**Maine Continuum of Care - MCOC**

**Governance & Structure**

**Revised July 2017**

**Article 1. Organization**

1. This affiliation is established by and in accordance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations.
2. The name of this affiliation shall be the Maine Continuum of Care, hereinafter referred to as “MCOC.”
3. MCOC covers the entire State of Maine.
4. MCOC will establish a Collaborative Applicant (CA) that is responsible for the general coordination, oversight, and planning efforts of MCOC for the purpose of submission of the funding application. The CA shall have the authority by the MCOC to certify and submit the annual HUD Homeless Assistance Grant funding application on behalf of the MCOC.
5. The Business address for MCOC will be maintained by the identified CA. See addendum.
6. The CA cannot hold a Chair position of the MCOC.
7. The MCOC is governed by the Continuum of Care Board of Directors (CoC Board). The CoC Board serves as the oversight body for the Maine Continuum of Care and serves the entire state of Maine (ME 500 CoC), and exists to:
* Coordinate a statewide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness;
* Approve CoC funding recommendations for ending homelessness;
* Promote access to, and effective use of mainstream resources by homeless individuals and families;
* Promote housing retention, stability, success, and optimize self-sufficiency in the community for people who have experienced homelessness;
* Review and assess system performance;
* Ensure implementation of statewide Coordinated Entry; and
* Provide guidance on HUD Topics and Policies to the MCOC.

The CoC Board shall assume and carry out duties as detailed by the HUD Continuum of Care Board of Directors Bylaws.

**Article 2. Purpose and Mission**

The mission of MCOC is to plan and coordinate an inclusive system that helps Maine people avoid or exit quickly from homelessness, and to address the underlying causes of homelessness. MCOC shall accomplish this mission by conducting the following activities:

1. MCOC develops and manages the annual Continuum of Care (CoC) Application process to ensure that MCOC receives the maximum amount of federal McKinney-Vento funding from HUD.
2. MCOC fosters and promotes comprehensive, cohesive, and coordinated approaches to housing and community resources for people and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless through:
	1. Diversion and prevention
	2. Outreach and engagement services
	3. Emergency shelters and supportive services
	4. Transitional housing
	5. Permanent housing
		1. Permanent supportive housing
		2. Rapid rehousing
		3. Market rate and affordable housing
	6. Linkages to mainstream and community resources.
3. MCOC identifies and prioritizes the housing and service needs of people who are homeless, and supports a system of intervention, assessment, referral, direct care and aftercare for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
4. MCOC identifies and addresses service gaps, risk factors, and priorities on an annual basis. MCOC develops specific priorities and action steps to address homelessness throughout the service area. These are posted publically on MaineHomelessPlanning.org.
5. MCOC participates in planning activities supporting Maine’s Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness with the following:
	1. The CoC Board;
	2. The Statewide Homeless Council;
	3. The Regional Homeless Councils; and
	4. Local groups, alliances, and coalitions.
6. MCOC collaborates with community providers and stakeholders regarding continuum specific goals and objectives related to ending and preventing homelessness in Maine.
7. MCOC advocates for necessary funding at the state and federal level to develop needed housing and services for people who are homeless in Maine.
8. MCOC develops and supports public policy to assist people who are homeless and advocates for systems change to help end and prevent homelessness in Maine.
9. MCOC educates and helps advocate for people experiencing homelessness in Maine.
10. MCOC educates and helps advocate for entities that help people who are homeless.

**Article 3. Meetings:**

1. MCOC shall hold scheduled meetings of the general membership at a time and place agreed upon by the membership at least semi-annually.
2. All meetings of the MCOC are open to the public and an invitation to join the MCOC is posted publicly at least annually.
3. Notice of meetings will be provided to the full MCOC membership by the CA.
4. A quorum must be present to hold a vote or conduct business at regular MCOC meetings. A quorum shall be 51% of the number of eligible voting members, and determined prior to the start of each meeting. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, discussion may still take place, but business and voting will not be conducted. The CA shall track attendance and voting member status to determine quorum status for meetings.
5. Committee meetings shall not require a quorum with the exception of the Steering Committee for the purposes of conducting business and voting on behalf of the MCOC (refer to Article 8 - Steering Committee).
6. Voting shall be conducted as outlined in Article 5 for general meetings.
7. If at any time there is a conflict of interest whereby an organization or individual will have a direct interest in the funding, scoring, ranking, or policy decision making, then that organization, representative of the organization, or individual may recuse themselves or abstain for the process in order to mitigate any perceived conflict of interest. The recusal or abstention may be oral or written. In addition, the MCOC may request an organization, representative of organization, or individual to recuse themselves from any activities.
8. In all procedural matters not otherwise specified in this document, MCOC shall be guided by the provisions of [*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (11*th *ed.)*](http://www.robertsrules.com/) *– Simplified and Applied* (A Webster’s new World Book © 1999 by Robert McConnell Productions).

**Article 4. Membership:**

Each member of MCOC is a vital link in a collaborative community network, and as such, shares in ideas, concerns and decisions regarding the development, and deployment of resources to address the needs of people who are homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless.

1. MCOC has open membership for all individuals and/or organizations within the service area that have an interest in and subscribe to the mission and policies of MCOC, and who, through their participation, will contribute to MCOC’s ability to carry out its mission.
2. There is no membership fee.
3. MCOC membership and participation is **required** for all agencies actively receiving MCOC funds. At a minimum, participation shall be defined as maintaining voting eligibility at regular meetings.
4. Regular meeting attendance will be recorded and maintained by the CA. The CA will provide MCOC Chairs with attendance tracking sheets prior to the regular scheduled MCOC meetings for the Chairs to determine voting eligibility as defined in Article 5.

 **Article 5. Members General Voting Rights:**

1. There shall be one vote per Agency, Association, or Individual in attendance and eligible to vote on all MCOC matters that come up at general MCOC meetings.
2. Participation by conference call or other electronic means shall count as attendance and eligible members may vote by electronic means.
3. For voting purposes: An Agency is defined as “an IRS Corporate Entity.” Therefore, if a person receives a 1099 as a consultant or a W-2 as an employee they are a member of said Agency. An Association is defined as a group of people who voluntarily enter into an agreement to establish an organization to accomplish a specific purpose. An Individual shall be defined as anyone who has no formal or informal relationship to any Agency or Association otherwise recognized by MCOC.
4. If an agency, association or company holds different corporations, it is the intention of Article 5 that only the parent agency and not the separate corporations may cast a vote. It is the responsibility of said agency, association, parent company, or corporation to determine who will vote on their behalf.
5. An Agency or Association shall be considered in attendance if they are represented by any member of their organization (it need not be the same person at all meetings).
6. A member must have attended at least 50% of the meetings in the previous 12 months to be eligible to vote.
7. Committee meetings will not be included for voting or quorum calculation purposes.
8. All items placed for voting must be made by motion and seconded. Motions may be made and seconded by anyone in attendance (you need not be eligible to vote in order to make or second a motion).
9. A simple majority (at least 51%) affirmative vote by those in attendance and eligible to vote shall determine the outcome of the vote. If specified in the motion, a vote may be taken by roll call or by written ballot, and/or via electronic means.

**Article 6. Officers & Elections:**

1. MCOC will have three Chairs, who will each serve for a three-year term.
	1. Chairs shall be responsible for planning and conducting general and Steering Committee meetings.
	2. Any Chair may act as the designated signatory for MCOC correspondence.
	3. Chairs must be members of eligible voting organizations (Something about regions)
2. One new Chair shall be nominated and elected by MCOC on an annual basis. Notifications for upcoming nominations shall occur in November. Nominations for a new Chair will be taken prior to and at the *December* MCOC meeting. Elections shall be held at the *January* meeting. The new Chair will begin serving upon election.
3. Term of Office shall be three years. There is no limit on terms, but all Chairs must be re-nominated and re-elected to serve another term once their initial term has expired.
4. Officers may resign in writing during their term and shall, to the best of their ability, give at least one-month notice of such resignation. Any vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by nomination and election at the next regular meeting.

**Article 7. HMIS:**

1. Designate Review, revise, and approve privacy, security, and data quality plans;
2. Ensure consistent participation of recipients/subrecipients in HMIS; and
3. Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements.
4. The MCOC will establish a HMIS advisory committee to meet with the HMIS lead agency on a (minimum) quarterly basis to address HMIS issues and or concerns along with review of HUD changes or requirements which may need to be adopted into the HMIS governance.

**Article 8. MCOC Committees**

1. The committees detailed below shall be Standing Committees of MCOC. In addition to the duties detailed below, Committees may investigate other topics or perform other tasks as assigned by MCOC.
2. With the exception of the Steering Committee, each committee shall elect co-chairs annually after the January meeting of the MCOC. These Co-chairs are responsible for planning, calling, and conducting committee meetings.
3. Co-chairs from each Standing Committee shall participate on the Steering Committee.

Committees shall not make any policy or funding related decisions. Committees may make recommendations to MCOC, which may be presented for voting approval to the MCOC.

1. All Standing Committees shall designate a Secretary to record minutes of the meetings and make them available.

***Steering Committee* –** The committee will be comprised of: The three MCOC chairs; Co-Chairs from each of the other Standing Committees; the chair of the Statewide Homeless Council (regardless of being a MCOC Chair or a Co-Chair on a MCOC Standing Committee); at least one representative from DHHS (regardless of being a MCOC Chair or a Co-Chair on a MCOC Standing Committee); at least one representative from MaineHousing (regardless of being a Co-Chair on a MCOC Standing Committee); and the CA (*at the COC BOD on 6/8/17 three members of the former PCOC were added as voting members to ensure representation*).

*The Steering Committee exists to:*

* 1. Set COC Agendas and Big Thinking Topics
	2. Coordinate with the Standing committees to ensure information is disseminated to the MCOC.
	3. Facilitates the NOFA process and make funding recommendations
	4. Review monitoring results & recommend action to BOD for underperforming projects
	5. Make recommendations for priorities

*The Steering Committee operation standards are:*

1. The MCOC Chairs and/or the Collaborative Applicant may call a Steering Committee meeting at any time to address immediate needs.
2. Recommendations from the Steering Committee shall go to MCOC to be voted on at the next regular meeting.
3. For immediate, emergency, or time sensitive decisions regarding the COC Application Process, or for other specific decisions or letters of support, as assigned by MCOC, the Steering Committee has the authority from MCOC to make appropriate decisions. In all other matters, the Steering Committee can only make recommendations to MCOC.
4. Votes taken by the Steering Committee related to immediate, emergency, or time sensitive decisions, as detailed above, shall be governed similarly to Article 5, Members General Voting Rights. For Steering Committee votes, a member must have attended at least 50% of the Steering Committee meetings in the previous 12 months to be eligible to vote.
5. Any such decisions made by the Steering Committee shall be reported back to the MCOC at the next regular meeting and by email or posting on the Homeless Planning Website.
6. The ‘One Agency- One Vote’ rule shall also apply to the Steering Committee. Therefore, as many agencies and individuals as possible should be encouraged to participate as Chairs on various committees.

***Project Monitoring and Template Committee***

*The Project Monitoring and Template Committee exists to:*

1. Oversee the processes and methodologies used to monitor COC and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipient(s).
2. Monitor Renewal Projects that receive ongoing funding through COC and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) recipient(s) and provide results and recommendations to the Steering Committee.
3. Establish the criteria and protocols used to score and rank projects seeking funding through the COC.

*The Monitoring Process for CoC-Funded Projects:*

1. Refer and adhere to the Monitoring and Evaluation Policies and Procedures.
2. Develop and refine the Monitoring Questionnaires and methodology used to monitor and evaluate ongoing program performance. The Monitoring Questionnaires will be presented for approval by MCOC prior to the start of the Monitoring process.
3. Once approved, the Monitoring Questionnaires will be provided to all projects up for renewal in the current funding round, along with a request for the project’s most recent E-snaps APR and the most recent HMIS-generated APR.
4. The Project Committee will monitor project performance which results in a threshold score. If an agency fails to meet threshold, as determined by the MCOC, they will be put on a Performance Improvement Plan which will be reviewed as needed, annually at minimum, and with technical assistance from the appropriate MCOC committee(s) will be required to demonstrate performance improvement. The Project Committee will also offer and/or refer agencies to appropriate assistance and training if available.
5. This Committee then prepares the information collected and presents their recommendations to the Steering and the MCOC membership for processes of prioritization and performance improvement and the Selection Committee for scoring and ranking.

*The Monitoring Process for ESG Recipient(s):*

1. Refer and adhere to the Monitoring and Evaluation Policies and Procedures.
2. Develop and refine the Monitoring Questionnaire(s) and methodology used to monitor and evaluate ESG program performance. The Monitoring Questionnaires will be presented for approval by MCOC prior to the start of the Monitoring process.
3. Once approved, the Monitoring Questionnaires will be provided to the ESG recipient(s).
4. The Project Committee will monitor project performance which results in a threshold score. If an agency/program fails to meet threshold, as determined by the MCOC, they will be put on a Performance Improvement Plan which will be reviewed as needed, annually at minimum, and with technical assistance from the appropriate MCOC committee(s) will be required to demonstrate performance improvement. The Project Committee will also offer and/or refer agencies to appropriate assistance and training if available.
5. This Committee then prepares the information collected and presents their recommendations to Steering and the MCOC membership for processes of prioritization and performance improvement.

*The Scoring Template Process and Criteria:*

1. Develop and refine the Scoring Templates, methodologyand protocols used to score and rank project applications seeking funding through the MCOC annual Collaborative Application to HUD.
2. This Committee will work closely with other committees to determine appropriate criteria for the separate scoring templates for new and renewal projects, and HMIS applications. Scoring Templates will be based on priorities established by MCOC and by HUD and will be reviewed and adjusted annually at least at the start of the NOFA to account for HUD changing priorities.
3. This Committee will establish a list of protocols and instructions to be provided to the Selection Committee who utilize the scoring templates.
4. The scoring templates, protocols and instructions shall be presented for to MCOC for approval, copies of the approved forms will be provided to the Selection Committee and to all new, and renewal projects including HMIS project applicants prior to the Selection process.

***Data Committee*** *-* The Data Committee collects information on homelessness throughout the state and to improve data collection techniques and data analysis methods for use in the MCOC Application and to better inform MCOC members, and the general public regarding homelessness in Maine.

*The Steering Committee exists to:*

1. Review data obtained through the annual Point-in-Time count of sheltered and unsheltered persons and the annual Housing Inventory of shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing in the MCOC area.
2. Evaluate best practices, new guidance, and emerging approaches on data collection, methodology, sharing, and analysis.
3. Review and makes recommendations pertaining to HMIS data quality and completeness for all HMIS participating projects within the MCOC.
4. Coordinate with the other Standing Committees to ensure that they have the information they need to properly perform their functions.
5. Include at least one member of MaineHousing, as MaineHousing is also the statewide HMIS Lead Agency

***Resources Committee*** - The Resource Committee exists to engage the community and the MCOC members, and collects, organizes, and shares information on homelessness in the state of Maine.

*The Resource Committee exists to:*

1. Work to recruit and orient new members to MCOC and its Committees to involve the broader public including private businesses, landlords, law enforcement, educators, citizens, faith-based organizations, and persons who are homeless or were formerly homeless in the Continuum of Care planning activities.
2. Plan and implement training and education opportunities for members and other providers.
3. Assist in resource development strategies to access new funding sources and improve connections with other agencies and organization.
4. Engage with the community and supports local initiatives to reduce and end homelessness throughout the MCOC area, particularly in our rural communities.
5. Seek to educate and inform MCOC member organizations and the general public on issues regarding homelessness and availability and access to mainstream and other resources.
6. Plan and organize the annual Point in Time (PIT) count for the MCOC.
7. Provide technical assistance, resources and support

***Selection Committee*** - The Selection Committee consists of agencies and/or individuals not competing for project funding during the current round of the MCOC application process. The committee is responsible for the selection, scoring, and ranking of projects to be included in the annual MCOC Collaborative Application according to the Selection Process outlined below in Article 9.

*The Selection Committee exists to:*

1. Read, review, and score all COC applications
2. Rank applications based on score and make recommendations based on rank
3. Follow Articles 9: Selection Process and Article 10 Appeals Process, outlined below
4. Provide recommendations for continuous improvement

***Policy Committee*** -This committee is a Joint Standing Committee of the MCOC and the Statewide Homeless Council, formally known as the Maine Homeless Policy Committee. This committee is an action oriented group that collects, organizes, and shares information regarding numerous, ongoing policy initiatives. This committee advocates on the local, state, and federal levels for resources and funding for homeless services necessary to fulfill the mission, goals, and objectives of the Continuum of Care.

*The Policy Committee exists to:*

1. Disseminate information on a regular basis pertaining to current and upcoming policy initiatives relating to homelessness at the regional and statewide levels so Maine presents as a united front around homeless policy;
2. Serve as an informative liaison to the Statewide Homeless Council, Regional Homeless Councils, both Continuums of Care, and other local committees and coalitions regarding local, state, and federal legislation as it pertains to homelessness;
3. Advocate for fully funding McKinney Vento so that the HEARTH Act can be properly implemented; Advocate for adequate Section 8 funding; Advocate for funding for the National Housing Trust Fund; Advocate for the continuation of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, including ensuring support for the continuation of the Community Reinvestment Act;
4. Maintain contact with the State and Federal Delegations, acting as a resource for information pertaining to homeless services in Maine; Advocate for federal resources for homeless services and affordable housing; Advocate for state resources for homeless services and affordable housing;
5. Advocate for local/municipal resources for homeless services and affordable housing;
6. Advocate for a sustainable state budget to protect homeless services; Maintain Maine’s Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness as a local priority; Engage with the community and support local, state, and federal policy initiatives to reduce and end homelessness.

***Veteran Committee*** – This committee, formally known as The Maine Homeless Veterans Action Committee (MHVAC) was formed in collaboration with several Maine agencies and organizations. This committee is an action oriented group that collects, organizes, and shares information regarding all homeless Veterans in Maine. We work to ensure that Veterans are immediately identified, have access to shelter, are assisted in developing an active housing plan, and permanently housed as quickly as possible.

*This Veteran Committee exists to:*

1. Actively engaged in the Maine’s Coordinated Entry System with the COC.
2. Update COCs on BNL progress (as agreed upon by all parties).
3. Prioritizing and matching Veterans to housing and services.
4. Manage and update Veterans By-Name-List (BNL).
5. Actively participate in local COC meetings.
6. Ensure privacy, release of information, and consent protocols are in place to project Veteran information as contained on the BNL (per individual agency and organization requirements).
7. Stay abreast of current initiatives pertaining to ending and preventing homelessness for Veterans.

***Youth Committee*** – This committee, formally known as The Maine Homeless Youth Provider Group (MHYPG) is a Joint Standing Committee of the Maine Continuum of Care (MCoC) and the Statewide Homeless Council (SWHC). It was formed in collaboration with several Maine agencies (DHHS, DOE & DOC) and youth serving organizations to address the need for a statewide strategy to meet the needs of youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, as well as to advocate for policy change to improve systems of care for those youth. This committee is an action oriented group that collects, organizes, and shares information regarding all homeless youth in Maine. We work to ensure that there is a system of services in place for youth who are identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness that follows best practices and meets federal and state standards of care. We work to improve communication between provider agencies and coordinate care across the state so that youth have access to shelter, outreach and transitional living services.

*This Youth Committee exists to:*

1. Build awareness of best practices for serving homeless and at risk of homeless youth, and disseminate that information to provider agencies.
2. Creating opportunities for youth voice to be present and/or represented in policies and decisions regarding systems, services and programs that directly impact their lives.
3. Advocate for policies that improve access to resources for homeless and at risk of homeless youth.
4. Create opportunities for coordination of services between state agencies and youth serving organizations.
5. To serve as an expert resource on youth homelessness to the MCoC, SWHC and Maine State Agencies.
6. Stay abreast of current national initiatives aimed at ending and preventing youth homelessness and advocate on a statewide level for the pursuit of resources to end and prevent youth homelessness in Maine.

***Sub-Populations and Advisory Councils-*** The Sub/ or Target Populations shall form independent Advisory Councils separate from the COC. Advisory Councils will inform and advise the COC Board of Directors, COC, Steering Committee and other committees’ population specific advice, recommendations and updates as relevant.

**Article 9. Selection Process**

1. MCOC shall provide information and materials to all committee members to familiarize them with the purpose and responsibilities of the committee.
2. Applications, Scoring Templates, and all other relevant materials will be given to the Selection Committee members for review prior to scoring.
3. All projects shall be scored using the appropriate approved Scoring Template.
4. Ranking of applications will be based on scoring results and adjusted as appropriate to address MCOC and HUD priorities and to maximize potential funding.
5. The Selection Committee shall draw up a slate of project applications in ranked order of prioritization to be recommended to MCOC for inclusion in the Application.

**Article 10. Appeals Process**

1. The original decision or action being appealed shall remain in effect throughout the Appeals Process unless or until a Final Decision is reached. Timeframes may be adjusted in order to expedite the CoC Application Process. However, MCOC makes no assurances that an appeal will be resolved within any timeframe other than that outlined below or as prescribed by HUD.
2. STEP ONE APPEAL: An appeal must be submitted in writing to the CA within five (5) working days from the date of the decision or action the individual or agency is appealing. The appeal should include the date of the filing of the appeal, the specific decision or action the individual or agency is in disagreement with, suggestions about possible ways to resolve the situation, and must include how the individual or agency can be reached. (Send attention to: Maine Continuum of Care, using CA info as outlined in Appendix 1.)
3. Within ten (10) working days, the CA shall convene all available members of the Steering Committee or action to review and respond in writing to the Step One Appeal.
4. If the individual or agency is not satisfied with the outcome of the Step One Appeal, the individual or agency may appeal again within five (5) working days from the date the individual or agency received the Step One Decision by filing a written Step Two Appeal to the CA. If there is no Step Two Appeal or if the issues are resolved in Step One, the Step One Decision shall be Final.
5. STEP TWO APPEAL: Within ten (10) working days, CA shall convene all available members of the COC Board to review, investigate and respond in writing to the Step Two Appeal.
6. If dissatisfied with the Step Two Decision, the individual or agency may submit a Step Three Appeal to the CA, requesting that the issue be reviewed by an ad-hoc Appeals Committee of the Maine COC. The written Step Three Appeal must be sent within five (5) working days from the date the individual or agency received the Step 2 decision. The Step Two Decision shall be Final.
7. The above steps outline the MCOC Appeals Process. However, in the event the project does not agree with the MCOC decision, the agency may send a complaint / appeal to the MCOC HUD representative.

**Article 11. Reallocation Procedure**

HUD expects communities to use the reallocation process to ensure that funding for the CoC program remains as competitive as possible. The goals include helping communities progress toward HUD-identified priority areas, ensuring high standards for performance outcomes, and ensuring effective use of limited funding. CoCs are scored overall each year through the CoC Consolidated Application, and this score determines the CoC’s competitiveness for renewal and new funding. Part of the score has historically included the CoC’s use of the reallocation process.

HUD encourages communities to analyze their portfolio of grants to determine if there is the right mix of housing and services, and whether funding for some projects, in whole or in part, should be reallocated to make resources available for new efforts.

The MCoC is responsible for decisions regarding the reallocation process each year. This includes consideration for voluntary and involuntary reallocations.

Voluntary reallocations are initiated by a renewal project applicant by choice. There are different reasons a renewal project applicant might choose reallocation. An applicant might see a greater need in the community for a different type of project from the one they are currently operating. They might also recognize that a different type of project will better meet HUD’s priorities for the CoC program, possibly making the CoC overall more competitive for additional funds for new projects. Or, an applicant may be prompted to consider changes to their project if they scored very low during the most recent CoC renewal competition.

Renewal applicants may voluntarily reallocate their project(s) at any point in time, up to and including during the annual NOFA process. Renewal applicants may choose to voluntarily reallocate funding for their project(s) and instead submit a new application for funding, based upon eligibility outlined in the HUD’s NOFA. Based on the score and ranking approved by the CoC, renewal applicants may choose to resubmit their application as a voluntary reallocation (in whole or in part) to a new type of project, according to HUD’s final rules published with the NOFA. Any new projects submitted in this way will be re-scored, which may result in a change of rankings for all projects.

**Article 12. Code of Conduct**

1. All members of the Maine Continuum of Care have the responsibility for maintaining high standards of honesty, integrity, courtesy, respect, and ethical conduct in all MCOC activities. Members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner while carrying out the business of MCOC and to:
	1. Advocate on behalf of all people experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness, with respect, concern, courtesy, compassion, and responsiveness.
	2. Exercise reasonable care, good faith and due diligence in all MCOC business and act within the boundaries of his or her authority regarding MCOC business.
	3. Carefully prepare for, regularly attend, and actively participate in MCOC meetings, committees, and other assignments.
	4. Accept personal responsibility to be informed of emerging issues and to administer MCOC business with professional competence, fairness, efficiency, and effectiveness.
	5. Approach MCOC activities with a positive attitude and constructively support open communication, cooperation, creativity, dedication, and collaboration.
	6. Respect and value the work done by, and the diversity of, opinions expressed by, other members of MCOC, and our partnering agencies and organizations, and to formally register dissent or disagreement only in an appropriate and professional manner.
2. Members have an obligation to conduct MCOC business within guidelines that prohibit actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest and to serve in a manner as to avoid inappropriate personal gain resulting from the performance of MCOC duties.
	1. An actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest occurs when a Member is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that Member, a relative, or an entity with which the member is associated. Personal gain may result from financial interest, a substantial gift, or any form of special consideration.
	2. MCOC members are expected to identify any conflicts prior to any activities where that would be an issue.
	3. No MCOC member may participate in any decision on any MCOC Application if that member has a direct or indirect interest in any entity that is a party to the application or that has a financial interest in the project.
	4. All members must respect and protect privileged information to which there is access in the course of MCOC duties and may not divulge or profit from the confidential information learned while performing MCOC duties.
3. Any concerns regarding Code of Conduct or Conflict of Interest matters must be brought to the attention of the Steering Committee who will consider all facts and will make a recommend to the full MCOC what further action, if any, should be taken.
4. **Abstention and Recusal Process** If at any time there is a conflict of interest whereby an organization or individual will have a direct interest in the funding, scoring, ranking, or policy decision making, then that organization, representative of the organization or individual will abstain and/or recuse themselves for the process in order to mitigate any perceived conflict of interest. The abstention and/or recusal may be oral or in writing. In addition, the CoC may request an organization, representative of organization or individual to abstain and/or recuse themselves from any activities. The CoC may also elect to develop a subcommittee consisting of members or individuals with no direct interest to make recommendations regarding funding, scoring, ranking, or policy decision.

**Article 13. Adoption and Amendment of Governance Document**

1. This Governance document shall be adopted and thereafter amended at a regular MCOC meeting by a simple majority (at least 51%) affirmative vote of the members present and eligible to vote.
2. Proposed amendments must be in written form and distributed to the members of the MCOC prior to the presentation and vote.
3. The MCOC can choose to fully revise the governance policy to include an agreed upon change or an Amended Article may be added for insertion into the existing document.

**Addendum 1 for MCOC Governance**

MCOC business address is:

Maine Continuum of Care (MCOC)

MaineHousing

353 Water Street

Augusta, Maine 04330-4633

MCOC Web Address is:

[www.mainehomelessplanning.org](http://www.mainehomelessplanning.org)