



Affordable Housing Coalition of Dakota County

BYLAWS

Article 1. NAME

- 1.1** This organization shall be known as the **Affordable Housing Coalition of Dakota County**; hereafter, referred to as the “Coalition” in this document.

Article 2. 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 To achieve its Purpose, the Coalition will:

- Obtain input from consumers of housing services as to their needs,
- Compile data and document unmet housing needs,
- Advocate 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, and
- Promulgate community awareness of affordable housing issues in Dakota County.

Article 3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Principles

Membership in the Coalition is open to all segments of the Dakota County Community; consumers of housing services, private service agencies, business, faith based

organizations, representatives from city, county, state and federal government agencies and any other interested citizen.

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 persons and organizations interested in advancing the purposes 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. Members are required to sign the disclosure statement on an annual basis. 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 a mailing list for meetings and other member activities. A section of the roster will be reserved for the “information only” non-members who wish to receive mailings.

Article 4. MEETINGS

4.1 Frequency

The Coalition regularly meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, and not less than four times each calendar year. Special meetings may be called by a Coalition Officer. All Coalition meetings shall be open to the public.

4.2 Quorum

A quorum of ten members that includes at least one duly elected Coalition Officer must be present to conduct business.

Article 5. 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 for 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 eligible to vote are those who have attended 33% of the Coalition’s meetings during the previous 12 months.

When a vote is taken, a simple majority determines the decision.

In addition to ranking Continuum of Care projects (see 5.3), and at the discretion of the Chair, the caucus system may be used in other circumstances that require a vote.

- 5.3** When the Coalition is seated as the Continuum of Care Committee and is ranking project proposals, the following procedures are used.
- Voting is conducted using a “caucus” system.
 - Members determine which of the following stakeholder descriptions best identifies themselves and caucus accordingly;
 - Consumer of housing services,
 - Private service agency,
 - Business community,
 - Government, and,
 - Faith community
 - One vote per organization
 - Each caucus discusses project proposals and determines a ranking order; 1, 2, 3, etc.
 - Each caucus submits one ranking ballot that is tallied with other caucus ballots to determine the final ranking order.

Article 6. OFFICERS

6.1 Elections and Terms

The Coalition shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair at the first meeting of each calendar year.

6.2 Facilitation of Meetings

The Chair shall facilitate regular Coalition meetings, prepare agendas, and communicate with other organizations and individuals as needed. The Vice-Chair shall facilitate meetings the Chair is unable to attend and shall assume all responsibilities based on absence and/or resignation of the Chair.

Article 7. COMMITTEES & FUNCTIONS

7.1 Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) Advisory Committee

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency awards a state FHPAP grant to Dakota County which operates the Supportive Housing Unit. The Coalition agrees to meet the state’s requirement and serve as the Advisory Committee for the FHPAP grant.

The Supportive Housing Unit regularly reports to the Committee and obtains the Committee’s counsel as special situations arise.

The Committee hosts an annual visit from the state Inter-Agency Task Force that oversees the FHPAP grant.

7.2 Continuum of Care Committee

On July 1, 1997, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners designated the Coalition as the Continuum of Care Committee for Dakota County. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires local jurisdiction to establish such entities in order to receive McKinney Homeless Assistance funding.

When the Coalition is seated and handling Continuum of Care business, the leadership is changed. The Chair and Co-chair will represent public and private sector with staggered two-year terms. The private sector chair is the chair of the Coalition. The public sector chair will be named by the Dakota County Social Services.

The Continuum of Care Committee is charged with:

- Development of a Continuum of Care Plan that includes estimates of homeless people, resources available, unmet needs, service gaps and priorities,
- Annual review of the plan, and
- Annual ranking of the project proposals that seek McKinney funding.

Some state agencies require a Certificate of Consistency that confirms a project is consistent with the Continuum of Care Plan in order to receive funding. This Committee reviews proposals and issues Certificates of Consistency to projects that merit it.

7.3 Other Committees

Other committees may be established to carry out purposes of the Coalition, Continuum of Care Committee or the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Advisory Committee. These committees shall be time-limited, assigned clear tasks, and they shall develop recommendations for approval by the membership, or, assume decision-making as directed.

Article 8. TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

8.1 Dakota County Social Services provides technical and clerical support to the Coalition. These services include; compiling data on homeless individuals, system capacity and unmet needs, drafting and updating the Continuum of Care Plan, preparing Certificate of Consistency statements, maintaining the Coalition roster, mailing meeting notices, as well as providing meeting space.

8.2 Dakota County shall be the fiscal agent, if one is required.

Article 9. ADOPTION & AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

9.1 Revisions and Amendments

Amendments to these by-laws may be approved by the membership at a regular meeting. Amendments must be submitted in writing and the amendment must be sent to the members 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.

Attachment 1



Affordable Housing Coalition of Dakota County

Code of Conduct Policy

Dakota County Affordable Housing Coalition Upholds the following Code of Conduct.

1. The Coalition has adopted Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Statements. Members are asked to sign the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest on an annual basis.
2. The Coalition prohibit the solicitation and acceptance of gifts or gratuities by officers, and members of the coalition for their personal benefit in excess of minimal value;
3. All members of the affordable housing coalition will be given a copy of the organizational By-Laws, which contains these statements and other applicable policies and procedures.
4. If an individual is found in violation of conflict of interest or code of conduct, he/she will not be able to vote until the issue is resolved.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Each Member of the Coalition shall exercise good faith and honesty in all dealings and transactions related to his or her duties within the coalition.

No Member shall use his/her position or knowledge gained from the coalition in such a way as to permit a conflict to arise between the interest of the coalition and his/her own individual interest.

If a matter arises in which a Member has, or might have, a conflict of interest, this situation shall be promptly disclosed.

Any Member having a possible conflict of interest on any matter before the Coalition may not use his or her personal influence with the Coalition or be present during the Coalition's review and vote concerning the matter. These requirements should not be construed as preventing a Member from stating his or her position in the matter, nor from answering pertinent questions from Members.

The minutes of any such meeting will reflect that a disclosure was made and that the conflicted Member abstained from voting.

If an individual is found in violation of conflict of interest or code of conduct, he/she will not be able to vote until the issue is resolved.

In order to establish a procedure to encourage disclosure, all Members will be required to sign the attached disclosure statement at the beginning of each year.

Attachment 2



Affordable Housing Coalition of Dakota County

Disclosure Statement

I have read and am fully familiar with the coalition's Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct Policies. Except for the matters listed below, there is no situation in which I am involved in which my decision on behalf of the Coalition may be influenced by my own personal gain or advantage, financial or otherwise.

Please describe any existing or potential conflict of interest associated with any particular contract or transaction touching upon your role within the coalition. If "none," please indicate in the space below.

I agree to disclose promptly, in accordance with the requirements of the policy, any additional interests which may arise after the filing of this statement.

Date

Signature

Print Name

Agency/Organization