



North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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www.ncceh.org/BoS

NC Balance of State CoC Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2024

Regional Leads Present: Derek Lancour, Emily Lowery, Amber Brafford, Pamela Hinton, Erin Gaskin, Natasha Elliott, Kerry Bashaw, Emily Locklear, Crystal Gwendo, Kisha Darden, Catonnia Pitt, Robert Hudson

At-Large Members Present: Melissa Hewitt, Angela Harper King, Kea Alexander, Danny Jordan, Erin Joy Crossfield, Brooks Ann McKinney, Cassandra Rowe, Joseph Chilton

SC Members Absent: Lisa Phillips, Shawanda Barnes

Interested Parties Present: Wanda Schwerer, Dr. Dia Thomas, Amy Modlin, Bonnie Harper, Melissa McKeown, Chris Parker, Cory Bragg, Tonya Gray, Melissa Hewitt, Lakitra Claude, Savannah Campbell, Kecia Robinson, Lori Watts, Sade Craine, Kristine Wiles, Bre Griffin, Kennedy Lane, Kim Crawford, Catherine Kastleman, Peggy Hendrix, Tara Peele, Mary Erwin, Kim Hemphill, Lola Rolley, Teena Willis, Alyce Knaflich, Brenda Marie Forbes, Sarah Lancaster

NCCEH Staff Present: Brian Alexander, Laurel Benfield, Allie Card, Adriana Diaz, Jenny Simmons, Dashia Shanks, Debra Susie, Ashley VonHatten

Approval of Consent Agenda

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

FY2024 CoC Program Competition

New Project Application Information:

- New Project Webinar recording and slides posted at: <https://www.ncceh.org/bos/currentcocapplication/>
- New Project Intent to Apply Form: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/dd>
 - Mandatory for new projects
 - Accepted on a rolling basis, non-binding
 - Deadline is 2 weeks after the release of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Renewal Project Application Information:

- Renewal Project Webinar recording and slides posted at:
<https://www.ncceh.org/bos/currentcocapplication/>
- Pre-Competition Scoring and Standards Review is underway.
 - Projects met all key programmatic design standards during last year's review and have been certified through either the FY2026 or FY2027 CoC Program competition.
 - Staff are conducting reviews of APRs and CE information.

Next Phases of the Competition:

- Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW)
- Release of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) – early to mid-summer?

Optional Webinar/Office Hour on e-snaps:

- New Project Applicants: Register for Navigating e-snaps: Wednesday, May 22 at 2 PM
 - Register at <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1674/>
- Renewal Project Applicants: Register for e-snaps Office Hours: Wednesday, May 22 at 3:30 PM
 - Register at <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1678/>

CY2025 ESG Program Competition Information

Project Application Tentative Information:

- The NC ESG Office expects to release the RFA on Tuesday, June 11th.
- The NC BoS CoC expects to set the 1st submission deadline for 5 PM on Tuesday, July 16th.
- The NC ESG Office expects to set the final submission deadline for 5 PM on Monday, August 26th.

ESG Program Eligible Projects include:

- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelter
- Rapid Rehousing
- Homelessness Prevention
- HMIS or Comparable Database for any of the above projects

For more information visit <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/aging/nc-emergency-solutionsgrant/nc-emergency-solutions-grantee-information>

Agencies can begin preparing by:

- Reviewing the ESG Program Desk Guide for required P&Ps
- Reviewing NC BoS CoC Written Standards per project type & coordinated entry

- Writing or aligning agency/project P&Ps with those in the Desk Guide & the NC BoS CoC's Written Standards (including Client Bill of Rights & Anti-Discrimination P&Ps)
- Reviewing the scorecard when it's posted – will email the CoC email distribution list - <https://www.ncceh.org/bos/esg/>
- HMIS/Comparable Database
 - Joining HMIS: <https://www.ncceh.org/hmis/about/>
 - Cleaning up HMIS data & practice running an APR

Last year's total amount for CY2024 was \$2,525,734. **This year's total amount is \$2,446,409.** For more information visit <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/aging/nc-emergency-solutions-grant/nc-emergency-solutions-grant-grantee-information>.

A process webinar will be held on Tuesday, May 21st from 11 AM – 12:30 PM. This webinar will cover the ESG Program competition process including key partners, eligible activities, total funding amount & Regional Fair Shares, & changes to this year's competition for regional leadership.

Please register for this webinar: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1686/>.

For Regional Committees:

- Spread the word & start now
 - Many of the providers in your regions may not hear critical information about application deadlines & materials if it does not come from you.
 - Encourage any interested providers to email bos@ncceh.org & request to be added to our general email list if they are not already.
 - Forward all ESG Program competition information to your networks, especially the application instructions
- Be prepared to answer questions correctly
 - Applicants may come to you before asking NCCEH staff.
 - It is very important that you have the correct information.
 - If you don't know, don't guess! Direct people to email bos@ncceh.org.

Coordinated Entry Written Standards

Overview of changes and/or updates for the 2024 NC BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards:

- Updated all references to VI-SPDAT to HART (Homeless Assessment and Referral Tool)
- Updated Category 4 to reflect new HUD definition (previously approved for all NC BoS Written Standards)

Order of Priority: Updated to reflect the new order of priority for ESG Program and/or CoC Program-funded permanent housing.

- First priority: Most severe service needs, as determined through HART acuity score.
- Second priority: Highest HART acuity score and experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

- Third priority: Highest HART acuity score and longest length of time homeless.
- Fourth priority: Highest HART acuity score and disabling condition.
- Fifth priority: Family with highest HART acuity score.

Updated to reflect HART categories:

- Housing and Homeless History
- Risks
- Health and Wellness
- Family Unit

CE Evaluation Procedure: Updated to state the CEC determines the procedure for the evaluation (removed specific steps for procedure as this process will be updated in 2024).

HART Timeline:

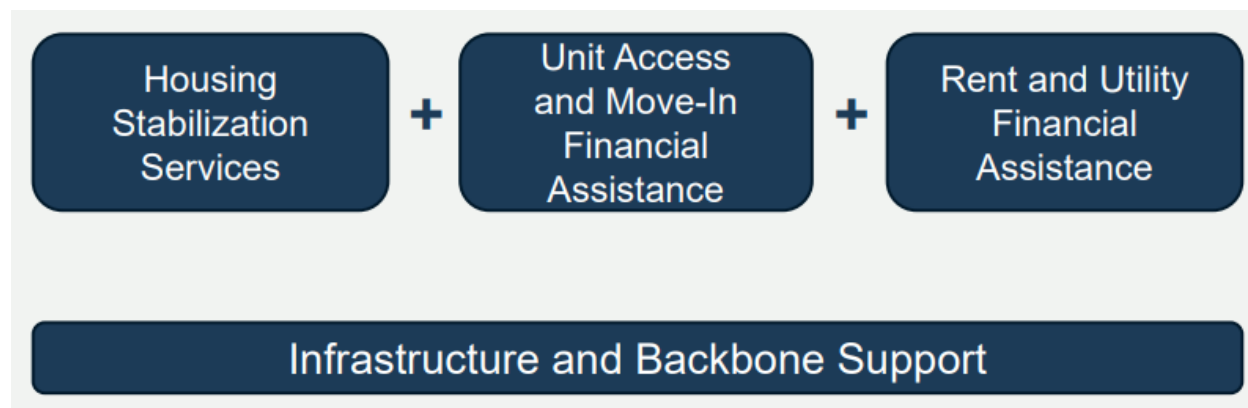
1. CE Written Standards recommend by Coordinated Entry Council (January 2024)
2. HMIS and by-name list updates (March – April 2024)
3. **CE Written Standards approved by NC BoS Steering Committee (May 2024)**
4. Training and Launch Phase (May – June 2024)

Angela Harper King motioned to approve the 2024 NC BoS CoC Coordinated Entry Written Standards. Dr. Dia Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Back@Home Balance of State Update

Staff from the NC Office of Recovery & Resiliency (NCORR) provided an update on Back@Home Balance of State that is providing rehousing services to households experiencing homelessness with severe service needs across the CoC's 79- county geographic area.

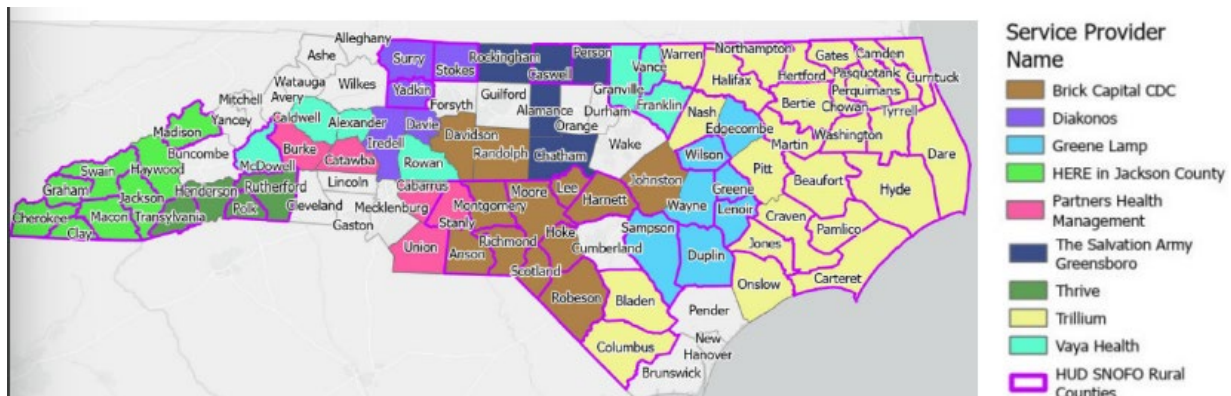
Program Model:



Housing Stabilization Services:

- Housing Stabilization Case Management: Case management services create a partnership with the household to assess, plan, implement, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the needs of the household to get and keep housing.
- Outreach: Outreach services assist by locating, engaging, and supporting households with life-saving resources as they experience homelessness and are connected to housing resources.
- System Navigation: System navigation services assist households with accessing resources from the homeless system and partner systems to get and keep housing.
- Housing Navigation: Housing navigation services assist households to gain access to and address issues with maintaining a physical unit.

Housing Stabilization Services Provider Coverage map:



Types of Financial Assistance offered in the program include:

- Rent and utility assistance
- Unit access and move-in financial assistance, including temporary stay costs

By Fall/Winter 2026, as many as 1400 households will be served through a combination of housing stabilization, financial assistance, and connection of other resources to stabilize individuals and families with severe service needs in housing.

All services offered through the project will follow the three best practices outlined in the Continuum of Care’s plan: Housing First, Harm Reduction, and Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed Care.

Back@Home Balance of State Program Timeline & Accomplishments to Date:

Month	Topic
October 2023 – January 2024	Housing Stabilization Services Provider training and start up (including weekly calls, 1:1 meetings, and office hours)
January 16, 2024	- Opened enrollment in SSO projects - Published v1 Program Policies and Procedures - Launched new NCORR System of Record
January 29, 2024	Opened enrollment in Permanent Housing projects
February 5, 2024	Launch of Move-in Financial Assistance capability
September 30, 2026	Program period of performance ends

Key Program Data as of May 3rd, 2024:

All Clients Served (HMIS – both enrolled + exited)	657
All Households Served (HMIS – both enrolled + exited)	377
Households enrolled in B@H-BoS (HMIS)	349
Households with signed leases (per Housing Collaborative on 5/3)	25
Authorizations approved by NCORR to move program participant into a PH project and begin housing navigation process	196
Number of counties where program participants have been enrolled (out of 79)	43

Tara Peele noted that as of the current date, May 7th, 30 households had signed leases.

Housing Collaborative continues to build relationships with property providers across the NC BoS CoC and support housing identification, navigation, and placement efforts for clients in the program.

The nine Housing Stabilization Services Providers remain the primary points of contact at the local level for outreach, housing stabilization case management, system navigation, and housing navigation.

NCORR encouraged the group to reach out to the program or any key partners if they have questions, ideas, or concerns about local operation of the program in their region. NCORR is open to feedback and input. For additional information, please contact backathome@ncdps.gov.

June In-Person Steering Committee Meeting

Staff provided further information on the upcoming in-person Steering Committee meeting in June. The 2024 in-person Steering Committee meeting will focus on evaluating & updating CoC governance. HUD charges CoCs to evaluate its governance every 5 years to determine if its current

Governance Charter facilitates processes & decision-making practices that effectively end homelessness.

This year, the Steering Committee's in-person planning meeting will focus on evaluating & updating the NC Balance of State CoC's Governance Charter to have a greater impact for our communities.

The in-person Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, June 26th. At the last Steering Committee meeting, members selected June 26th as the best date to hold the next in-person meeting.

- Audience: All Steering Committee members including at-large members, Regional Lead & Regional Lead Alternates should plan to attend.
- Time: Planning for 10 AM – 4 PM
- Location: TBD – looking at locations near Greensboro or Winston-Salem
- Registration: Register as soon as possible at <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1685/>
- Lunch: NCCEH will provide lunch for attendees
- Preparation: Review the current Governance Charter & come to the meeting with your ideas & questions. Review the Governance Charter at <https://bit.ly/3QjjOhX>.

Angela Harper King asked how long until the location of the meeting would be finalized. Brian responded it should be no more than a couple of weeks from the current date.

HMIS@NCCEH Potential Software Change

Since the launch of HMIS in NC in 2004, the NC Balance of State along with its sister CoCs have used a version of WellSky's Community Services software to collect, evaluate, and submit required data.

Recently, the Wake/Raleigh and Charlotte/Mecklenburg CoCs have switched to new software for their independent HMIS implementations. While various HMIS governance boards overseeing the HMIS implementation the NC Balance of State CoC has used have considered a change in software, we have remained with WellSky infrastructure.

- Two HMIS Lead transitions
- Need to update all training & technical assistance materials

Under prior HMIS Leads, the NC Balance of State CoC struggled to report accurate & comprehensive data because of:

- The complexity of set-up for a Balance of State
- Inherent visibility issues under prior HMIS Lead chosen tree structures in the system
- Lack of prior HMIS Lead staff experience & knowledge to develop & maintain new & canned reports

Now that those things have been fixed, NCCEH has a much better understanding of the challenges the chosen software poses for collecting, entering, reporting, & evaluating data.

- WellSky has notoriously bad customer service.

- Required reports, which must be updated regularly due to Data Standard changes & new HUD reporting requirements, are often late & require intense QA by Data Center staff to identify issues.
- The software's look & functionality is not user-friendly or contemporary.
- The software back-end is complicated & requires enormous staff capacity, limiting time for other important HMIS Lead functions.

The HMIS@NCCEH Advisory Board tasked CoC designated members to speak with their Governance Boards. The HMIS@NCCEH Advisory Board governs the HMIS@NCCEH implementation.

- Two designated representatives from each participating CoC
 - Brian Alexander & Jenny Simmons from NCCEH serve in these roles for the NC Balance of State CoC.
- Non-designated members
 - Statewide representatives
 - Sector leaders
 - End users from each participating CoC
 - Researchers
- Decides how the HMIS implementation operates, approves the annual budget, evaluates the HMIS Lead, sets strategic goals, & makes recommendations to CoCs on governance level decisions
 - Does not approve the HMIS Lead or the implementation software – these are decisions made by individual CoCs

Staff propose that the time seems right to explore a potential change in HMIS software.

- The move could help with more sophisticated reporting & evaluation.
- A change could provide more user-friendly software, making the licensure & training processes easier for users & Data Center staff.
- It could allow for better customer service & quicker fixes to challenges.
- It could ensure quicker access to required reports during Data Standards updates & reporting periods.

A software change is not a fix for all HMIS challenges. However, exploring other available software would allow us to consider whether a change might improve the implementation's ability to better meet our needs.

Amber Brafford noted that one of the things Region 3 runs into is that leadership works hard to point folks to HMIS; however, when they move them to HMIS, it is essentially doubling up the work having to upload all the data. This makes the switch a hard selling point for non-HMIS agencies.

Brian agreed that WellSky is not user friendly, and there is other software that makes data entry easier. There's also some software that allows you to pull data from another source and upload it. He noted this is currently just a research phase, and there is no time frame as of now.

Reminders

- Vote for your regional Unsheltered Access Coordinators during your April regional meetings
- UAC responsibilities:
 - Serve as primary contact for Regional Committee around unsheltered access
 - Coordinate with regional Coordinated Entry Leads to ensure people experiencing unsheltered homelessness access the local coordinated entry system
 - Ensure data collection happens on all people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
 - Engage providers/organizations/stakeholders to understand the local plan to engage people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and how to connect them to the coordinated entry system
 - Provide additional training to providers/organizations/stakeholders as needed
- Please submit elected UAC information via Smartsheet at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/735202063aa046e294b54ecb3070e6cc>.

Upcoming meetings & reminders

- **Lived Expertise Advisory Council**, *Friday, May 10, 12 – 1 P.M.*
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 579 903 9481
Passcode: qYqVY5
- **Racial Equity Subcommittee**, *Wednesday, May 15, 11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.*
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 832 6483 8597
- **Local Leadership Response Call**, *Wednesday, May 15, 1 – 2 P.M.*
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 837 9246 1651
- **NC BoS Homeless Assessment and Referral Tool (HART) Training**, *Thursday, May 16, 10 A.M. – 12 P.M.*
Register at: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1680/>
- **Funding & Performance Subcommittee**, *Thursday, May 16, 2 – 3 P.M.*
[Join Google Meeting](#)
Or dial: (US) +1 929-249-4814
PIN: 256 826 060#
- **Coordinated Entry Council**, *Monday, May 20, 10 – 11:30 A.M.*
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 848 4039 7905

- **Webinar on Navigating e-snaps, Wednesday, May 22, 2 – 3 P.M.**
Register at: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1674/>
- **Returning CoC Program Project Applicant e-Snaps Office Hour, Wednesday, May 22, 3:30 – 4:30 P.M.**
Register at: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1678/>
- **NC BoS CoC Emergency Transfer Plan Webinar, Friday, May 24, 9. – 10 A.M.**
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 825 0236 1142
Passcode: 189145
Additional information: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1684/>
- **Monthly HMIS Training: How to use Hashed CSV & EVA, Wednesday, May 29, 10 – 11 A.M.**
Register at: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1677/>
- **In-Person Steering Committee Meeting, Wednesday, June 26, 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.**
Register at: <https://www.ncceh.org/events/1685/>

Next Steering Committee meeting(s):

Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 10:30 AM (Moved for Bringing It Home Conference)

Wednesday, June 26, 2024, at 10 AM (In-Person Meeting, location TBD)