

# Dakota County Affordable Housing Coalition Bylaws

*Revised and Adopted: 08/08/2024*

## 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:

- Review and consider data to document unmet housing needs.
- Set goals to identify unmet housing needs and priorities for investment and provide clear direction to funders and providers on our most critical needs.
- Obtain input from users of housing services regarding programmatic needs.
- Advise 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.

- Promulgate community awareness of affordable housing issues in Dakota County.
- Participate in the planning and activities of SMAC, including recruitment of members and recommendations of governing board member applicants.

## Article III—Membership

### 3.1 Principles

Membership in the Coalition is open to all segments of the Dakota County Community, participants of housing services, service agencies, businesses, faith-based organizations, representatives from city, county, state and federal government agencies and any other interested citizens.

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 people and organizations interested in advancing the mission 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. **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 an electronic mailing list for meetings and other member activities.

## Article IV—Meetings

### 4.1 Frequency

The Coalition regularly meets monthly as established by the coalition, 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 in order to watch and listen to the proceedings. The public is not guaranteed the right to speak at an open meeting.

## 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, electronic voting is allowed. 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 Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, 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 term.

- a. The Chairperson 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 Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall act as chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and when acting shall have all the powers and authority of the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson shall succeed the Chairperson in the case of a vacancy of that term. Term of office will be 12 months starting in January.
- 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 nominations.
- 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.

## Article VII—Committees, workgroups, and functions

### 7.1 Workgroups

The Coalition may establish workgroups as needed outside of the regular meeting to strategize, plan, and provide oversight to the community's efforts to end homelessness. Workgroups may 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, and provides insight on services for future affordable housing development.
- 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 as well as other prevention and outreach grants and activities as appropriate.

## 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 support the AHC.
- b. The AHC shall identify and encourage up to three members of the Coalition to participate in the Suburban Metro Area Continuum of Care Governing Board meetings. SMAC membership term will be one year. 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 may be provided by staff or in collaboration with SMAC and may 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.