

## **BYLAWS OF THE HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION OF METRO SOCIAL SERVICES**

These Bylaws are established pursuant to Section 11.107 of the Metropolitan Charter which provides as follows:

“Each Board or Commission may make such Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, not inconsistent with law, as it deems appropriate for the conduct of its business, copies of which shall be filed with the Metropolitan Clerk and with the Secretary of the Board or Commission.”

**Preamble:** The purpose of the Homelessness Commission is to assure implementation of the Strategic Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Nashville 2005-2015, including the on-going development and promotion of initiatives consistent with the purpose of that document, pursuant to Ordinance BL2005-582 which created the Homelessness Commission.

**SECTION 1. Establishment of the Commission.** Pursuant to Metropolitan Ordinance, a Homelessness Commission was established for Nashville and Davidson County to be a part of the Metropolitan Department of Social Services. The Homelessness Commission shall be commonly referred to as “Homelessness Commission of Metro Social Services” (the “Commission”). Policies of Metropolitan Social Services shall apply to the Homelessness Commission.

**SECTION 2. Members of the Commission.** The Commission shall be composed of the following persons:

A. Eleven persons appointed by the Mayor, who shall serve without compensation, and who shall serve for terms of three years, except that, of the members first appointed, three shall serve for a term of one year, four shall serve for a term of two years, and four shall serve for a term of three years. The commission shall include a member of the Social Services Commission. Each class of the commission shall include one member who has personally experienced homelessness, ensuring that at all times there will be three members representing the homeless community. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary, any member serving on the commission who is homeless while serving may receive bus passes to attend commission activities and compensation in accordance with a reimbursement plan adopted by the commission.

B. Four members of the Metropolitan Council, one of whom shall be a member of the Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee (or its successor Committee) and selected by that Committee, one of whom shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee (or its successor Committee) and selected by that Committee, and two of whom shall be the Vice Mayor and/or his/her designee(s). Such Council members selected shall serve for a term not to exceed two years, which terms shall begin within sixty days after Council elections, and sixty days after the middle of the councilmanic term;

C. Seven officials of the Metropolitan government, serving as nonvoting ex officio members, representing related departments, as follows:

1. The Mayor or the Mayor’s designee;
2. The director of the Social Services department or the director’s designee;
3. The director of the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency or the director’s designee;
4. The director of the Health department or the director’s designee;
5. The director of Nashville Career Advancement Center or the director’s designee;

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6. The director of Metropolitan Action Commission or the director's designee; and
7. The chief of the Metropolitan Police Department or the chief's designee.

Members appointed by the Mayor who fail to attend three consecutive meetings may be excused from serving on the Commission upon a majority vote of the Commission, with vacancies to be filled in the same manner as any other appointment.

**SECTION 3. Advisory Committee.** The Commission may create an advisory committee. Its membership shall reflect a variety of community stakeholders and perspectives. The committee shall include individuals who have personally experienced homelessness and individuals representing business interests; the faith community; neighborhood interests; housing developers; non-profit service providers; mental health practitioners; alcohol and drug treatment programs; advocates; funders; and a large hospital.

### **SECTION 4. Duties and Responsibilities of Homelessness Commission.**

A. The Commission shall have the following duties and responsibilities: To assume accountability for implementation of the Strategic Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in Nashville 2005-2015 (henceforth called the 10 Year Plan);

1. To implement a coordinated and focused approach to ending chronic homelessness;
2. To develop measurable, time-framed objectives for implementation of the 10 Year Plan, and to provide ongoing evaluation and revision of the 10 Year Plan;
3. To assure participation of all stakeholders including homeless persons;
4. To establish procedures to assure that policies, services and funding within the control of Metropolitan Government Departments and agencies are consistent with the 10 Year Plan. With respect to funding applications or awards specifically addressing homelessness, the Homelessness Commission shall serve as a working partner in the development, review, and approval, of all Metro supported or approved homeless grant applications, plans, and funding opportunities;
5. To maintain accurate, current data on homeless populations;
6. To educate the public, service providers and other interested parties on the 10 Year Plan; and
7. To issue an annual report on the Commission's progress in meeting the goals of the 10 Year Plan.

B. The Commission is not and shall not be deemed to be a board or commission of the Metropolitan Government.

**SECTION 5. Officers of the Commission.** The Mayor shall select a Chairperson for the Commission. Upon the initiative of the Chairperson, he or she may appoint or select other officers. The Chairperson's responsibilities include convening regular and called meetings, presiding over meetings or appointing a designee to preside, developing meeting agenda, and appointing committee chairpersons.

**SECTION 6. Meetings.** The Commission, unless otherwise scheduled, will meet in regular session on a regular basis on a schedule and at a time determined by the Commission. The Commission generally meets bi-monthly at 9:30 am on the first Friday of every other month, and meetings are held in buildings owned by the Metropolitan Government. Upon the initiation of the Chairperson, called meetings may be held. In accordance with the Metropolitan Code of

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Laws (Sec. 2.68) all meetings shall be open to the public with adequate notice in advance to the public. Notification shall be in accordance with the MSS Public Meeting Policy.

The meetings shall include approval of minutes, updates on projects and activities of the Homelessness Commission, committee reports, announcements and other items deemed appropriate by the Commission Chairperson. Subject to the availability of time, an opportunity will be provided for members of the public to address the Homelessness Commission. At the discretion of the Chairperson, regular meetings will include a period at the end of each meeting for public comments, generally limited to 3 minutes per person.

In consultation with Commission members, the Chairperson will determine the items to be placed on the agenda. The Chairperson will approve the agenda items and will forward them to the Director who will prepare and distribute the agenda in accordance with the MSS Public Meeting Policy. Members of the public may submit requests for items to be placed on the agenda to the Chairperson or Commission Director, no later than 14 days prior to the meeting date, and these will be considered by the Chairperson in developing the agenda.

### **SECTION 7. Committees.**

The Commission shall establish an Executive Committee that shall be primarily responsible for overseeing the operation of the Commission, including, but not limited to:

- Establish, coordinate and dissolve other standing committees of the Commission as deemed necessary from time to time;
- Direct and oversee the goals, objectives and policies of the Commission;
- Address new areas of concern for the Commission not delegated to the committees;
- Review all budgetary matters of the Commission;
- Conduct a yearly evaluation of the Director of the Commission; and
- Act on behalf of the Commission in emergency situations between meetings and reporting such action at the next Commission meeting for review or action.

The Executive committee shall meet monthly and be composed of the following Commissioners: the Commission Chair, the Director of Metropolitan Social Services, a member of the Metropolitan Council, a Commissioner who has personally experienced homelessness, and all standing committee chairs. The Commission Chairperson shall appoint the Metropolitan Council member and Commissioner who has experienced homelessness to serve on the Executive Committee. Any standing Committee Chairs who are not Commissioners shall serve as nonvoting ex officio members of the Executive Committee.

The Commission Chairperson, in conjunction with the Commission Director, shall appoint all members of committees of the Commission and shall appoint a Chairperson of each standing and special committee. A Committee Chairperson is not required to be a Commissioner.

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The Commission Chairperson may serve as an ex officio member of all committees. At least one Commissioner shall serve on each standing committee. Committee meetings shall be scheduled by the Committee Chairperson. The responsibilities of Committee Chairpersons include convening meetings and presiding over meetings, developing meeting agendas, identification and recruitment of members from the public to ensure wide community representation, and providing reports to the Commission as requested.

**SECTION 8. Quorum.** A majority of the total voting Commission members is required to be present before any action of the Commission can be taken in a regular or special meeting.

**SECTION 9. Voting.** An action of the Homelessness Commission shall be in the form of a vote on a motion which has been properly made and seconded. The decision of a majority of the Commission members present who have voting rights in accordance with the Ordinance shall determine the outcome of any particular issue upon which a vote is taken. Only voting members may vote; representative designees of voting members may not vote.

**SECTION 10. Conduct of Meetings.** Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified. These rules may be suspended upon motion and vote to suspend by a 2/3 vote of voting members present.

**SECTION 11. Amendments to Bylaws.** Any amendment to the Bylaws shall require a majority vote of the voting membership of the Commission. Any proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be submitted in writing to the Commission Director and posted on the Commission website at least three weeks prior to the date of the Commission meeting at which the amendment will be voted on.

**SECTION 12. Approval of Bylaws.** Upon approval of the Commission of these Bylaws or any amendments thereto, the Commission Director shall immediately file a copy with the Metropolitan Clerk and maintain a copy in the office of the Homelessness Commission as a public record.

**SECTION 13. Conflicts of Interest.** Commissioners will comply with conflict of interest provisions in the Metropolitan Code of Laws (Section 2.222) which is based upon state law restrictions on conflicts of interest by public officials. Such provisions include the prohibition against a board member from specific acts such as: voting on a contractual arrangement if he will derive any direct or indirect benefit from that arrangement; accepting a bribe; voting on a matter without disclosing a conflict of interest. (Conflict of interest usually means that the member has a pecuniary interest in a matter before the board, but it can also include a situation where the member's personal interests conflict with the member's public duty).

If a Commissioner has a conflict of interest regarding an item to be considered by the Commission on the agenda of a meeting, the Commissioner shall disclose the conflict at the beginning of the meeting and abstain from voting on that item.

Each Commissioner shall certify knowledge of the conflict of interest requirements described above by filing a written, signed statement with the Commission. Each current Commissioner shall submit the statement within two (2) months of approval of these Bylaws. Each Commissioner subsequently appointed to the Commission shall submit the statement prior to the first Commission meeting after the Commissioner's appointment to the Commission.

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**SECTION 14. Non-Discrimination.** It is the policy of the Homelessness Commission that it shall not discriminate against individuals or groups because of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion or disability status.

- *Relevant MSS documents:*
  - MSS Public Meeting Notification Policy
- Homelessness Commission Funding Expenditures Policy
- Homelessness Commission Budget Development Policy

*Relevant laws:*

- Meetings of Boards and Commissions: MCL 2.68.010 Regular and special meetings--  
Location--Open to public.
- Conflict of Interest: MCL Section 2.222
- Metropolitan Ordinance BL2005-582