

The Tri-County CoC of Warren, Sussex, and Hunterdon Bylaws

Article I: Organization

Section 1: Name

The name of this body shall be the Tri-County Continuum of Care of Warren, Sussex, and Hunterdon (hereafter referred to as the Tri-County CoC).

Section 2: Geographic Area

The geographic area served by the Tri-County CoC shall encompass all of Warren, Sussex, and Hunterdon counties.

Section 3: Address

The principal address of the Tri-County CoC shall be at the office of Warren County Department of Human Services, Division of Administration, 1 Shotwell Drive, Belvidere, NJ 07823.

Article II: Establishment

The establishment of the Tri-County CoC derives from a decision reached by a planning body headed by the Directors of Human Services of Warren, Sussex, and Hunterdon Counties on June 17, 2011. The Tri-County CoC is advisory to the respective Human Services Advisory Councils in all three counties.

Article III: Mission & Purpose

Section 1: Mission

The mission of the Tri-County CoC is to develop and revise comprehensive strategies to address and prevent homelessness in the Tri-County region.

Section 2: Purpose

The Tri-County CoC is both a strategic planning body and a vehicle to carry out the responsibilities of a Continuum of Care as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which include but are not limited to the following duties:

1. To operate the Continuum of Care as prescribed by HUD in the program regulations.
2. To coordinate and implement a system to meet the needs of the homeless population within the CoC area, including conducting an annual gaps analysis of homeless needs and services, consulting with state and local Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipients, collecting data on those experiencing homelessness, collaborating with other planning bodies, and reporting on the performance of ESG and CoC funding recipients;
3. To prepare and oversee an annual application for federal funds targeted to homelessness which includes establishing priorities for funding projects with the CoC, determining which application can be considered, and selecting the applications submitted for funding.
4. To designate and operate HMIS.
5. To develop and implement a ten-year plan to end homelessness.

Article IV: Structure

Section 1

Warren County shall act as the lead coordinator and designated voice for the Tri-County CoC. Duties include submitting the Homeless Assistance Grant Application, collecting data, and submitting all required reports to HUD in a timely manner. Other duties include organizing and documenting Tri-County meetings and maintaining all records relating to the business of the Tri-County CoC.

Article V – Membership and Process

Section 1

Membership is open to all interested community members and organizations. The CoC will encourage participation, in particular, by anyone serving the homeless or anyone who is currently homeless or has been homeless.

Section 2

To accomplish its mission and purpose, the Tri-County CoC will form an Executive Committee to serve as the governing body of the Continuum.

Section 3

The Tri-County CoC will convene a general meeting semi-annually.

Article VI: Executive Committee

Section 1

The Executive Committee shall have equal representation from the local continua, not to exceed twelve members. Membership will include a representative from each county Department of Human Services, social and homeless service providers, and individuals who have experienced homelessness. Members will be designated by their local planning body.

Section 2

The Executive Committee is authorized to make decisions on behalf of the Tri-County CoC. Executive Committee members are expected to solicit input from their local continua and should be evidenced in local CoC minutes. The Executive Committee shall meet a minimum of six times annually.

Section 3

Members shall have voting rights. While the Executive Committee will strive to achieve consensus, the affirmative vote of a simple majority of members shall be required for the approval of any matter. Members must be present to vote.

Section 4

The duties of the Executive Committee include, but are not limited to:

- The relaying of information between the Tri-County CoC and their local continua
- The identification of ways to coordinate and link resources across the Tri-County region that will help to avoid duplication and facilitate movement toward permanent housing and self-sufficiency.
- The development of a continuum-wide coordinated assessment
- The evaluation and monitoring of all HUD funded programs

- To set system performance standards for homeless programs in the CoC
- The development of a Tri-County ten year plan to end homelessness
- The review and ranking of all proposed projects, both new and renewals, for HUD funding
- Participation in, and support of, the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Oversight of the HUD Homeless Assistance Grant application process

Article VII: HMIS

Section 1

The Executive Committee shall approve the organization that will serve as the HMIS lead agency and identify the HMIS software that will be used in the Tri-County CoC.

Section 2

Warren County, as the lead agency for the Tri-County CoC, shall sign all agreements with the HMIS lead agency governing the implementation of the HMIS in the Tri-County CoC.

Article VIII: Conflict of Interest

All individuals and representatives of organizations who have a financial interest in the Tri-County CoC HUD application may not participate in project review and ranking nor vote on the Executive Committee recommendations for funding.

Article IX: Annual Rating and Ranking of HUD Applications

Section 1

Annually, the Executive Committee will establish the priority(s) for the Tri-County CoC HUD application. Priorities will be established based on gaps/needs analysis and input from the local continua.

Section 2

Upon notification of the NOFA from HUD, the Tri-County CoC lead will issue a Request for Letters of Intent from entities wishing to have projects considered for submission. Project developers may be asked to present to the Executive Committee and respond to questions about the proposal.

Section 3

The Executive Committee shall issue a Request for Letters of Intent (RLI) through the CoC lead agency. And determine the schedule for project review and selection to correspond with the HUD application process.

Section 4

The Executive Committee will appoint a Selection Committee to score and rank applications. Projects, both new and renewals will be given a score and will be presented to the Executive Committee for final approval. Ranking decisions will be communicated to all applicants via email.

Section 5

While recognizing that HUD has the ultimate authority in funding new or renewal projects, the Tri-County CoC is the primary decision maker for which projects are included in the annual application. Organizations submitting projects for the application may appeal the decision of the Executive Committee through the following process:

- A formal letter indicating the decision to appeal must be submitted, by mail or email, to the CoC lead (WCDHS) within 5 days of the funding decision, indicating the reason for appeal and any back-up documentation.
- A three-member independent review committee will be convened within 15 days of receipt of the letter. The panel will consist of one representative from each local continuum, who may or may not be a member of the Executive Committee. Panelists must be neutral and cannot have any conflict of interest with any of the parties applying for funding. Panelists cannot have served on the Selection Committee.
- The panelists may make inquiries of the Selection Committee. The panel will consider the possible effect on another agency's rank. All decisions are final.

Article X: Committees

Section 1

The Tri-County CoC shall establish committees to address specific areas of the planning process and work of the CoC. The following committees shall be a regular part of the CoC:

- a. Selection Committee - a subcommittee of, and appointed by, the Executive Committee, the Selection Committee is responsible for reviewing and ranking all applicants for funding through the HUD application process and for making recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- b. Monitoring Committee - a sub-committee of, and appointed by, the Executive Committee, the Monitoring Committee is responsible for conducting annual site visits of all programs funded through the Tri-County CoC.

Section 2

Additional subcommittees, work groups, etc. may be established by the Executive Committee, as needed.

Article XI: Amendments

Section 1

The Executive Committee will review the bylaws annually for necessary additions and/or adjustments.

Section 2

A majority vote of the Executive Committee is required to formalize bylaws. Each county HSAC will also review the bylaws.