

# **IOWA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS**

## **Bylaws**

*As Amended by the Iowa Council on Homelessness, May 18th, 2007*

### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Iowa Council on Homelessness (“Council”).

### **ARTICLE II – MISSION**

The Iowa Council on Homelessness shall work to identify causes and effects of homelessness in Iowa, develop recommendations to address homelessness, foster greater awareness among policy makers and the general public, and is committed to ensure all Iowans have access to safe, decent and affordable housing, health care and education.

### **ARTICLE III – RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Section 1 General**

The responsibilities of the Council are set forth in Executive Order 33, signed on November 17, 2003 by Governor Thomas Vilsack.

#### **Section 2 Duties of the Council**

The duties of Council include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1 Development and implementation of a ten year plan to address homelessness in Iowa coordinated with the efforts of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- 2 Fund, monitor, and oversee the completion of a report on homelessness in Iowa every two calendar years, facilitate the collection of demographic data on homeless Iowans, and collect anecdotal information regarding the of causes of homelessness in Iowa.
- 3 Increase public awareness and education about homelessness.
- 4 On an annual basis, provide significant input, monitor and oversee the completion of the state’s Continuum of Care application to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development under the McKinney Act.
- 5 Recognize the need for, develop, and support Local Homeless Coordinating Boards (LHCB) in communities throughout the state.
- 6 Make annual recommendations to the Governor regarding federal and state legislation on matters which impacts homelessness no later than September of each year. On an ongoing basis, advise the Governor’s Office, the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA), other executive branch agencies and other mission partners on workable strategies to eliminate homelessness in Iowa.

7 The Council shall develop a process for the evaluation of policies, programs, statutes within agencies and regulations of their respective agencies and divisions to determine whether any should be revised or modified or resources better coordinated with other agencies, toward a goal of developing a well-coordinated and seamless delivery system to prevent and alleviate homelessness.

### **Section 3 State Administering Agency**

1 The Iowa Finance Authority is designated as the State's administering agency and in cooperation with other state agencies, will provide staff support, primarily through the Homeless Programs Coordinator staff position, to carry out the mission and purpose of the Council.

## **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1 General**

To the extent feasible, the membership of the Council shall represent the diverse population residing in the State of Iowa. The Council shall seek membership and varying levels of participation from consumers, advocacy organizations, providers, and relevant federal and local agency representatives and others to facilitate collaboration across Iowa to address the needs of the homeless, alleviate and prevent homelessness.

### **Section 2 Non-Discrimination**

The Iowa Council on Homelessness does not discriminate in any of its programs and activities pursuant to Executive Order 18.

### **Section 3 Membership**

1. The Iowa Council on Homelessness shall consist of thirty-six voting members. Twelve voting members shall be representatives of each of the following state agencies named in the executive order. Twenty-four (24) voting members shall be from the general public.
2. The twelve state agencies are the Iowa Department of Economic Development, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Justice, Iowa Department of Human Rights- Division of Community Action Agencies, Iowa Department of Elder Affairs, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Corrections, Iowa Workforce Development Administration, Iowa Department of Public Safety, Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs and the Iowa Finance Authority.
3. Each state agency director shall designate one or more representatives with and interest in serving on the Council and whose position within the agency is relevant to the mission of the Council. While each state agency may have more than one member on the Council, state agencies shall have only one voting member. Each state agency director may appoint an alternate, who may vote on Council matters, in the absence of the regularly appointed representative. It is highly recommended the alternate will attend all meetings with the designated representative. In the event of a schedule conflict that would prevent the designated representative from attending, the alternate shall attend.
4. In addition to the state agency representatives, the Council shall consist of twenty-four (24) voting members from the general public.

5. Voting members from the general public may include, but are not limited to the following types of individuals and programs: homeless or formerly homeless persons and family members, youth shelters, faith based organizations, local homeless service providers, emergency shelters, transitional housing providers, family and domestic violence shelters, private business, local government and community based organizations.
6. Five (5) of the twenty-four voting members selected from the general public shall be reserved for individuals who are homeless, formerly homeless, or family members.
7. Representatives from the Governor's office, Legislative branch and from the Federal government shall be encouraged to participate as non-voting members.
8. The voting members of the Council shall have responsibility, in coordination with the Nominating Committee, for annually electing members of the general public to the Council and filling vacancies as they may arise.
9. All voting members of the Council will serve on at least one of the standing committees.

#### **Section 4 Terms of Service**

1. Each state agency representative shall serve for terms of two years each and may be reappointed for subsequent terms if the agency director nominates them for subsequent terms. Agency directors shall have the responsibility to inform the Council of any changes in designee between terms of office, due to staff changes or other reasons.
2. The twenty-four (24) voting members selected from the general public shall each serve a two year term. Terms shall be staggered so that twelve (12) are elected in one year and twelve (12) in the year thereafter.
3. The Council shall approve the State designees and elect general public members annually in March of each year and terms shall start in April.

### **ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

#### **Section 1 Officers**

The officers of the Council shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.

#### **Section 2 Nomination and Election**

The Council shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Nominating committee shall recommend to the full Council a slate of candidates to be voted on every two (2) years at the May meeting.

#### **Section 3 Terms of Office**

Officers shall be elected for a two- year term. At all times the Chair and Vice-Chair positions shall include a state agency and general public representative. The Chair and Vice-Chair positions shall rotate between the state agency and general public representatives.

## **Section 4 Duties**

Duties of the officers are as follows:

1. The Chair shall:
  - a. Coordinate activities of the Council, and work closely with appropriate IFA staff (Homeless Programs Coordinator).
  - b. Preside at Council meetings
  - c. Serve as a liaison between the Council and other groups and organizations,
  - d. Communicate with and regularly report to the Council,
  - e. Perform other miscellaneous functions, as developed or designated by the Council.
2. The Vice-Chairperson shall:
  - a. assume the Chairperson's duties if the Chairperson is unable to do so;
  - b. in the case of permanent inability of the Chairperson, act temporarily as Chairperson until the Council selects and elects a new Chairperson; and
  - c. in the absence of the secretary in the meeting, serve as secretary.
3. The Secretary shall:
  - a. perform other duties, as designated by the Council; and
  - b. ensure that all minutes of meetings and records of the Council's business shall be compiled and preserved. All minutes and records of the Council shall be maintained by the Iowa Finance Authority.

## **ARTICLE VI – STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1 Committee Membership**

1. In addition to members of the Council, persons not members of the Council may be appointed to serve on standing or ad hoc committees of the Council.
2. Election or confirmation of an individual member to a committee will normally take place at the annual meeting, but may be called at another date at the discretion of the chair.
3. Efforts shall be made to balance all committees with members from the diverse groups represented by the Council, including state and private organizations, consumers and family members, if appropriate.

### **Section 2 Reports**

Except as otherwise provided by the Council, all committees shall maintain written agendas and/or minutes which shall be provided to staff and made available to the Council. Each committee chair shall report its activities to the Council as necessary.

### **Section 3 Meetings.**

1. All committees shall meet at such time and place as designated by the Chair of the committee and as often as necessary to accomplish their duties.
2. All committees, with the exception of the Nominating Committee shall meet a minimum of three (3) times per calendar year.
3. The Executive Committee shall meet between the regularly scheduled Council meetings

4. Participation by members of committees may be via telephone conference calls or electronic communication.

#### **Section 4 Standing Committees**

1. The standing committees of the Council are the following: Executive Committee, Nominating Committee, Research and Analysis Committee, Policy and Planning Committee, Public Awareness Committee, Continuum of Care (COC) Committee.
2. Each Standing Committee shall consist of at least five voting members of the Council, elected or appointed by the Council. The chair of each Standing Committee must be a voting member of the Council. Each Standing Committee, except the Executive and Nominating Committees, shall have responsibility for appointing additional committee members who are not voting members of the Council. Each Standing Committee, except the Executive Committee shall elect their own chair.
3. Executive Committee
  - a. The executive committee shall consist of a chair, vice chair and secretary of the Council and the chair of each of the standing committees.
  - b. The chair of the Council shall serve as the chair of the Executive Committee.
  - c. The executive committee shall be responsible for reviewing and making recommendations for amendments or changes to the bylaws.
  - d. The Executive Committee shall carry out the business of the Council between regularly scheduled Council meetings.
4. Nominating Committee
  - a. The nominating committee shall nominate persons for chair, vice-chair, and secretary for consideration by the entire Council.
  - b. The nominating committee shall be responsible for receiving, soliciting, and reviewing applications for Council membership, including from sponsoring organizations when appropriate, and making recommendations for membership on the Council.
  - c. Election or confirmation of an individual member or of a slate nominated by the committee will normally take place at the regular meetings, but may be called at another date at the discretion of the chair, if the regular meeting date is unduly distant.
5. Research and Analysis Committee
  - a. The Research and Analysis Committee shall be responsible for facilitating the collection of demographic data on homelessness in Iowa and anecdotal information on causes of homelessness in Iowa.
  - b. The committee shall oversee the completion of a report on homelessness in Iowa every two calendar years.
  - c. The Committee shall present the report to the Council for approval and shall coordinate transmittal of the approved report to the Governor's Office.
6. Policy and Planning Committee
  - a. Shall be responsible for development of the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy and Annual Action Plan for Iowa.
  - b. The Committee shall report at each Council meeting on the progress of the Annual Action Plan.

- c. Each September, the committee shall propose to the Council a slate of legislative and administrative recommendations which may impact homelessness.
- d. After Council approval, the committee shall coordinate the transmittal of the approved legislative agenda to the Governor's office to support policy development on homeless issues.

7. Continuum of Care Committee

- a. Shall assist in the development and maintenance of a statewide continuum of care to end homelessness.
- b. Shall on an annual basis, participate in the development of the state's Continuum of Care application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding under the McKinney Act.
- c. Shall also work to support the development of local homeless coordinating boards in communities throughout the state.

8. Public Awareness Committee

- a. The public awareness committee shall be responsible for increasing the public's awareness about homelessness in Iowa
- b. The Committee will coordinate with state and local organizations to promote homeless awareness events and campaigns.
- c. The Committee will promote and encourage the use of the State Plan and the most recent data to develop press releases, web based information, printed materials and presentations.

**Section 5 Ad Hoc Committees**

The Council chair may create Ad-Hoc committees as necessary to fulfill the work of the Council. The Council chair shall appoint at least three voting members of the council to serve on each Ad-Hoc Committee, with additional members appointed by the Committee chair as necessary. Ad-Hoc committees shall select their own chair.

**ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS**

**Section 1 Meetings**

1. Regular meetings of the Iowa Council on Homelessness will convene on the third Friday of every alternate month beginning at 10 a.m. on the following schedule, whenever practical: January, March, May, July, September, and November.
2. The Executive Committee may call one or more additional Council meetings with appropriate notice to all members throughout the year, as the need may arise.
3. The Council shall comply and conform to the Iowa Open Meetings Law and the Public Records Law. The Iowa Finance Authority shall be the official repository of Council records.

**Section 2 Voting Rights**

1. Thirty-six Council members shall be designated as voting members and each shall hold one vote.
2. The Council may appoint additional non-voting members as desired.

3. Members may attend via the ICN network and via telephone, if technically possible at the meeting location and prearranged with Iowa Finance Authority staff.
4. Under general ethical principals regarding conflict of interest in Iowa Code Chapter 68B (Conflicts of Interest), members of the Council shall recuse themselves when they have or anticipate having a direct financial stake in the outcome of a Council decision, independent of their status as providers of services to the homeless.

**Section 3 Quorum**

No less than two-thirds of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum. If during the meeting the number of members present is reduced below a quorum, the meeting may continue but no vote may be taken. A majority of the quorum is needed to accept any matter put to a vote.

**Section 4 Vacancies**

1. Individual Council membership ends when:
  - a. a member resigns or dies; or
  - b. a member is deemed inactive by the Council upon the relevant facts having been presented; or
  - c. a member’s term ends, and the member is replaced by the sponsoring agency or organization and confirmed by the Council; or
  - d. A majority of the Council terminates the member for just cause, as defined by the majority.
2. After two absences of any regularly scheduled full council meeting, separated by less than one year between each occurrence, the member may be notified that his/her position will be declared vacant. In the case of representatives from the designated state agencies, the head of the agency will be notified and requested to name a replacement representative from that agency. The failure to notify shall not constitute a waiver of the attendance requirements. The Council shall determine final action on the status of membership for individual members.
3. Attending by telephone or via the ICN network fulfills the attendance requirements of these bylaws.
4. An individual’s termination of membership does not terminate the state agency’s representation on the Council as provided for in Article III, Section 2.

**ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS TO BY LAWS**

1. The bylaws of the Iowa Council on Homelessness may be revised, amended, repealed by a majority vote of the Council, with notice of the proposed changes provided at one Council meeting and voted on at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Notice of proposed changes to the by-laws must be submitted to membership in writing (which shall include electronic communication) at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting where the vote will take place.

Bylaws accepted by vote on May 18, 2007.

Chairperson signature and date \_\_\_\_\_