



Dakota Affordable Housing Coalition

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I—ORGANIZATION

1.1 Name.

This organization shall be known as the Affordable Housing Coalition of Dakota County, hereafter referred to as the “Coalition” in this document.

ARTICLE II—VISION, MISSION, AND PURPOSE

2.1 Vision

The Coalition has a vision that no one in Dakota County will be homeless; that all individuals will have access to decent, safe and affordable housing, and the support services needed to maintain housing, regardless of income, age, race, sex, religion, familial status, national origin or ability.

2.2 Mission

The Coalition strives to maintain, improve and expand an integrated affordable housing system in Dakota County that is genuinely effective in meeting the needs of individuals who are homeless, lack adequate housing and/or may require support services to maintain housing. This system includes, but is not limited to; homeless prevention, outreach and assessment, case management, emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent affordable housing.

2.3 Purpose

To achieve its Purpose, the Coalition will perform the following functions in a public forum:

- Compile data and document unmet housing needs
- Do broad goal setting to identify unmet needs and priorities for investment and provide clear direction to funders and providers on our most critical needs. This will include obtaining input from consumers of housing services as to their needs,
- Advocate for the maintenance, improvement, and creation of affordable housing resources that meet existing needs,
- Fulfill oversight and advisory responsibilities for certain State and Federal housing programs,
- Collaborate with other organizations, groups and individuals whose objectives are consistent with the Coalition’s mission, and
- Promulgate community awareness of affordable housing issues in Dakota County.
- Elect members of the Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care (SMAC) Governing Board

ARTICLE III—MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Principles

Membership in the Coalition is open to all segments of the Dakota County Community; consumers of housing services, private service agencies, business, faith based organizations, representatives from city, county, state and federal government agencies and any other interested citizen.

All members either shall reside in Dakota County, or be employed by an organization that is located in the county or serves Dakota County residents. All such persons and organizations interested in advancing the purposes of the Coalition are welcomed as members.

3.2 Expectations

Members are expected to attend meetings regularly and share their concerns, insights, and perspectives on affordable housing issues.

3.3 Code of Conduct

Membership requires agreement to the Code of Conduct Policy developed by the coalition. Members are required to sign the disclosure statement on an annual basis. The Code of Conduct is enclosed as Attachment 1 to the By-Laws.

3.4 Roster

The Coalition shall maintain a membership roster that serves as a mailing list for meetings and other member activities.

ARTICLE IV—MEETINGS

4.1 Frequency

The Coalition regularly meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, and not less than four times each calendar year. Special meetings may be called by a Coalition Officer, provided notification of each member occurs at least five (5) days before the meeting. Special meetings may consider only those items so specified in advance. This schedule may be adjusted from time to time as needed. All Coalition meetings shall be open to the public.

4.2 Quorum

A quorum of ten members that includes at least one duly elected Coalition Officer must be present to conduct business.

4.3 Meeting Minutes

Proceedings of all meetings will be recorded and distributed to the membership.

ARTICLE V—DECISION-MAKING

5.1. Consensus

The desired method for decision making is consensus – everyone agrees a decision will take effect. Consensus is reached when each member in attendance has the opportunity of input, understands the decision and is prepared to support it.

5.2. Voting

Voting shall be used for decision-making when the membership is unable to reach consensus, when a member requests a vote, and when the Coalition is adopting formal measures such as changes in mission, governance, or structure. Members will have attended at least 50% of meetings over the past 12 months to have voting rights (this includes voting in Coalition sub-committees). Organizations that meet the 50% attendance threshold may assign an alternate to vote in their place. When a vote is taken, a simple majority determines the decision.

At the discretion of the Chair, the caucus system may be used in other circumstances that require a vote.

ARTICLE VI—OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

6.1 Officers

The officers of the Coalition shall be a Chair person, a Vice-Chair person, and a Secretary. The meeting shall be presided over by the chairperson; or vice- chairperson, in his/her absence, and in the absence of the chairperson and vice- chairperson, the remaining members shall appoint a chairperson pro tem.

- a. Chair Person. The Chair person will act as chair and preside at all meetings of the Coalition and establish an agenda for each meeting. Term of office will be 12 months starting in February.
- b. Vice Chair Person. The Vice Chair person shall act as chair person in the absence of the Chair person and when acting shall have all the powers and authority of the Chair person. The Vice Chair person shall succeed the Chair person in the case of a vacancy of that term. Term of office will be 12 months starting in February.
- c. Secretary. The secretary will ensure meeting minutes are recorded and stored, will distribute minutes to Coalition Members. The Secretary is responsible for passing along stored documentation to the next Secretary at the end of their term. Term of office will be 12 months starting in January.

6.2 Elections

Elections shall be held annually or as needed to fill officer positions, SMAC positions and other positions yet to be determined.

- a. Interested parties shall be recruited and considered one month prior to nomination by a Nominations committee. A slate of nominees will be brought to the meeting by a nominating committee for consideration by the AHC.
- b. Coalition members may nominate individuals who they think will be a good candidate to hold the identified positions.
- c. If a member is nominated by someone and does not wish to hold either position, the member may reject the nomination
- d. Coalition members may also volunteer to nominate themselves
- e. When nominations are over, each member who is nominated will explain to the Coalition why they are interested and qualified for the position.

- f. For Coalition Officers, Coalition members will then first vote for the Chair and the Vice-Chair, second when voting for both positions
- g. Nominations to serve on the Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care (SMAC) will follow the above process and be in compliance with the SMAC bylaws.

ARTICLE VII—COMMITTEES, WORKGROUPS, AND FUNCTIONS

7.1 Workgroups

The Coalition will establish workgroups as needed outside of the regular meeting to strategize, plan and provide oversight to the community’s efforts to end homelessness. Workgroups include, but are not limited to:

- a. Heading Home Dakota Housing and Services Workgroup – Advises on Continuum of Care issues, access to supportive housing programs, needs and gaps analysis, development and oversight of a Coordinated Entry System.
- b. Heading Home Dakota Community Education and Engagement – This workgroup is community based and volunteer focused and has the primary goals of educating and engaging the community about homelessness in Dakota County.
- c. Heading Home Dakota Prevention and Outreach Workgroup –This group serves as the Dakota Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program workgroup and helps coordinate outreach to clients, landlords, and other community partners.

7.2 Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) Advisory Committee

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency may award a state FHPAP grant to Dakota County. The Coalition agrees to meet the state’s requirement and serve as the Advisory Committee for the FHPAP grant.

- a. The FHPAP, Prevention and Outreach Workgroup will act as the FHPAP advisory sub-committee.
- b. While it will be desired that the Coalition will conduct all formal votes related to the FHPAP grant, the Coalition gives authority to the Workgroup to make time-sensitive and focused decisions on behalf of the Coalition. All decisions made by the Workgroup will be reported to the Coalition at their next scheduled meeting.
- c. The FHPAP advisory workgroup shall consist of FHPAP providers, County Community Services staff, a homelessness advocate, a person who has experienced homelessness, a member of the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness (MICH), youth service providers, representatives of public and private providers of emergency shelter, rental assistance, affordable housing, and other members of the public. The workgroup may also include school homelessness liaisons, Work Force Center representatives, Veterans Service Officers, landlords, legal aid staff, members of the faith community, and other community members as appropriate.
- d. All FHPAP voting must ensure that no more than 20% of the voting members of the advisory committee are representatives of organizations that receive FHPAP funding.

7.3 Continuum of Care

Dakota County, as well as Coalition members, are a part of the Suburban Metro Continuum of Care (SMAC) which includes representatives from Anoka, Dakota, Scott, Carver, and Washington counties. The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.

- a. The Dakota County Housing Department will designate a staff member to serve as the “Local CoC Lead” to the AHC.
- b. Up to three members of the Coalition will be elected to serve on the Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care Governing Board. SMAC membership terms will be for up to two years. There is no limit on the number of consecutive years a member may serve.
- c. The Coalition will comply with SMAC bylaws and any subsequent amendments made to SMAC bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII--TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

8.1 Technical & Administrative Support

Dakota County Social Services provides technical and clerical support to the Coalition. These services include; compiling data on homeless individuals, system capacity and unmet needs, drafting and updating Plans, preparing Certificate of Consistency statements, maintaining the Coalition roster, emailing meeting notices, as well as coordinating meeting space.

8.2 Fiscal Agent

Dakota County shall be the fiscal agent, if one is required.

ARTICLE IX—ADOPTION & AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

9.1 Revisions and Amendments

Amendments to these by-laws may be approved by an affirmative vote of a quorum of the membership at a regular meeting. Amendments must be submitted in writing and the amendment must be sent to the members at least 30 days prior to the meeting at which it will be considered.

9.2 Adoption

Once approved, amendments and/or revisions become effective immediately unless otherwise stated and remain in effect until revised.