

# Governance Charter of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH)

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## **1. Organization:**

- A. The name of the committee is the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (hereinafter referred to as the “BRICH”)

## **2. Purpose:**

- A. The BRICH serves as the HUD-designated primary decision making group and oversight board of the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care (hereinafter referred to as the “CoC”). As the oversight board of the CoC, the BRICH and its members:
  - a) Ensure that the CoC is meeting all of the responsibilities assigned to it by Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations (see below);
  - b) Represent the relevant organizations and projects serving homeless subpopulations;
  - c) Support homeless persons in their movement from homelessness to economic stability and affordable permanent housing within a supportive community;
  - d) Ensure that the CoC is inclusive of all needs of the homeless population in the Blue Ridge CoC, including the special service and housing needs of sub-populations;
  - e) Assist in the development of the annual HUD CoC application; and,
  - f) Facilitate responses to issues and concerns that affect the agencies funded by the CoC that are beyond those addressed in the annual CoC application process.

## **3. Responsibilities:**

As the designated board for the CoC for the geographic area, the BRICH works with the CoC Collaborative Applicant (City of Roanoke) to fulfill three major duties:

- A. Operate the CoC, which must:
  - a) Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least monthly;
  - b) Make an invitation for new members to join public available within the geographic area at least annually;
  - c) Adopt and follow a written process to select BRICH members. The process must be reviewed, updated, and approved by the larger CoC membership at least once every two years;
  - d) Appoint committees, subcommittees, or workgroups;
  - e) Review and/or make recommendations for the Annual Homeless Service Providers Award.
  - f) In consultation with the CoC Collaborative Applicant and the HMIS Lead, develop, follow and update annually a governance charter, which will include all procedures

# Governance Charter of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH)

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and policies needed to comply with CoC requirements as prescribed by HUD; and a conflict of interest process for the BRICH, its chair(s), and any person acting on behalf of the board;

- g) Consult with recipients and sub-recipients of CoC state and federal funding to establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type, monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and take action against poor performers;
- h) In consultation with recipients of CoC State and Federal funds, establish and operate a centralized and coordinated assessment system that provides an initial, comprehensive assessment of the needs of individuals and families for housing and services.
- i) In consultation with recipients of State and Federal funds within the geographic area, establish and consistently follow written standards for providing CoC assistance. At a minimum, these written standards must include:
  - 1) Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance;
  - 2) Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive housing assistance;
  - 3) Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid re-housing assistance; and,
  - 4) When the CoC is designated a high-performing community, policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive Homeless Prevention Assistance.

## B. Designating and operating a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):

- a) Designate a single HMIS for the geographic area;
- b) Designate an eligible applicant to manage the CoC's HMIS, which will be known as the HMIS Lead;
- c) Review, revise, and approve a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the HMIS;
- d) Ensure consistent participation of recipients and sub-recipients of CoC State and Federal funding in the HMIS;
- e) Ensure the HMIS is administered in compliance with requirements prescribed by HUD.

## C. Continuum of Care planning – the CoC must develop a plan that includes Coordinating the implementation of a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of the homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following:

# Governance Charter of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH)

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- 1) Prevention strategies
  - 2) Outreach, engagement and assessment
  - 3) Shelter, housing and supportive services
- D. Planning for and conducting, at least annually, a point-in-time count of homeless persons within the geographic area that meets the following requirements:
- a) Homeless persons who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans must be counted as unsheltered homeless persons;
  - b) Persons living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects must be counted as sheltered homeless persons;
  - c) Other requirements established by HUD.
  - d) Conducting an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within the geographic area.

#### **4. BRICH Membership:**

- A. Each year, at the annual strategic business plan session, the structure of the CoC, working groups and BRICH is outlined; the nomination process for the BRICH/CoC is also explained. A slate of potential members (developed as described in the Nomination and Terms section below) are presented to and voted on by the BRICH membership at the September meeting.
- B. In addition to Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission staff position, the BRICH membership consists of a representative from the following:
  - a. Chair
  - b. CoC Lead
  - c. HMIS Lead
  - d. Planning bodies
  - e. Homeless/Formerly Homeless Person
  - f. Behavioral health care providers
  - g. Health Care providers
  - h. Veteran Services
  - i. Education
  - j. Business (2)
  - k. Faith Based Entity
  - l. Units of local government represented in the CoC's geographic region

# Governance Charter of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH)

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- m. Public housing authorities
- n. Law enforcement (2)
- o. Funders
- p. Nonprofit Organization (non-voting seat that rotates annually)

Advisory seats: In addition to the above roles, BRICH members may designate non-voting representatives to attend and participate in meetings to provide advice and expertise on particular issues. Membership shall not exceed 30 members.

## **5. Nomination and Terms:**

All seats are permanent as identified in 5.b above. All seats are subject to staffing changes at represented agencies.

- A. Vacancies: In the case of a vacant permanent seat, said agency will be responsible for designating another staff person to fill the vacant seat.
- B. Quorum: In order for the BRICH to take official action, a quorum of members must be present. A majority of members, 50% +1, shall constitute a quorum. The act of the majority of the members present shall be the act of the full membership.
- C. Voting: At all meetings, business items may be decided by arriving at a consensus. If a vote is necessary, all votes shall be by voice at the will of the majority of the members serving on the BRICH. Each representative seat shall have one vote. No member may vote on any item which presents a real or perceived conflict-of-interest. Members or their designee must have attended at least 50% of annual meetings prior to casting vote.
- D. Removal: The seat of any representative who is absent without prior notification for three (3) consecutive meetings of the BRICH may be declared vacant by the remaining members of the BRICH. Such seats will then be filled through the processes described above under vacancies.
- E. Work Groups and Committees: The BRICH may establish committees as it deems necessary. However, only the full BRICH membership, as required to assemble at least monthly, can designate a work group.
- F. Conflicts of Interest: A representative having a conflict of interest or a conflict of responsibility on any matter shall refrain from voting on such matter. Members of the BRICH will sign a Conflict of Interest policy annually.
- G. Resignation: Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, any representative may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chairperson. Any such resignations shall take effect at the time specified within the written notice or if the time be not specified therein upon its acceptance by the BRICH.
- H. Charter Structure: Staffed positions of the BRICH include: BRICH chair, CoC Chair and lead entity staff representative (recorder).

# Governance Charter of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH)

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- I. Election and Term: The BRICH Chair shall be appointed by the BRICH representatives for a term of three (3) years and may serve up to 2 consecutive terms.
- J. CoC-Chair: Responsible for scheduling meetings of the BRICH, ensuring that the BRICH meets regularly or as needed, and for setting the agenda for meetings.
- K. Recorder: The Recorder or their designee shall keep accurate records of the acts and proceedings of all meetings of the BRICH, or designate another person to do so at each meeting, including documenting all actions taken without a meeting, as described above. Such records will include the names of those in attendance.
- L. Resignation: Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, the BRICH chair may resign at any time by giving written notice to the CoC Chair.

## 6. **BRICH Grievance Policy:**

Our goal is to provide the community with the friendly, flexible and expedient service with empathy and understanding. In some instances, we may fall short of our goal.

- A. The Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH) holds the final authority for all decisions related to funding and governance of the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care (CoC). Decisions made or actions authorized by CoC which do not satisfy an interested party may be brought before the BRICH for a decision in accordance with established procedures.
- B. The BRICH shall not have a conflict of interest for the grievance they are to adjudicate. Membership will consist of the Chair of the BRICH, and three committee members. If conflict with committee member exists, one BRICH representative will be appointed by the Committee Chair.
- C. Client Grievance - clients of participating agencies shall follow established agency procedures regarding unsatisfactory service.

## 7. **Required Documentation to CoC Lead**

- A. All HUD CoC applicants are required to submit to the CoC lead a draft copy of their HUD Annual Progress Report 30 days prior to the due date to HUD ESNAPS system. Upon review by the CoC Lead, the agency must submit their APR to ESNAPS within 15 days prior to HUD due date.
- B. All HUD CoC applicants are required to submit to the CoC lead any monitoring reports and findings as identified by the local planning agency and HUD regional office within 10 working days of notification.
- C. The HUD regional office has authorization to provide the VA-502 CoC lead with copies of any grantee documentation that will assist the CoC lead in providing grant oversight.

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The Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness met on Friday, November 13, 2015. As part of its regular agenda, the preceding document was reviewed and formally adopted as the guidelines for providing oversight to the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care.

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Paula L. Prince, PhD  
Chair, Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness

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Date

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Carol W. Tuning, BSW/MALS  
Chair, Blue Ridge Continuum of Care

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Date