

Anti-Discrimination Policy Webinar

October 7, 2024

2:00 PM

Agenda

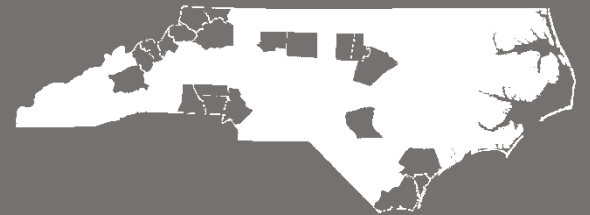


Today's agenda

- Policy overview
- Section 1. Equal Access Policy and Procedures
- Section 2. Family Separation Policy
- Section 3. Faith-Based Inclusion Policy
- Section 4. Grievance and Anti-Retaliation Policy and Procedures
- Section 5: Racial Equity Policy
- Appendix I: References
- Appendix II: Agency Anti-Discrimination Policy Checklist



Policy Overview



Benefits

- Supports diversity within the homeless population
- Responds to the fact that certain populations are over-represented among people experiencing homelessness
- Minimizes stigmatization and trauma
- Interrupts the cycle of racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia that contribute to poverty and homelessness

If homelessness services are the last refuge – that is, people have no where else to go – then it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we do not further contribute to discrimination and marginalization.



HUD requires CoCs to have an Anti-Discrimination Policy



NC Balance of State
CoC

Who does the policy apply to?

Mandatory for all:

- CoC grantees
- ESG grantees
- Other Federal and state grantees (SFRF, HOME, etc)

Recommended for all other providers within the NC BoS CoC



Everyone has a role to play

CoC

Agencies

Staff

Volunteers

People experiencing homelessness



Agency Checklist



Does your agency have an Anti-Discrimination policy?

Is there a stated plan to train new staff and clearly communicate this policy during the onboarding process? Is annual training provided for staff, volunteers, and contractors?

Does the intake process include a copy of the agency's Anti-Discrimination policies to clients or people presenting for services?



Section 1: Equal Access Policies and Procedures

Equal Access Policy and Procedures

The CoC and agencies within the CoC will ensure equal access to programs for all individuals and families.



Everyone has the same opportunity for services and housing

- NOTE: Programs can follow eligibility and funding requirements but must not make decisions to deny services to any of the protected classes listed if the person otherwise would be eligible for the program.

Programs will not discriminate based on the following:

Race	Color
Ethnicity	Language
National origin	Religion
Sex	Familial status
Disability: physical, mental, or sensory	Age
Gender identity	LGBTQ+ status
DV/SV Status	Marital status

The NC BoS CoC will:

Maintain policies and procedures prohibiting discrimination

Provide annual training to agencies and staff

Use appropriate, inclusive language in CoC communications, policies, and materials

Develop partnerships with organizations that can provide resources and expertise

Support clients' understanding of privacy rights

Develop, maintain, and publish grievance procedures



Agencies in the NC BoS CoC will:

Adhere to Anti-Discrimination Policies and incorporate them into agency policies

Ensure staff, volunteers, and contractors are trained on the policies, at least annually.

Use appropriate, inclusive language with all communication, including taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Provide clear, transparent, and accessible information at intake

Maintain confidentiality policies, ensuring client information, such as legal name and sex-assigned-at-birth, are not shared

Mediate and resolve conflicts between clients, treating them fairly and equally

Take immediate action to resolve inappropriate behavior, treatment, and harassment



Staff, volunteers, and contractors at agencies will:

Provide equal access to facilities, services, financial aid, or benefits to everyone and treat them with dignity and respect

Participate in annual training on Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures.

Seek assistance from administration if questions about implementation of the policy or procedures arise

Use appropriate language in all communications. Ensure meaningful access to persons with Limited English Proficiency

Adhere to confidentiality policy: Conduct intakes and meetings in a private space to ensure confidentiality. Never share client information outside of the agency without a release of information (ROI)

Inform clients at intake of the Equal Access grievance process and the Client Bill of Rights. Support clients through the grievance process and inform administration of any concerns



Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Policy and Procedures

The CoC and agencies within the CoC will prohibit all forms of harassment and discrimination of or by clients, employees, visitors, and volunteers, including harassment and discrimination based on actual or perceived gender identity and expression, or based on an individual's association.



Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Inclusive Policy:

Gender Identity

Use clients stated gender and pronoun, and support clients' gender identity

Do not make decisions based on appearances

Do not ask questions or seek information about a person's anatomy and only seek the most necessary elements of information regarding a person's medical history for providing services *

Do not require an individual's gender identity to match gender on an ID or other documents

Give people with prescribed hormones and other medications as part of their gender-affirming health care regime full access to medications

TGNC = Transgender and Gender Nonconforming



TGNC Inclusive Policy:

Confidentiality

Keep client's transgender identity confidential if that's what they want

Tell only essential staff, identified by administrators, a client's transgender identity

Ensure all staff, volunteers, and contractors maintain the confidentiality of a client's legal name, and sex assigned at birth – treat this information as confidential medical information that cannot be disclosed without specific, time-limited-client consent

Honor the request of an individual for private space to complete intake & data collection.



TGNC Inclusive Policy:

Physical Accommodation

Honor the request of an individual for accommodation based on personal safety and privacy concerns. This might include a private sleeping area or access to a single-use bathroom if possible. *

Offer individual stalls in congregate showers & bathrooms and/or gender-neutral showers & bathrooms

Ensure future construction projects include privacy in sleeping areas, bathrooms, and showers

Eligibility for Services

Do not consider a client or potential client ineligible because their appearance or behavior does not conform to gender stereotypes

Ensure agency documents accommodate for legal and preferred name, as well incorporate all gender identities



TGNC Inclusive Policy:

Harassment and Concerns of Clients

Take immediate action to resolve inappropriate behavior, treatment, and harassment

If someone needs to be moved for harassment and safety concerns, have a preference to move the client with a bias

Training and Education

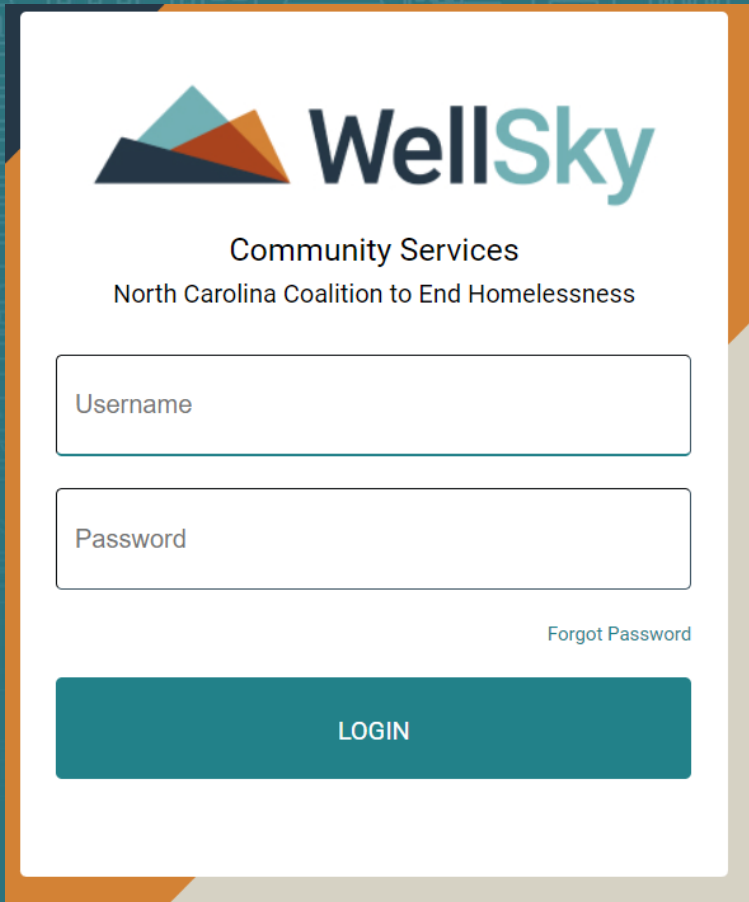
Build subject matter expertise to increase cultural competency around transgender and gender nonconforming identities


Correct misinformation or inaccurate conclusions that TGNC clients threaten the health or safety of others

Ensure staff understand the potential impact that disclosure of a client's legal name and sex at birth can have on a client's progress to self-sufficiency



Questions about Identity in HMIS



 **WellSky**

Community Services
North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness

Username

Password

[Forgot Password](#)

LOGIN

Principles:

- Self-reported by clients
- Try to get accurate information
- ‘Need to Know’ for services
- Should not be used to deny services

These principles apply to all clients within the requirements set by HUD and other funders.

NC BoS CoC Anti-Discrimination Policy

“Ensure all staff, volunteers, and contractors maintain the confidentiality of a client’s legal name and sex assigned at birth and understand the potential impact that disclosure can have on a client’s progress to self-sufficiency.”

- HMIS should use the client’s self-identified chosen name (It is their *real* name)
 - Whether or not their legal name has changed
- HMIS should use the client’s self-identified gender identity
 - Whether or not their legal gender marker has changed



Agency Checklist



Is there an equal access policy?

Is there a clear statement about non-discrimination because of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, ancestry, religion, sex, familial status, age, gender identity, LGBTQ+ status, marital status, domestic or sexual violence victim status, or sensory, mental, or physical disability?

Does the policy refer to Department of Housing Urban and Development (HUD) Equal Access Rule, anti-discrimination and privacy laws, and all other Federal, state, and local non-discrimination and privacy laws?

Does the policy include specific procedures for working with transgender and gender nonconforming persons?



Section 2: Family Separation Policy

Involuntary Family Separation Policy

Families will not be separated because of marital status or age/gender of children.

No CoC- or ESG-funded project can deny admission of a household on the basis of:

- Age and gender of a child under 18 or
- Gender or marital status of a parent or parents

The CoC will take all reports of abuse seriously and take action!

Families and providers can report abuse of the rule at bos@ncceh.org for the CoC to take action against the program, including potential relinquishment of funding.



Families are more likely to succeed in getting and staying housed when the family unit is intact!



Agency Checklist



Is there a family separation policy?

Are procedures spelled out that demonstrate how the clients, agency, staff, volunteers, and contractors will carry out the agency's anti-discrimination policies?



Section 3: Faith-Based Inclusion Policy

Faith-Based Activities Policy

Programs will not discriminate based on religious belief or failure to participate in religious practices.

Faith-based organizations play an important role in providing services in the NC BoS CoC. However, no program should:

- Discriminate based on religion or religious belief
- Mandate participation in a religious practice

Agency Checklist



Is there a faith-based activities policy?

Are procedures spelled out that demonstrate how the clients, agency, staff, volunteers, and contractors will carry out the agency's anti-discrimination policies?



Section 4: Grievance and Anti-Retaliation Policies and Procedures

Grievance and Retaliation Policy

Anyone participating in the CoC has the right to file a grievance.

The NC BoS CoC affirms that people who wish to file a grievance have the right to do so without retaliation from the party accused or any representative associated.



Grievance Procedures

1. Anyone can submit a complaint form initially to program administration.
2. Program administration will address the grievance with the provider and the client, staff, volunteer, or contractor.
3. If a participant is not satisfied with the outcome or if a participant fears retaliation at the program level, a complaint can be filed with NCCEH staff at bos@ncceh.org.



NC BoS CoC Client Bill of Rights

Passed by the Steering Committee in April, 2023 the Client Bill of Rights establishes basic expectations of how a participant can expect to be treated in the following categories:

- Respect and dignity
- Services free of discrimination
- Self determination
- Safety
- Privacy
- Inclusion and participation in decisions about their welfare
- Transparency in agency policies that affect the services they receive



NC BoS CoC Client Bill of Rights

- The Client Bill of Rights is applicable for all agencies in the NC BoS CoC.
- The policy does not change the previously discussed grievance procedure. Participants must still navigate an agency's grievance procedures internally.
- The Client Bill of Rights gives both participants and agencies more clarity and language for when a grievance might be warranted.
- Online training available at www.ncceh.org/bos



Agency Checklist



Are there grievance and anti-retaliation policies and procedures? Do you have a copy of the client bill of rights?

If so, are they shared with each person presenting for services?



Section 5: Racial Equity Policy

Racial Equity Policy

“Racism is fundamental to the United States’ inception: our founding as a nation and economy depended on it. Chattel slavery and the genocide of Indigenous people supplied the labor and land for cotton, our nation’s first economic boon and lucrative export. Through social practice and policy, the U.S. has maintained a racialized underclass and the legacy of policies like redlining, black codes, and the War on Drugs have deeply disadvantaged Black and Brown lives today and will for generations to come.” (NAEH, “Equity Is the Answer all Along: Addressing Racial Trauma and Homelessness”)

Racial Equity Policy

CoC agencies, staff, volunteers, and contractors must recognize that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are disproportionately represented in the homeless services system and are often negatively impacted at disproportionate rates by economic and political systems, contributing to higher rates of homelessness.

NC BoS CoC conducts an annual Racial Equity Analysis

- This data informs strategies related to disparities in the homeless services system along lines of race and ethnicity.
- Utilized data from the AHAR, HMIS, and PIT Count along with baseline data from the US Census.
- Available on the NCCEH website at www.ncceh.org/bos
 - Direct link to the assessment: <https://www.ncceh.org/files/11546/>

Racial Equity Data (NC BoS CoC)

	White	Black	Native American/Alaskan	Asian/Pacific Islander	Other/Multi-Racial
% of Everyone	72%	19%	2%	1%	5%
% of People Experiencing Poverty	55%	31%	3%	1%	10%
% of People in Families Experiencing Poverty	49%	34%	4%	1%	12%
% of Everyone Experiencing Homelessness	56%	38%	2%	1%	4%
% of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness	47%	43%	2%	1%	7%



Ethnicity Data (NC BoS CoC)

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
% of Everyone	8%	92%
% of People Experiencing Poverty	16%	84%
% of People in Families Experiencing Poverty	23%	77%
% of People Experiencing Homelessness	5%	95%
% of People in Families Experiencing Homelessness	8%	92%



Taking action

1. Seeking regular racial equity training opportunities for all agency staff, volunteers, contractors, and board members.
2. Review the NC BoS CoC annual Racial Equity Assessment and develop plans to target disparities that persist in their community.
3. Actively work to increase racial diversity in hiring, especially in leadership or supervisory positions, and board member recruitment.

Taking action

4. Actively recruit bilingual staff in hiring for client-facing positions.
5. Assess and make changes to agency policies and procedures that might disproportionately impact BIPOC clients, such as requiring criminal background checks for program entry.
6. Consider tracking your agency's data to ensure equal access to admission, housing, and other programming based on race.

Agency Checklist



Is your agency seeking racial equity training for staff? Are you reviewing the Racial Equity Assessment and agency data for trends on race/ethnicity?

Is your agency reviewing your policies and procedures to increase equity? Is your agency seeking qualified BIPOC applicants for open positions?

Appendix I: Resources

Get a notice of rights at:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Notice-on-Equal-Access-Rights.pdf>

HUD Equal Access Final Rule: <https://www.hudexchange.info/news/hud-publishes-final-rule-equal-access-in-accordance-with-an-individuals-gender-identity/>

- HUD Technical Assistance Resources:
 - Equal Access for Transgender People: Supporting Inclusive Housing and Shelters - <https://bit.ly/3gAr8EL>
 - LGBTQ Homelessness: <https://bit.ly/3v9PHw8>



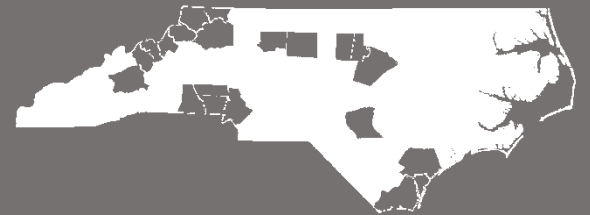
Appendix II: Checklists

Agencies can use the checklist as a tool to develop:

Anti-Discrimination Policies that align with the NC BoS CoC Anti-Discrimination Policies.



Next Steps and Wrap-up



Next Steps and Wrap Up

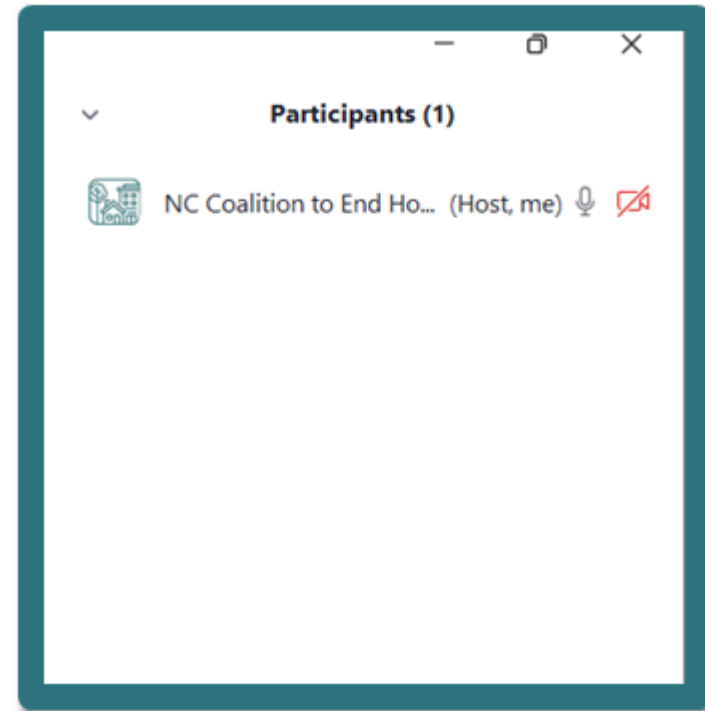
- 2024 Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures available at: <https://www.ncceh.org/bos/>
- Next Steps
 - Evaluate current philosophy and practices
 - Train boards and staff
 - Review and update agency policies and procedures
- Keep in touch
 - bos@ncceh.org
 - (919) 755-4393



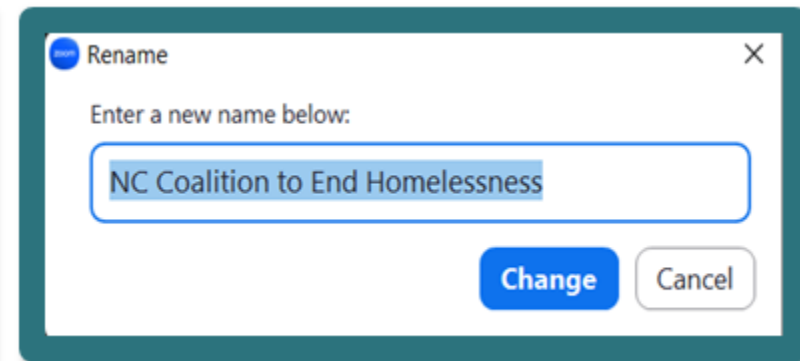
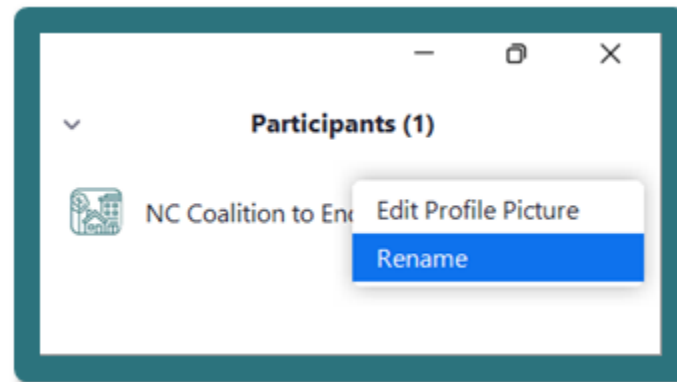
Attendance

- All participants should enter their full names, so we know they are here

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Attendance (recorded)

- If you are viewing this recording after the live webinar, you must confirm you viewed the webinar in its entirety.
- Once you have completed the webinar, visit this link and complete a brief form to confirm your attendance:
<https://forms.gle/GHdsanteoReXu2dD9>
- You will be prompted to enter your information, the agency you work for, and the others that attended the webinar with you.
- **October 31 deadline** to view the recording and complete the attendance form. Agencies in Regions 01 and 02 have until November 21 due to Hurricane Helene.
- Email bos@ncceh.org with any questions or concerns.

