

North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

bos@ncceh.org

919.755.4393

www.ncceh.org/BoS

Regional Committee Restructuring Proposal May 2016

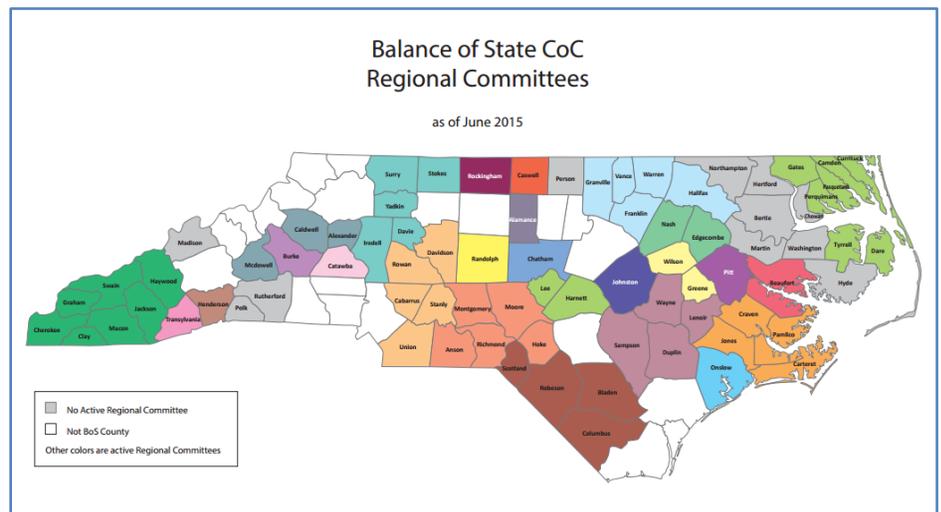
Executive Summary

In May 2015, the Balance of State CoC Restructuring Workgroup was formed to explore a more effective model for Regional Committee structure. The workgroup met numerous times to discuss and develop specific recommendations regarding Regional Committee responsibilities, leadership, and geographic coverage. This document presents the workgroup’s proposed restructuring model, the timeline for implementation, and methods for Regional Committees to provide comments.

Background

Current Landscape

The Balance of State CoC was created in 2006 to increase capacity and access to HUD funding for 79 rural counties in North Carolina. In order to organize and implement CoC responsibilities, active communities formed Regional Committees to carry out local planning and coordination for homeless services. These Regional Committees are currently responsible for a number of activities, including:



- Holding regular, public meetings and posting meeting minutes
- Recruiting local partners to address community needs for housing and homeless services
- Planning and implementing a coordinated assessment system for homeless and housing programs
- Applying for Emergency Solution Grants (ESG) funding through a local application process
- Organizing an annual Point- in-Time (PIT) Count to survey individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night in January
- Participating in CoC activities:
 - Steering Committee meetings
 - BoS subcommittees and workgroups
 - CoC funding committees

As the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) legislation continues to be implemented, these Regional Committee activities will expand to include larger system-wide tasks, including:

- Monitoring and improving local performance on system performance measures as set by HUD, including:
 - Decreasing average length of stay
 - Increasing permanent housing exits
 - Reducing new episodes of homelessness
- Managing the homeless service system to address community needs:
 - Ensuring adequate and appropriate programs and services available
 - Working together to address gaps at the local level by securing new resources and expanding the eligibility criteria of current programs

Currently, Regional Committees form and self-identify their coverage areas with guidance from Balance of State CoC staff to ensure that all Regional Committees meet the criteria and requirements as outlined in the CoC governance charter and the *Regional Leads and Regional Committees Roles & Responsibilities*¹ document approved by the Steering Committee. A list of official Regional Committees is approved by the Steering Committee each year, and throughout the year Regional Committees can form on a tentative basis while others can become inactive. Several counties in the Balance of State CoC remain inactive due to a lack of capacity to manage a Regional Committee or due to a lack of knowledge about the CoC process.

Current Challenges with Regional Committees

As of 2016, the Balance of State CoC has 26 Regional Committees, which is three times more than other Balance of State CoC in the country. Despite this large number of Regional Committees, many counties remain inactive within the CoC, and the CoC continues to struggle with engaging and involving inactive areas. With so many Regional Committees, the administrative burden to run the committees and oversee local tasks is high for local communities, CoC staff, and state partners (for example, the State ESG office).

Many current Regional Committees struggle to meet the basic requirements of being a committee and will be unable to meet more advanced expectations. In a survey conducted in August 2015, Regional Committees identified that they had trouble expanding capacity in leadership roles. Regional Committees also reported that stagnation exists at the local level for groups who have been meeting for several years.

The current Regional Committee structure also poses problems for CoC administration. Communities can form Regional Committees without regard to the number of homeless households or services in the area. This can lead to committees with vastly different priorities, challenges, and needs, yet the CoC gives each Regional Committee equal vote at the Steering Committee level. Also, due to the large number of Regional Committees, CoC staff focus much of their current capacity on managing Regional Committee formation and changes rather than on innovating the homeless service system.

The current Regional Committee structure also means that the Balance of State CoC does not fully utilize available ESG funds. Lower-capacity Regional Committees and inactive counties are not competitive in the application for ESG funding. The state ESG office recaptures ESG dollars not applied for and distributes them to other CoCs.

Regional Committees identified in the 2015 survey that they would be willing to join with struggling or inactive communities to support and grow the impact of the Balance of State CoC.

¹ <http://www.ncceh.org/files/3117/>

Regional Committee Restructuring Workgroup

Goals

In March 2015, the BoS CoC formed a Regional Committee Restructuring workgroup at the annual Regional Lead in-person meeting to explore options for restructuring and present recommendations to the Steering Committee. The workgroup has representatives from across the state with representation from both small and large Regional Committees.

As the workgroup explored options, they identified several key goals that the restructuring process needed to achieve:

- Increase capacity and coverage of the Balance of State CoC by including inactive areas
- Promote best practices through cross-pollination of service providers
- Allow for easier partnership with large system partners like LME/MCOs and the VA
- Where possible, create systems within each Regional Committee that include an array of program types (i.e. each system has access to shelters, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing)
- Foster leadership and Regional Committee capacity
- Streamline CoC operations to allow more Regional Committee and CoC staff time to be used to innovate Balance of State systems

Principles

In achieving these goals, the Regional Committee Restructuring Workgroup was guided by several key principles, including weighing the costs and benefits of each option for both Regional Committees and the CoC, designing a process that solicits input from all Regional Committees, and using existing or natural partnerships to create new Regional Committee boundaries. The workgroup saw that restructuring the Regional Committees was the next, natural step in the evolution of the Balance of State CoC.

Proposed New Regional Committee Structure

New Regional Committees

The proposal developed by the Regional Committee Restructuring workgroup combines existing Regional Committees and inactive counties to create 13 new Regional Committees.

Date	Task
June 7, 2016	Potential approval by Steering Committee
June 2016 - December 2016	Consolidation phase in which current Regional Committees continue to implement current tasks while getting to know new partners*
January 1, 2017	New Regional Committees begin*
January 25, 2017	Point-in-Time Count conducted within new Regional Committee structure
April 1, 2017	New coordinated assessment plans due to Coordinated Assessment Council (CAC)

*Regional Committees that wish to consolidate on an earlier timeline may do so.

Implementation Expectations and Responsibilities

In order to aid the implementation process, the Regional Committee Restructuring Workgroup and BoS staff have provided a list of benchmarks and a recommended timeline for meeting them.

Consolidation Phase:

During the 7-month consolidation phase, the BoS CoC expects Regional Committees to form relationships with their new partners and plan for new roles and responsibilities. While the benchmarks and timelines below are simply recommendations, the Regional Committee Restructuring Workgroup strongly recommends following this list to ensure consistent progress towards CoC goals and the January 1, 2017 deadline.

Recommended Benchmarks and Implementation Timeline:

Benchmark	Complete by
Initial meeting of current Regional Committee leaders and formation of a Transition Committee	June 30, 2016
Complete a draft plan for new Regional Committee transition that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting structure, frequency, and location • Consolidation of contact lists and communications • Plan for Regional Committee leadership and election (see leadership requirements on the next page) • Plan for fair and equitable distribution of financial and funding resources • Plan for outreach and engagement to all counties included in the Regional Committee • Plans for standing workgroups and subcommittees • Timeline for plan for future Point-in-Time Count • Timeline and plan for consolidated Coordinated Assessment Plan • New name for the consolidated Regional Committee 	July 31, 2016
Presentation of transition plans to current Regional Committees for approval	August 31, 2016
Initial consolidated meeting of the new Regional Committee/election of new Regional Committee leadership	September 30, 2016
1-day regional meetings with Balance of State staff and new RC leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenville 	October 1-14, 2016

- Burlington
- Morganton

Creation of Point-in-Time Count and Coordinated Assessment subcommittees

October 31, 2016

Other Recommendations and Helpful Information:

Transition Committees:

Transition Committees should include acting Regional Committee Leads and representation from all Regional Committees and inactive counties (if possible). Elect co-chairs of the Transition Committee to oversee the process, ensure consistent meeting dates and agenda formation, and facilitate progress. Create plans for consolidation and ensure that the new Regional Committee is able to meet all expectations.

2016 Funding Cycles:

As applications for both CoC and ESG funding become available during the consolidation phase, Regional Committees may choose to either apply for funding as the new expanded regions or as the original smaller Regional Committees. This decision needs to be communicated to CoC staff as soon as possible in the application process.

Regional Committee Leadership:

Leadership positions for the new Regional Committees will include:

- Regional Committee Lead
- Regional Committee Alternate
- Webmaster
- Point-in-Time Count Lead
- Coordinated Assessment Lead
- Funding Committee Lead, who will oversee the ESG application process and ensure the Regional Committee is involved in CoC funding committees
- County Chairs (optional)
- Others as needed or desired

Regional Committees must ensure that those who hold leadership positions represent their larger regions and that the same person does not concurrently hold more than two leadership roles.

Regional Committee Meetings:

While developing new Regional Committees, members need to meet face-to-face as much as possible to foster new relationships. In order to encourage participation and increase access in larger regional territories, the workgroup encourages Regional Committees to rotate meeting locations and include a phone or video conferencing option for participants who have travel restrictions. Regional Committees should seek participation from individuals experiencing homelessness or who have experienced homelessness as possible and provide transportation and phone options to allow for their participation. In order to meet system goals, larger Regional Committees will likely need to use leadership groups and subcommittees to coordinate projects.

Coordinated Assessment:

During the consolidation phase, Regional Committees will continue to operate their existing coordinated assessment systems while creating revised or new regional plans to be approved by the Coordinated Assessment Council (CAC). New Regional Committees should form a Coordinated Assessment Subcommittee as soon as possible to review existing CA plans, evaluate current plans for strengths and weaknesses, and how best to consolidate them for regional coverage.

New Regional Committee plans will be due to the CAC by April 1, 2017 and must provide coverage for all counties in the region. Current Coordinated Assessment Leads will provide leadership in creating the new plan. Existing CoC parameters around coordinated assessment remain the same.

Engaging Inactive Counties:

The Regional Committee Restructuring Workgroup and BoS staff understand that engaging currently inactive counties will be a challenge. Realize that the CoC expects the new Regional Committees to regularly and consistently engage and outreach these inactive counties in order to increase participation in the Regional Committee. However, these counties are inactive for a reason. We understand that it will take time to get regular, active involvement from many of these counties. The CoC will measure success with these inactive counties in small ways. Any activity in these counties is a bonus at this point. Where possible, CoC staff will assist in the Regional Committee's outreach by requesting that state partners encourage participation and by providing historical information like lists of known programs and past contacts in the area.

The CoC recommends that Regional Committees reach out to key partners in inactive communities, including: Public Housing Authorities, Departments of Social Services, homeless service agencies listed on the Housing Inventory Chart (shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing programs), domestic violence service providers, faith-based organizations, county and city officials, the local Council of Governments, Community Action Agencies, housing developers, police, local jails, victim advocate groups, food pantries, SSVF/VA providers, LME/MCOs, mental health providers, school liaisons, hospitals, veteran service officers, Legal Aid, and Social Security Administration field offices.

Proposed Support from BoS Staff

- June 2016: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) documents addressing questions from Regional Committees during the feedback period. The document will include some examples of various configurations for leadership, meeting structures, etc. To be published on the NCCEH website in June 2016.
- June/July 2016: One-on-one phone calls or video chats with BoS staff to answer questions or provide guidance. These calls can be at regularly scheduled Regional Committee meetings or with a smaller group of RC leaders. Calls are at the request of the Regional Committee Lead.
- August 2016: One-on-one phone calls between BoS staff and Transition Committees. Transition Committees will give staff an update on consolidation activities and have a chance for ongoing questions and discussion. BoS staff will contact Transition Committee chairs to schedule these calls.
- October 2016: Regional 1-day workshops in Greenville, Burlington, and Morganton. Facilitated discussion of transition and consolidation and preparation of 100-day plans.
- October - December 2016: On-site visits with new Regional Committees by BoS staff.