



Polk County Continuum of Care Membership Overview Document

The membership of the Polk County Continuum of Care is open to all community stakeholders who are interested in preventing and ending homelessness in Polk County and willing to engage in and support the work of the Polk County Continuum of Care. Community stakeholders include non-profit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, government entities, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals. All are invited to become members, including individuals, organizations and associations that support the Polk County Continuum of Care mission within Polk County, Iowa.

Membership Role

The most powerful and effective strategy in ending homelessness is the engagement and collective impact of our membership. Through its membership, the Polk County Continuum of Care will mobilize community stakeholders, and effectively use community resources to prevent and end homelessness. Membership objectives include:

- a. Build community awareness of the problem of homelessness and solutions to ending homelessness.
- b. Generate political will in executing solutions to ending homelessness.
- c. Engage grassroots resources in preventing homelessness.
- d. Advance best practices; programmatic knowledge and skills.
- e. Achieve collective impact in ending homelessness.
- f. Apply programmatic and strategic expertise.
- g. Inform strategic planning to end homelessness.

General Membership categories

- a. **Individual Member:** Individual with an interest in preventing/ending homelessness, such as a consumer, homeless or formerly homeless individual, a volunteer, a professional, agency board member, or student.
- b. **Homeless assistance agency:** A public or non-profit agency or organization that provides homeless assistance, including services, health care, benefits, financial assistance and affordable housing resources.
- c. **Community Based Organization:** Community organizations, including units of government, public housing authority, law enforcement, federal agency, educational organizations, including school districts and universities, faith-based organizations, funders of community resources and networks of agencies or individuals.

d. **Private Sector:** Businesses or other entities with an interest in supporting community efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

Membership Participation

The Polk County Continuum of Care seeks a high level of participation and engagement of community stakeholders in the efforts to successfully achieve the mission. The Polk County Continuum of Care will actively recruit members to enlist in the work of preventing homelessness. There is no limit regarding the number of member representatives/associates who choose to engage and participate in Polk County Continuum of Care activities. All representatives of Polk County Continuum of Care members, including staff, board, clients and volunteers are welcome and encouraged to participate in the Polk County Continuum of Care activities, including committees, planning efforts, advocacy and community activities directed toward the goal of ending homelessness.

Membership Voting Rights

The Polk County Continuum of Care membership is encouraged to voice its views and beliefs in the governance of the organization, including development of policies and procedures. Individual members may exercise the right to vote on periodic updates of the Governance Charter, including Polk County Continuum of Care policies and procedures, amendments to the charter, and strategic plans. Each individual member will receive a single vote on any decision or vote required of the full membership. Only individual members who have completed the required registration form during the membership invitation periods and have met participation requirements as described within the Continuum of Care Membership Requirements, in the section directly following, are entitled to vote.

Polk County Continuum of Care Membership Requirements

To become and retain membership, the following must:

- a. Complete a membership application form with basic contact information
- b. Meet a minimum participation threshold to maintain their membership status in the Polk County Continuum of Care. To retain membership in good standing, a member must participate in eligible Polk County Continuum of Care activities within the most recent twelve months. Eligible Continuum of Care activities may include:
 - o Polk County Continuum of Care Board meetings
 - o Semi-annual full membership meetings
 - o Strategic Planning sessions, forums and focus groups
 - o Provider Advisory Committee meetings
 - o CoC Standing committee meetings
 - o Community-wide activities, including the Point in Time Count or the annual Homeless Connect event