

Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care (CoC)

INITIATIVES EFFICIENCY MEETING MINUTES

DATE: JULY 7, 2025

LOCATION: Oasis Center

TIME: 2:30PM

FACILITATORS	Alyssa Fernandez, Oasis Center
RECORDED BY	Raquel de la Huerga, OHS Continuum of Care Manager
ATTENDANCE	Alyssa Fernandez (Oasis Center), Raquel de la Huerga (OHS), Suzie Tolmie (MDHA), Raven Nye (The Contributor), Nelson Guillen (NOAH), Giovanni Achoe (MSS), Stephen Watts (Southwest Center for Cooperative Development), Tim Leeth, Allison Cantway (OHS)

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS	Chair Alyssa Fernandez asked attendees to indicate whether they are interested in becoming official members of the Task Force. Suzie, Raven, and Nelson expressed an interest in becoming members. Giovanni shared that she was on the fence about joining. Tim noted that he does not want to be a member.
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	Nelson shared that he was able to get a copy of Miami-Dade County's grievance process, but did not start digging into the language. Nelson had a phone call with Miami's Collaborative Applicant Executive Director, who shared that Microsoft Co-Pilot was a helpful tool in carving out their process and organizing meetings. Ares Miller sent an email that he would not be able to attend the meeting, but had uploaded restorative justice documents to the SharePoint folder. Ares reached out to Wake County, got a prompt response, but then did not get a follow up to meet. Tim looked into applicable state laws. Tim noted that grievance proceedings <u>do</u> need to be held publicly. The only private meetings allowed are executive sessions, which are only for attorney client privileges so those meetings are only intended to receive information and ask questions of attorneys. Executive sessions cannot include any deliberation on the matter at hand. Executive sessions need to be adjourned and the regular meeting needs to resume to conduct business. Tim noted that any CoC meeting related to grievance procedures would need to be done publicly, however, private organizations may not need to conduct their grievance processes privately. For example, a funded organization could have private grievance proceedings, but if a CoC body needed to respond those meetings would need to be public. Tim noted that he could not find HUD's requirement that CoCs have to have grievance procedures. Tim and Suzie discussed looking further into the CoC Interim Rule. Suzie noted that individual agencies need to have grievance procedures for if their clients have a concern, but it is unclear whether the CoC has a whole needs to have a process. Suzie also noted that the CoC is required by HUD to have an appeals process for funding decisions in the local competition, but the scope is very narrow. Nashville's CoC has a dedicated Appeals Panel that specifically reviews appeals for the funding decisions of the PEC. There are strict parameters for filing appeals and winning (fraud, only sharing information with a few agencies, conflicts of interest). The Appeals Panel is made up of three independent individuals who do not have any relationship to CoC funded agencies. Suzie noted that some grievances could be filed directly with HUD, however, if the local CoC had not yet had an opportunity to respond to the concern, HUD would likely send it back to the CoC to attempt to resolve.

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Attendees discussed that there is a need to have a process more focused for client concerns with their service providers or interpersonal matters within the CoC. Attendees noted that ideally client matters would not have to be grieved publicly, unless the situation needed to be escalated to a CoC committee or the Homelessness Planning Council.

Attendees noted that there is little authority for the Continuum of Care to require participation in grievance procedures and/or restorative justice practices. There is no authority that would require organizations to resolve an issue. Previously, Steve Reiter had suggested Memoranda of Understanding, however, Tim noted that those are not binding contracts. Attendees suggested for future language that indicates expectations for funded agencies to participate and encourages others in the CoC to buy into the process to move the community forward.

Tim shared that changing the public comment process within the Continuum of Care could also provide less formal processes for community members to share their concerns and be heard. For example, the language on agendas and public comment sheets needs to indicate that public comments can be made germane to any item on the agenda and not just action items. Tim shared that there also needs to be a clearer process for members of committees or the Homelessness Planning Council to have an item added to the agenda. Attendees noted that it might make sense for a panel or the Executive Committee to follow up on public comments shared at meetings since there may not be a response that can be provided in the moment.

Attendees noted that at the last meeting there was a proposal to have a separate panel of people who could mediate or support or advocate. However, it was unclear who is on the panel and how they are selected.

Giovanni noted that Nashville has a Conflict Resolution Center and proposed that they could be an entity to act as a mediator. Attendees researched and found that the Conflict Resolution Center charges \$300 per mediation for organizations with their largest bracket of operating budgets. Attendees suggested to look further into engaging with the Conflict Resolution Center and potentially have them attend future General Membership meetings to explore strategies to mediate community tension. Suzie noted that the Conflict Resolution Center could not be the final arbiter for matters related to HUD funding, but could be a strong option to consider for other matters. Members suggested that the HPC could be the final arbiter when there is not alignment on how to resolve an issue. Suzie also noted that the Continuum of Care is not a legal entity so if any matter were to rise to the level of a lawsuit it would need to be with a funded agency or lead agency.

Attendees noted items that still need to be clarified:

- Who would serve on a grievance panel?
- What can be grieved?
- How are individuals/organizations required or encouraged to participate in the process?

Raquel shared categories of grievances that had been named in discussions about grievance procedures and potential avenues for pursuing a grievance:

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	• Issues with regulations related to public meetings and government boards - fielded with city or state government • Client concerns regarding services and program participation – fielded by the funded agency, then if things need to be escalated it would be fielded with the Collaborative Applicant and then HUD • Concerns regarding Continuum of Care funding – fielded by the Appeal Panel and then HUD • Interpersonal matters between Continuum of Care members – fielded either by a new panel, the Conflict Resolution Center, or the Metro Ethical Conduct Board (if it is an issue regarding the Homelessness Planning Council) The group agreed to create a general flow chart of the various grievance pathways. Attendees noted that their primary goal is to ensure community members are aware of pathways to resolve matters to ensure that the Continuum of Care can collaborate better. Attendees shared that there may not be a clear resolution or a nice conclusion, but it would be helpful to at least offer a process and support for raising concerns. Attendees noted that it could also be helpful to revisit the CoC Charter regarding language around expectations for conduct, grounds for corrective action, and specifically what corrective action may be taken. Attendees noted that there will be a need to eventually outline what are severe, medium, and minor violations. Tim also shared that Robert's Rule of Order may be a helpful tool in promoting civil dialogue and debate. Raven shared that she pulled together grievance forms from other communities and started working on a draft that includes the following: date of filing, name, contact, date of incidence, locations of incidence, details specifics, policies being challenged, list of others involved or who it is against, witnesses, steps taken to resolve the grievance, what do you feel should be done to resolve the incident. NEXT STEPS - Create a flowchart - Send Metro's Ethical Conduct Board Policies - Explore creating an independent panel - Suzie send the grievance process for MDHA
ONE YEAR PLAN	Chair Fernandez shared a draft one year plan: • July – research report out and review • August – finalize research and review first draft, review in collaboration with relevant committees • September – finalize draft to present for public comment in October • October – prep draft presentation, present grievance procedures draft to HPC and General Membership to gather feedback • November – Finalize revisions based on feedback and re-send final revised draft to General Membership and Homelessness Planning Council by December 1.

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	December – Discuss summary of Ad Hoc Task Force Goals completion to be presented at HPC including suggestion for Ad Hoc's future after it ends on December 31st – General Membership votes on adopting grievance procedure for the HPC to approve at their January meeting to be effective for 2026.
ALL CHAIRS MEETING	Chair Fernandez reported out from the All Chairs meeting and the Menti responses were passed out. Nelson Guillen noted that compensation remains a sticking point and expressed a desire to figure out a resolution. Attendees discussed barriers to compensation and creative strategies to continue to engage people with lived experience in decision making. Attendees noted that the Task Force's role should be increase capacity for CoC Committees and wanting to explore potential trainings and other pathways to better equip committees.