

State of Connecticut Housing and Homelessness Data Strategy Board Governance Charter

Adopted by CT Balance of State CoC _____
Adopted by Opening Doors Fairfield County _____

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Purpose

The name of this newly established board shall be “Housing and Homelessness Data Strategy Board” and shall be shortened to “Data Strategy Board” or “DSB” for communication purposes.

The vision of the DSB is to cultivate a cohesive statewide coalition, uniting funders, service providers, and key partners in a collective mission to enhance and optimize Connecticut's Homelessness Data Infrastructure, including the CTHMIS, for the purpose of data analysis, performance measurement, and system improvement statewide. Recognizing the critical role of data and CT HMIS in addressing homelessness, the DSB will aspire to create a collaborative data environment that facilitates data-informed decision making for the benefit of individuals, youth and families experiencing homelessness and the agencies who serve them.

This governance charter outlines how the Data Strategy Board will be populated and governed, as well as its relationship to and oversight of the state’s homeless management information system (HMIS) implementation, including how the DSB will interact with the designated HMIS Lead, HMIS System Administrator, HMIS software, and any HMIS bodies of leadership defined by the Continuums of Care (CoCs) in operation in the state.

The Connecticut Balance of State Continuum of Care (CT BOS) and the Opening Doors Fairfield County Continuum of Care (ODFC) are the CoCs designating the creation and operation of the DSB. The purpose of the DSB, then, is to provide oversight of a shared statewide data strategy that is carried out

collectively by the designated parties outlined in CT BOS and ODFC CoC governance documentation. Additionally, the DSB has the authority as directed by the CT BOS and ODFC boards to make statewide strategic decisions and recommendations impacting the governance of the CoCs' HMIS operations to assist with achieving that data strategy.

Background

The CT BOS and ODFC CoCs (CT CoCs) employ a shared HMIS to record and store client-level data including the numbers, characteristics, and needs of persons utilizing shelter, homeless outreach, housing assistance and supportive services. Use of the HMIS is mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all communities and organizations receiving Continuum of Care (COC), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP), and/or Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funds; by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for organizations receiving Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and/or Grant Per Diem (GPD) funds; and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) and/or Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) funds. The CoCs have both designated the same HMIS Lead and same HMIS software to comply with HUD, VA, and HHS HMIS use requirements. The CT CoCs have historically delegated much of the HMIS oversight and decision making to the HMIS Steering Committee. With the formation of the DSB, the HMIS Steering Committee will be dissolved with the DSB taking on their responsibilities and additional roles related to broader data strategy for the efforts to end homelessness in Connecticut.

Many of Connecticut's housing and homeless service providers also use the implemented HMIS software as their primary customer relationship management (CRM) tool for housing and homeless adjacent programs that are not required to enter data into the system. This expanded use of the CT HMIS system, for purposes beyond those required by HUD, the VA, and HHS, necessitates further oversight of the system to ensure the additional uses of HMIS (i.e.: CRM) do not interfere with HMIS compliance. One of the many responsibilities of the DSB is to ensure the minimum requirements of HMIS are met and that future customizations and costs of the CRM additions do not impact the baseline functionality and affordability of HMIS.

Relevant Additional Governing Documents

[CT HMIS Policies and Procedures](#)

[HMIS Data Quality Standards](#)

[Housing and Homelessness Data Strategy Board By-Laws \(TBD - but link to HMIS Steering Committee by laws for now\)](#)

[CT BOS Governance Charter](#)

[ODFC Governance Charter](#)

Structure and Selection

Membership Structure

Because of the specialized knowledge required to participate in discussions on the analysis and use of data, membership on the DSB will be limited to those who have experience with analyzing data/research, have roles specific to data around homelessness, and/or are part of organizations funding HMIS.

The DSB will be composed of up to 12 voting members and 2 non-voting members as outlined below.

- Up to four (4) representatives from housing/ homeless providers who are subject matter experts in data analysis, research, and large scale data management
- Up to two (2) representatives from two different CAN backbone agencies
- Up to two (2) individuals designated as representatives from CT BOS and ODFC, respectively.
- Up to one (1) ex-officio Statewide CAN Manager - Data Analysis hired by CT Department of Housing (DOH)
- Up to one (1) expert from a statewide provider coalition focused on ending homelessness appointed by the coalition.
- Up to two (2) representatives of HMIS funders, one (1) appointed by DOH and one (1) appointed by CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)
- Up to one (1) expert representation from the HMIS Lead entity (non-voting)
- Up to one (1) expert representation from the HMIS System Administration entity (non Voting) (if different from the HMIS Lead entity)

All of the above positions may be filled by a person with lived experience with homelessness, mental health, substance use or housing instability, acknowledged or otherwise.

Representation from people with lived experience and expertise of homelessness will be included through positions compensated by planning funding to provide specific and direct input on topics determined by the DSB to require input. The DSB will partner with CLIP (Consumer Leadership Involvement Project) and other CoC representatives in this capacity, as needed.

Entities soliciting applications and making appointments shall also consider a person's knowledge/involvement with the CT HMIS as well as diversity, inclusive of race, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio economic status, preferred language, country of origin, religion, culture, familial status, veteran status, etc., and geographic dispersion of membership.

Upon initial population of the board, the board shall designate one (1) co-chair for a two-year term and one (1) co-chair for a three-year term. Each year thereafter the board will designate one (1) new co-chair so that the co-chairs have two-year, staggered terms.

The co-chairs are responsible for leading the board meetings and working with the DSB staffing to develop meeting agendas and move work forward between meetings as necessary.

Subcommittees

Subcommittees and ad hoc work groups with clear scopes of work may be convened and chaired by active members of the DSB at the DSB's discretion. The work of any such subcommittees shall be in alignment with the Data Strategic Plan to be developed by the DSB. Subcommittees may be made up of current DSB members and other external entities, including persons with lived experience of homelessness.

Membership Selection

Further details about the selection process as well as the process for resignation and termination for each of the designated member categories above is outlined in Appendix A.

Membership Tenure

Upon initial population of the board, six (6) voting members shall be appointed to a two-year term and six (6) voting members to a three-year term. Non-voting members have no term limits. Following the first two years, each year thereafter, half of the Board members' terms will expire. Thus, members will serve staggered, two-year terms. Terms will run concurrent with the state fiscal year, July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Incumbent members must reapply at the end of their term to serve another term. There is no limit on the total consecutive number of terms a Board member can serve, though members are encouraged to vacate their spot if there are other interested parties.

Interested parties not currently on the board should send a note of interest, availability, and qualifications for consideration for membership through the correct selection process outlined in Appendix A.

Board Staffing

The HMIS Lead entity will be responsible for providing staffing support to the DSB along with the co-chairs of the Board. This includes setting meeting agendas, distributing meeting information and reminders, taking and distributing notes, maintaining Committee membership lists, and coordinating the solicitation of new members. Where there is a conflict of interest, the HMIS Lead staff will not provide any type of administrative support for those meetings.

Roles, Responsibilities and Performance

CT CoCs (CT BOS & ODFC)

The CoC Program interim rule gives CoCs authority over and responsibility for HMIS. These responsibilities include:

- Designating a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the geographic area;
- Designating an eligible applicant to manage the Continuum's HMIS, which will be known as the HMIS Lead;
- Reviewing, revising, and approving a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS

- Ensuring consistent participation of recipients and subrecipients in the HMIS; and
- Ensuring the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.

The CT BOS and ODFC CoCs authorize the following entities to carry out the defined responsibilities on their behalf, as it relates to the operation and oversight of HMIS. The CoCs will review performance indicators as follows to ensure operations and oversight are achieving the intended goals.

Data Strategy Board

- Developing an RFP for an HMIS Lead, HMIS Software, and HMIS Administrator as needed at the direction of the CoCs
- Convening ad hoc committees to evaluate and select, for recommendation to the CoCs, an HMIS Lead and/or HMIS Administrator and/or HMIS Software as requested by the CoCs, solicited through the State of Connecticut Procurement process.
- Ensuring the HMIS scope of work embedded in contractual obligations for the HMIS Lead and HMIS Software and HMIS System Administrator aligns with the requirements of HUD, participating organizations and other stakeholder groups;
- Providing oversight to ensure any issues that have major implications for the HMIS, such as HUD HMIS Data Standards revisions or HMIS Vendor performance problems;
- Ensuring consistent participation in HMIS by grantees and subgrantees;
- Reviewing, revising and approving HMIS governing and management documents developed by the HMIS Lead, HMIS Software and HMIS Administrator, such as the Policies and Procedures and Data Quality Standards;
- Determining HMIS reporting needs, approaches, and methods for sharing reporting, and other reporting needs as defined by the DSB;
- Serving in an advisory capacity to the HMIS Lead and System Administrators in the following:
 - Process of the annual evaluation and monitoring of the HMIS implementation;
 - Identifying and managing the HMIS financial needs;
 - Strategic planning related to the HMIS implementation;
- Managing the designated HMIS Lead, HMIS Software, and HMIS Administrator in the monitoring processes on behalf of CT BOS and ODFC CoCs and in compliance with all governance documentation;
- Serving as the final authority for all decisions related to the statewide governance of the CT HMIS implementation including the review of all requests for changes or access to the HMIS Implementation that may be outside of the HMIS scope identified by federal entities;
 - DSB evaluates non HUD-required customization requests in the quarterly meetings and makes determinations about building requested functionality on a case-by-case basis considering the following:
 - Applicability and relevance of the custom reporting request to other projects and HMIS End Users
 - Staff capacity to build requested report
 - Time estimated to build the requested report
 - Relevance of request to other work of the HMIS and CoC
 - Extent to which the requested report meets a grant reporting needed.
 - Alignment with the Data Strategic Plan
 - Resources necessary to implement the changes

- Measuring statewide performance against key indicators and reporting to the CoCs the performance of the entities the DSB provides oversight and monitoring for, including the DSB, DSB Subcommittees, HMIS Lead, HMIS Software, HMIS Administrator, and any other related entity in the DSB oversight structure.
- Developing and monitoring a strategic plan around data needs, collection, use and analysis of data related to ending homelessness in Connecticut
- Improving the user experience within these data collection sources, including CT HMIS
- Ensuring providers have access to data needed to improve programming and to meet funder requirements

Performance Indicators for DSB:

- No less than quarterly meetings each fiscal year
- Minutes and agendas regularly posted publicly
- Annual HMIS expenditure amount (for HMIS Lead, HMIS Software, and HMIS Administrator, separated)
- Data Quality Indicators from System Performance Measures (SPM) reporting posted after annual SPM submission period
- Utilization of publicly available data visualizations using HMIS and other datasets on June 30 of every fiscal year
- Other indicators as directed by CT BOS and OFDC

HMIS Lead(s) and/or HMIS System Administrator(s) and/or HMIS Software Provider(s)

- Providing staffing support for the DSB including facilitating communication between members, assisting with meeting agenda creation and distribution, creation, storage and distribution of meeting minutes.
- Maintaining and sharing expertise around HMIS with the DSB including
 - understanding of the HMIS System Administration services requirements
 - knowledge of HMIS data and technical requirements
 - national best and innovative practices for HMIS system
- Ensuring documentation of expenditures on only eligible activities and providing updates on needed and expended resources to the DSB
- Providing project management for the implementation of all system upgrades as instructed by the DSB including system changes/ enhancements that are outside the federal requirements for HMIS. The HMIS Lead and/or System Administrator are prohibited from making non-HUD required changes to the HMIS implementation without express permission from the DSB.
- Supporting the HMIS Lead and CoC leadership’s outreach to project and community leadership to cultivate and maintain support and understanding of HMIS.

Voting and Decision Making

Quorum

A number equal to a majority of those serving on the DSB shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of conducting business at any meeting; however, the DSB primarily seeks to make decisions by consensus.

When the DSB cannot make a decision by consensus, decisions will be made by a simple majority vote of the members present, as long as there is a quorum.

Action without a Meeting

Any action that may be taken at a meeting may also be taken without a meeting, such as via email. Preferably, any action to be taken outside of a meeting will have been discussed at a DSB meeting and deferral of action approved by DSB members. Board members may take votes by email, provided that at least 48 hours, over the course of two business days, are given for members to cast their votes.

Where action is taken without a meeting, any vote counts and the results of the action shall be kept on file and be reflected in the written minutes of the next regular meeting.

Conflicts of Interest

Upon appointment to the DSB, members will be asked to disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest related to the DSB's business. Should a conflict of interest arise after the appointment, members will disclose the conflict to the DSB chairs immediately. These members will refrain from voting on items where a real or perceived conflict of interest exists.

Any DSB member who is determined to have engaged in behavior in a DSB meeting that would be considered a real or perceived conflict of interest, without having disclosed the conflict of interest, may be asked to resign their seat on the DSB.

Charter Revisions and Adoptions

- 1) Original Charter Rev. September 5, 2024
Approved by CT BOS on:
Approved by ODFC on:

Appendix A

	Provider, Community & CAN Representatives	CoC Representatives	Appointed Members
Selection Process	The CoCs will each solicit applications each year from their membership for representatives to fill these member roles. Current DSB members will vote to approve board members from the list of applicants each year at the first meeting of the calendar year.	In alternating years, each CoC undergoes their own selection process to choose a representative for a two-year term prior to the Board’s first meeting following July 1 of each year.	Agencies designated below will appoint the members indicated using their own selection instructions.
Count of members selected through the selection process outlined above	<p>Up to four (4) representatives from housing/ homeless providers who are subject matter experts in data analysis, research, large scale data management</p> <p>Up to two (2) representatives from two different CAN backbone agencies</p> <p>Total: Up to six (6) voting members</p>	<p>Up to two (2) individuals designated as representatives from CT BOS and ODFC, respectively.</p> <p>Total: Two (2) voting members</p>	<p>Up to one (1) Ex-officio Statewide CAN Manager - Data Analysis hired by CT Department of Housing (DOH)</p> <p>Up to one (1) expert from a statewide provider coalition focused on ending homelessness appointed by the coalition.</p> <p>Up to two (2) representatives of HMIS funders, one (1) appointed by DOH and one (1) appointed by CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)</p> <p>Up to one (1) expert representation from the HMIS Lead entity (non-voting)</p> <p>Up to one (1) expert representation from the HMIS System Administration entity (non Voting) (if different from the HMIS Lead entity)</p>

			Total: Up to four (4) voting members and two (2) non-voting members
Additional Criteria for every selection process	<p>When soliciting and voting on applicants/representatives and/or appointees the Board, the CoCs and designated entities shall encourage and consider the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge/ involvement with the CT HMIS in operation ● Diversity, inclusive of race, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio economic status, preferred language, country of origin, religion, culture, familial status, veteran status, etc. ● Lived experience with: homelessness, mental health, substance use, housing instability 		
Resignation and termination process	<p>The DSB member can resign at any time by bringing a motion to the CoC executive leadership committee that nominated them. CoC leadership can appoint an interim representative to fulfill the term until the term expires, then must follow the standard selection process for the board position vacated.</p> <p>After a full vote of the board, the DSB can request termination of a member's tenure at any time by bringing a motion to the CoC executive leadership committee. CoC leadership can appoint an interim representative to fulfill the term until the term expires, then must follow the standard selection process for the board position terminated.</p>	<p>The DSB member can resign at any time by working with the appointing CoC to select a replacement for their position.</p> <p>After a full vote of the board, the DSB may request a new appointee at the end of an appointee's term by special request of the CoC making the appointment. A replacement representative will be selected following the standard selection process.</p>	<p>Appointing agencies are solely responsible for the oversight of their appointed members, and may request performance indicators or member reviews at any time through DSB staffing. Every accommodation will be made to ensure appointed members are operating in the interest of the appointing agency.</p>