

Memorandum of Agreement

between the

Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS),

Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH), and

Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA)

AHS, VCEH and VSHA each play critical roles in preventing and ending homelessness in the State of Vermont. This Memorandum of Agreement strives to outline the roles and responsibilities of each entity in an effort to ensure a mutual understanding and strengthening of our joint partnership.

AHS Roles and Responsibilities

In its role of managing the Vermont Interagency Council on Homelessness and administration of numerous related initiatives, programs and departments, AHS directs key resources and leadership to prevent and end homelessness in Vermont. The following is a list of some of the most critical responsibilities that AHS agrees to continue:

- Support of, and collaboration with, Vermont 211, a program of the United Ways of Vermont, to ensure free access to community resources, including AHS programs, to all people in Vermont through information and referral (I&R) services and assistance.
- Collaboration with VCEH and VSHA to increase awareness of, and support activities in, Vermont's Continuums of Care to prevent and end homelessness, including efficient, fair and effective uses of available resources.
- Coordinate with VCEH and VSHA in the implementation of Vermont's Annual Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless and Housing Inventory of Homeless Beds.
- Coordinate and enhance discharge planning policies and practices to ensure no one is routinely discharged into homelessness, or a homeless program, from an institution including: Corrections, Mental Health, Foster Care and Health Care.
- Act as the HMIS CoC Lead Agency for the Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care (VT BoS CoC) to improve and maintain high data quality of HUD CoC Programs.

VCEH Roles and Responsibilities

The Vermont Balance of State Continuum of Care (VT BoS CoC) is the service area consisting of 11 local Continua of Care coalitions, in addition to key state and federal partners. Each local CoC is comprised of local providers and community members working earnestly to prevent and end homelessness. The 11 local CoC's, along with state and federal partners, collectively act as a team under the administrative umbrella known as the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH). The VCEH agrees to continue:

- Act as the Primary Decision-Making Group for the VT BoS CoC.
- Collaborate to secure local, state and federal funds to prevent and end homelessness.
- Increase public awareness of homeless and other issues including coordination of the Annual Homeless Vigil, Legislative Advocacy and other activities.
- Maintain operations of the VT BoS CoC through calling/holding meetings, creating and providing meeting agendas and minutes, strategic planning, creation and monitoring of committees, and other activities.
- Support local CoC coalitions to identify and address issues and strengthen capacity.
- Support VSHA and AHS with the annual HUD CoC Homeless Assistance application, the Annual Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless, Housing Inventory Chart of Homeless Beds, HUD regulation compliance, and other mutually agreed upon goals to maximize the application score and overall performance of the VT BoS CoC area.
- Ensure that all HUD CoC Programs establish and follow Educational Assurances so Vermont children continue to receive quality education regardless of housing instability.
- Ensure data quality from all HUD CoC Programs through participation in a Homeless Information Management Systems (HMIS) selected by the VT BoS CoC.
- Provide a system whereby the VCEH will respond promptly to AHS and VSHA requests for information or decisions including holding meetings or conference calls in between regular meetings as needed.
- Ensure VCEH members are kept apprised, and noticed, of activities occurring on their behalf through a process of open and fair communications.
- Ensure that any potential and/or perceived conflicts of interest are addressed in an effective, open and timely manner.

VSHA Roles and Responsibilities

Established in 1968, as the first statewide housing authority in the nation, the Vermont State Housing Authority aggressively and compassionately pursues opportunities to provide and make housing more accessible and affordable for Vermonters. VSHA agrees, funding permitted, to continue to:

- Provide substantial in-kind donations to the VT BoS CoC and local CoC's in support of critical activities to prevent and end homelessness.
- Act in the role of CoC Lead Agency for the VT BoS CoC including, but not limited to, completion and submission of annual HUD CoC Application for Homeless Assistance/Project Exhibits; coordination with VCEH, AHS and other key stakeholders; and maximization of CoC application score to the extent possible. VSHA is empowered to contract for assistance as needed.
- Coordinate with VCEH and AHS to conduct the Annual Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless, and the corresponding Housing Inventory Chart of Homeless Beds.
- Coordinate with AHS, as the HMIS Lead Agency, to ensure high data quality and other HUD HMIS compliance of all HUD CoC Program projects in the VT BoS CoC.
- Administer VSHA-designated HUD CoC grants including: grants management; technical assistance and trainings; financial accounting and draw down of HUD funds; coordination and submission of Annual Performance Reports to HUD; and other measures to ensure project and overall compliance with HUD and other regulations.
- Monitor activities of HUD CoC sponsor agencies to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements including performance measures. This may include on-site and other monitoring and review of fiscal, grant and program management.
- Support VT BoS CoC through participation in management activities of VCEH, although this is the primary responsibility of the VCEH.
- Ensure open and fair methods of communication and processes in the monitoring of Shelter Plus Care grants, or other HUD CoC grants, administered by VSHA to reduce the potential of a perceived or actual conflict of interest, e.g. performance monitoring, etc.

This Memorandum of Understanding is hereby executed as follows:

Vermont Agency of Human Services:

_____	_____
Name (print)	Title
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness:

_____	_____
Name (print)	Title
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness:

_____	_____
Name (print)	Title
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Vermont State Housing Authority:

_____	_____
Name (print)	Title
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Problem Resolution

Should disagreements arise under this MOU, the parties agree to work to resolve these as quickly and agreeably as possible. While most disagreements can be resolved among the parties, none shall be adverse to requesting assistance from a neutral party if needed.