NC Balance of State CoC Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2025

Regional Leads Present: Derek Lancour, Emily Lowery, Cory Bragg, Pamela Hinton, Erin Gaskin, Jai Baker, Tonya Gray Young, Dr. Dia Thomas, Anita Lynch, Lakitra Claude, Lynne James, Brian Fike

At–Large Members Present: Karen Carroll, Melissa Hewitt, Ken Edminster, Kea Alexander, Danny Jordan, Erin Joy Crossfield, Brooks Ann McKinney, Kenett Melgar, Jospeh Chilton, Tara Peele

SC Members Absent: Cassandra Rowe

Interested Parties Present: Catrina Martin, Leonard Tillery, Sophie Bernard, Michael Absher, Melissa McKeown, Jeanne LeMaster, Chrishonda N Ham, Latoya Smith, Charlene Elliott, Laurenn Singleton, Donna Hodges, Chris Parker, Chasity Houck, Monica Frizell, Lori Watts, Michele Welsh, Jessica Joyner, Kim Hemphill, Evelyn Campbell, Kecia Robinson, Kisha Darden, Robert Hudson, Daisy Butzer, Lynne James, Bre Griffin, Susana Rodriguez, Teena Willis, Sarah Lancaster, Shelly Chandler, Rachelle Ellis

NCCEH Staff Present: Laurel Benfield, Debra Susie, Mira Sanderson, Adriana Diaz, Andrea Carey, Ashley VonHatten, Allie Card, Brian Alexander, Jenny Simmons, Dr. Latonya Agard, Teresa Robinson

Approval of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was voted on at the beginning of the meeting. Without changes or objections, the consent agenda was approved by common consent. The consent agenda was sent out for review prior to the meeting and is posted at:
https://www.ncceh.org/bos/steeringcommittee/

Recent Federal Interventions

Brian Alexander presented the Steering Committee with the following questions in response to the events that happened last week: What was your experience last week? What did you discover you needed to have in place to be prepared for what happened?

Lynne James, who works in local government, responded to the question by sharing with the meeting members that in her county, they immediately notified their County Manager and

attorney to discuss the situation with lobbyists and their governing board. They are continuing to actively monitor developments. Lynne also mentioned that their housing case managers are primarily funded by federal resources and expressed concern about their job security, particularly regarding how long they will be able to continue their work if their primary funding is withdrawn.

Michael Absher, an interested party present at the Steering Committee meeting, shared that he took the initiative to create and distribute memos to school districts to inform people about their rights and which areas are accessible or inaccessible to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). He recognized the significant impact that signage can have on public awareness regarding accessibility. Michael also mentioned that ICE was in his county, alongside the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), on the same day as the Point-in-Time (PIT) count. He was able to mitigate the situation due to his knowledge of public versus private access. In response to Michael, Laurel Benfield noted that NCCEH is currently developing training for interested parties concerning ICE and shelters. Laurel, along with others in the chat, requested that Michael share his memo with them, as well as any other resources he may have.

Letter of Support Requests

Allie Card presented the following information to the Steering Committee for their approval.

Rowan Helping Ministries – Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program Case Management

- The Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program Case Management, funded by the Veteran's Administration (VA) provides case management services to improve housing retention by veterans who are at risk of becoming homeless or who were previously homeless and are transitioning to permanent housing.
- This project will serve veterans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including those who are guests or clients of Rowan Helping Ministries or are referred by the Salisbury VA Medical Center.
- Counties served: Rowan, Cabarrus, Davidson, Davie, Iredell, and Stanly (Regions 4 & 5 of the NC Bos CoC)

NCCEH

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists, Inc (VRSI)– Homeless Veteran Reintegration Program (HVRP)

- HVRP, funded by the Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS) provides career exploration, training, placement, and supportive services to veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- VRSI will assess the Veteran's employment history, developing or reinforcing resume needs, connect them to stable housing resources, food resources, etc. They work with employers in the area to help find jobs and lasting employment for the Veteran. If this job does not work, they continue serving the Veteran for up to two years.
- Counties served - Brunswick, Pender, New Hanover, **Harnett, Columbus, Duplin, Onslow, Lenoir, Robeson, Bladen, Sampson, Carteret, Jones, Scotland, Hoke, Wayne, Craven, Greene,** Cumberland (multiple NC BoS Regions)

In response to the information presented, Dr. Dia Thomas asked how much money was being requested. Allie replied that, in the letter of request form that the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness (NCCEH) uses for partner organizations, they do not ask for detailed financial information. She explained that, generally, funding is allocated towards case managers and supportive services or items for Veterans. Melissa Hewitt followed up with a question regarding the specific percentages dedicated to Veterans versus case managers. Allie clarified that this request is solely a request for support from the NC Balance of State CoC and not a request for funding. The funding they will receive will come from the Department of Veteran Affairs and Department of Labor; NCCEH will only be sending a letter of support on the CoC's behalf to inform potential funders that these organizations are partners.

With that clarification, Dr. Dia Thomas made a motion to approve the letter of support request. Melissa seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Allie shared that the letters will be provided to those agencies by the end of the week.

NC Balance of State CoC (NC BoS CoC) Annual Orientation Overview

NC Balance of State Continuum of Care & Regional Committees

Continuums of Care (CoC) form the backbone of the homeless service system.
- A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing & services funding for people experiencing homelessness.
  - Represents a wide range of agencies & organizations with a vested interest in ending homelessness
  - Promotes community-wide commitment to ending homelessness

o   Required body to apply for HUD homeless funding

CoCs have management & planning responsibilities.

- Hold regular governance meetings
- Recruit new members
- Form subcommittees & workgroups as needed
- Establish a Governance Charter
- Monitor grantees
- Evaluate grantee & CoC performance

- Implement a coordinated entry system
- Coordinate a system of care
- Conduct annual Point-in-Time & Housing Inventory Counts
- Consult with state & local ESG recipients
- Establish programmatic written standards

12 CoCs exist in North Carolina

500 Winston-Salem/Forsyth Co.	506 Wilmington/Brunswick/New Hanover/Pender Co.
501 Asheville/Buncombe Co.	507 Raleigh/Wake Co.
502 Durham City/Durham Co.	509 Gastonia/Cleveland/Gaston/Lincoln Co.
503 NC Balance of State	511 Fayetteville/Cumberland Co.
504 Greensboro/High Point/Guilford Co.	513 Chapel Hill/Orange Co.
505 Charlotte/Mecklenburg	516 Northwest NC

The Steering Committee is the main decision-making body for the CoC.

The Steering Committee:

- Oversees all the work of the CoC
- Approves & updates written standards for programs & systems
- Approves ranked list of CoC Program project applications
- Sets CoC policy & procedures for coordinated entry
- Establishes subcommittees & workgroups
- Sets CoC goals, like ending Veteran homelessness
- Approves the HMIS Lead

5 Standing Subcommittees

Subcommittee	Purpose
Funding & Performance	• Recommends CoC & ESG Program Funding Priorities • Analyzes CoC data including System Performance Measures, progress toward ending homelessness among subpopulations, & resource allocation
Veterans	• Oversees the CoC's plan to end Veteran homelessness
Nominations	• Recommends slate of at-large members annually to Steering Committee for approval
Lived Expertise Advisory	• Formed of people who have experienced homelessness to address its impact & advise on how to improve service delivery across the CoC; • Provides feedback & recommendations to the Steering Committee on CoC policies.
Racial Equity	• Oversees the annual Racial Equity Analysis • Makes data-driven recommendations to the Steering Committee

2025 Steering Committee Meetings

• The Steering Committee typically meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month from 10:30 AM – 12 PM.

- January 7
- February 4
- March 4
- April 1
- May 6
- June 3
- July 8*
- August 5
- September 9*
- October 7
- November 4
- December 2

*Note meetings in July & September occur on the 2nd Tuesday of the month due to holidays.

Regional Committees implement the CoC's strategies locally.

Each Regional Committee:

• Implements local coordinated entry system

• Shares resources, best practices

• Facilitates the unsheltered PIT/HIC

• Builds political will

• Implements local strategies to end homelessness

NC BoS CoC Regional Committee Leadership roles

- **Regional Lead**
- **Regional Lead Alternate**
- **Coordinated Entry Lead**
  - Implements & oversees regional coordinated entry system
- **Webmaster/Secretary**
  - Maintains Regional Committee minutes & provides to staff for posting to the NCCEH website
- **Project Review Committee Representative**
  - Reviews, scores, & ranks CoC & ESG Program project applications; reviews & recommends grant transfer requests
- **Unsheltered Access Coordinator**

NCCEH serves as the NC BoS CoC Collaborative Applicant & HMIS Lead.

The North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness:

- Staffs the CoC
- Facilitates the CoC competition each year, writes the CoC-wide application, & submits to HUD
- Ensures the CoC meets HUD requirements
- Provides training & technical assistance
  - Conducts performance improvement with ESG & CoC Program grantees
  - Teaches best practices
    - Harm Reduction
    - Housing First
    - Low-barrier, Housing-focused shelter
    - Trauma-informed practices
    - Case Management
  - Supports HMIS end users
- Serves as grantee for HMIS & CE projects

An Effective Homeless Response System

System Components

Prevention/Diversion
Street Outreach*
Emergency Shelter*
Transitional Housing*
Rapid Rehousing
Permanent Supportive Housing

*HUD literally homeless

Prevention & Diversion
Prevention & diversion programs consist of financial assistance, case management services, & resources provided to households to keep them in current housing or to move to other permanent housing to prevent an episode of homelessness.

Street Outreach
Engagement of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness who can't or won't access the homeless service system on their own to ensure they are connected to critical services & permanent housing.

Emergency Shelter (ES)
The purpose is to provide safe, temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness while working to find permanent housing.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH)
Programs that quickly place families in permanent housing by locating housing, negotiating with landlords, providing time-limited rental assistance, & providing home-based stabilization services to promote housing retention & link participants with needed services within their community.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
Provides the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness who have disabilities & high barriers with long-term rental subsidies & intensive case management services to get & keep housing.

Funding Application Subcommittees

Subcommittee	Purpose
Scorecard	• Members: (1) representative from each Regional Committee & at-large members equal to or less than the number of regional representatives • Determines criteria & scoring guidelines for new & renewal CoC Program project scorecards
Project Review	• Members: (1) representative from each Regional Committee & at-large members equal to or less than the number of regional representatives (no conflict of interest) • Reviews, scores, & ranks each new & renewed CoC Program project application • Reviews, scores, & recommends ESG Program project applicants for the annual ESG Program competition

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Homeless Assistance Grants

Continuum of Care (CoC) Program	Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program
Nationwide competition	Block grant (State of NC & 7 Entitlements: Raleigh, Wake, Charlotte, Durham, Forsyth, Fayetteville, and Greensboro)
NCCEH runs a competition for CoC Program funds within the NC BoS CoC	NCCEH runs a competition for ESG Program funds within the NC BoS CoC
Eligible Activities: • Permanent Supportive Housing • Rapid Rehousing* • Supportive Services Only (coordinated entry) • Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing • HMIS*	Eligible Activities: • Street Outreach • Emergency Shelter • Rapid Rehousing* • Homelessness Prevention • HMIS*

*funded by both programs

The CoC Program Funding Process

Legend:
CoC Program Application Process   HUD contracts directly with local agency
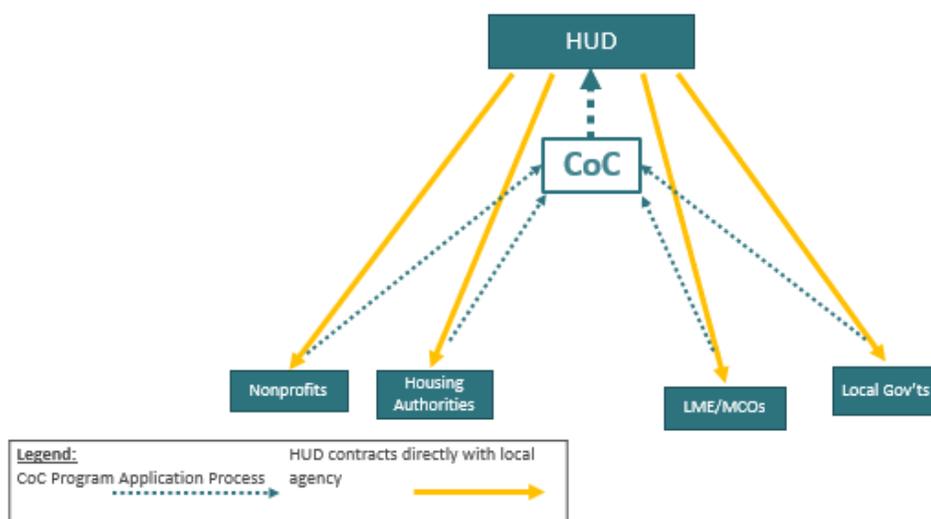
CoC must facilitate a CoC Program competition

- Designate a Collaborative Applicant (NCCEH)
- Set CoC Program Funding Priorities
- Solicit project applications based on the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Review & rank project applications through the Project Review Committee
- The Steering Committee reviews & approves the ranked list of project applications
- Prepare & submit the CoC consolidated application

The ESG Program Funding Process
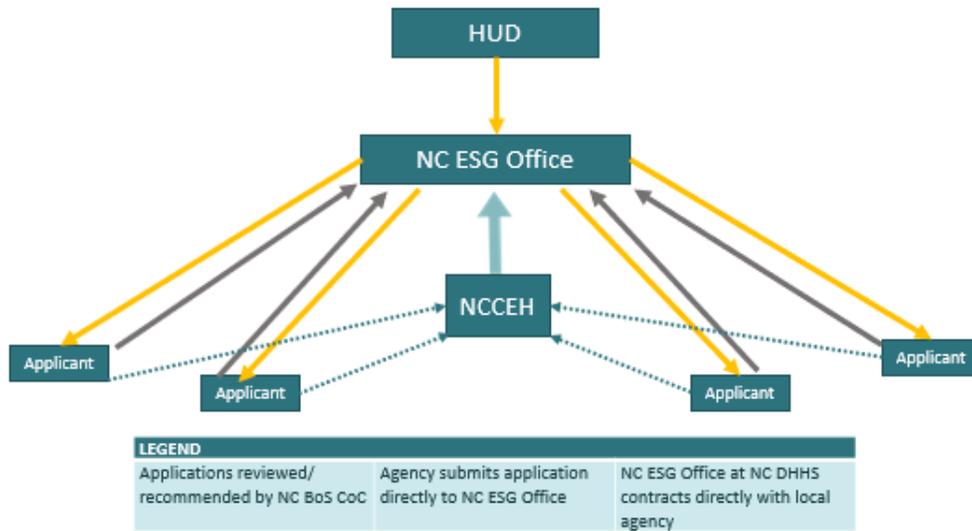
In NC, CoC's must facilitate an ESG Program funding process.

- Set ESG Funding Priorities
- Solicit project applicants based on the Request for Applications (RFA) issued by the NC ESG Office
- Review & score project applications through the Project Review Committee
- Project Review Committee members make a recommended slate of project applications for approval by the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee approves the final slate of ESG Program applicants.
- CoC staff complete & submit the Regional Application.
- Approved applicants submit their project applications directly to the NC ESG Office.

Coordinated Entry (CE)

Coordinated entry shifts the response to homelessness from programs to systems.
- HUD issued a notice in 2015 for the development & implementation of a CE process.
- On January 23, 2017, HUD published a Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a CoC centralized or coordinated assessment system towards the development & implementation of coordinated entry.

- o Established new requirements that CoCs & recipients of CoC & ESG Program grants must meet related to the development & use of a centralized or coordinated assessment system
- o Provided guidance on additional policies that communities should consider incorporating into written policies & procedures to achieve improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. If you would like to learn more about CE policies: https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-Policy-Brief.pdf
- By January 2018, each CoC was expected to establish or update its coordinated entry process in accordance with the CoC Program Interim Rule.

Before Coordinated Entry:
Program-level response to homelessness
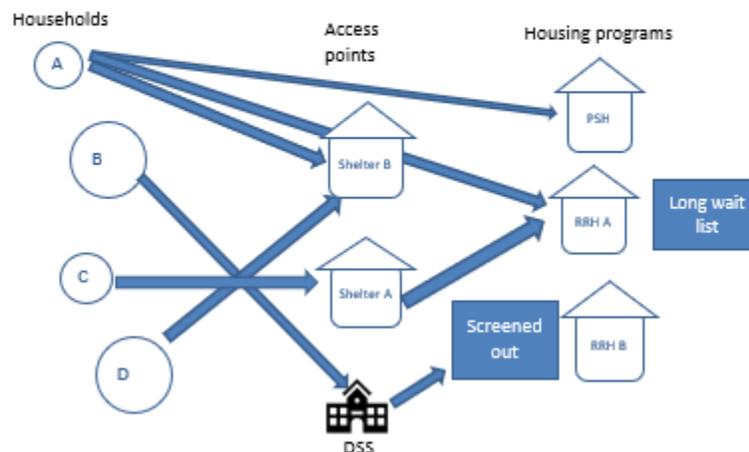
CoCs experienced many problems before coordinated entry.

- People received services on a first-come, first-serve basis, not based on their level of need.
- Accessing services was difficult & time consuming. Clients were expected to navigate a complicated system on their own.
- Resources were not used effectively: low-need households received high-cost resources & vice versa.
- Communities did not understand the real need for homeless services.

CE attempts to solve many of these problems. The coordinated entry system:

- Defines access points into the homeless service system with clear referrals to emergency services
- Assesses all clients in the exact same way for permanent housing

- Takes all referrals for funded permanent housing projects through the CE system based on need (not first-come, first-served)
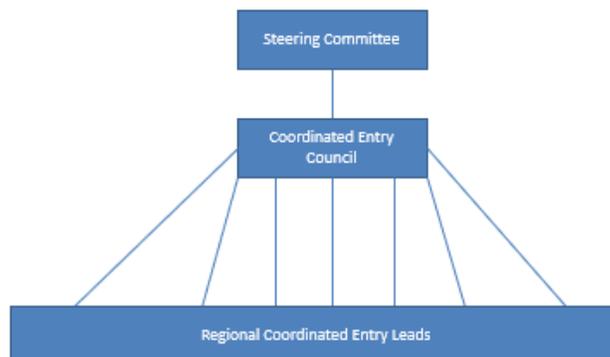- Assists clients in the navigation of services

A Basic Coordinated Entry System:
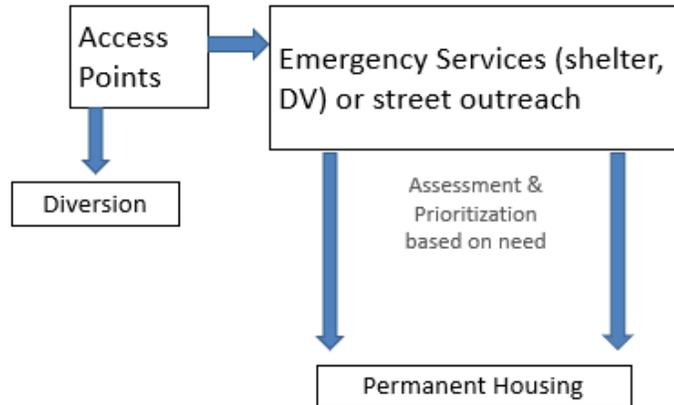
NC BoS CoC Coordinated Entry System
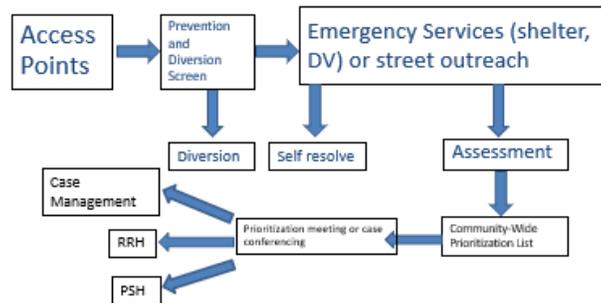

NC BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Governance Structure

If anyone has any questions regarding coordinated entry, feel free to reach out to Ashley at ashley@ncceh.org.

New NCCEH Website Update

Adriana Diaz announced that NCCEH is launching a new and improved website on Friday, February 14! The URL will remain the same: www.ncceh.org. Features include a simplified navigation bar, less pages and lots of cohesive images! Following the announcement, Adriana shared her screen and displayed the key features in real time.
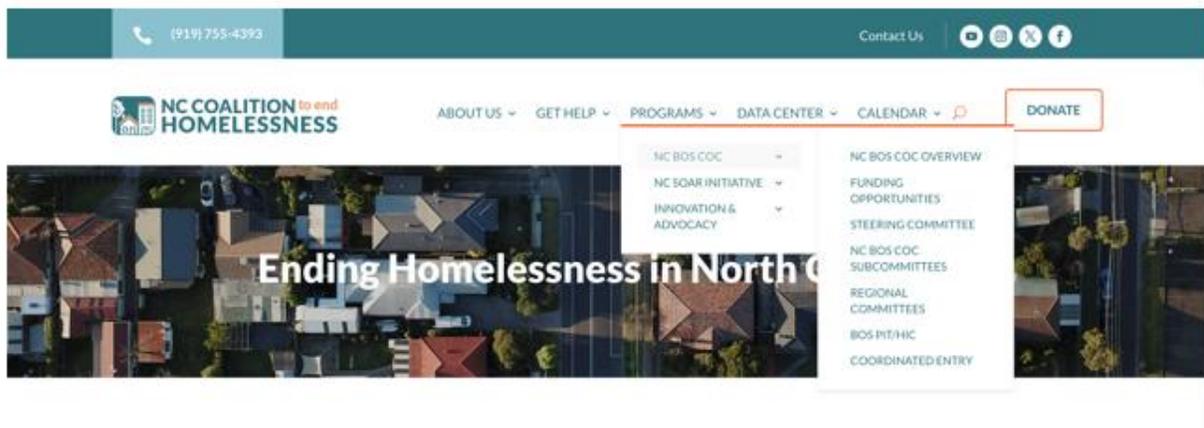
Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Update

Upcoming Meetings and Reminders

- Lived Expertise Advisory Council, *Friday, February 14, 12 P.M. – 1 P.M.*
  Join Zoom Meeting
  Meeting ID: 579 903 9481
  Passcode: qYqVY5

- Coordinated Entry Council, *Monday, February 17, 10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.*
  Join Zoom Meeting
  Meeting ID: 897 8280 4661
  Passcode: 490790

- Racial Equity Subcommittee, *Wednesday, February 19, 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.*
  Join Zoom Meeting
  Meeting ID: 832 6483 8597

- Funding & Performance Subcommittee, *Thursday, February 20, 2 P.M. – 3 P.M.*
  Join Zoom Meeting
  Meeting ID: 824 6553 8716
  Passcode: 427473

- Veterans Subcommittee, *Monday, March 3, 11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.*
  Join Zoom Meeting
  Meeting ID: 816 4243 7801
  Passcode: 756430

Next Steering Committee Meeting:

Tuesday, March 4th at 10:30 A.M.