Columbus Muscogee / Russell County Continuum of Care GA-505

GOVERNANCE CHARTER

ADOPTED January 27, 2014

AMENDED August 11, 2016
Amended August 24, 2017
Amended August 13, 2020
Amended August 17, 2023
Amended August 15, 2024
Amended August 15, 2025

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1. Organization

The name of this unincorporated organization is the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County Continuum of Care. HUD refers to this COC as the GA-505 Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC. The principal office of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall be at the office of Home for Good (HFG) unless changed by the COC.

Mailing address:

Home for Good
P.O. Box 1157
Columbus, GA 31902

Home for Good
1005 Front Ave
Columbus, GA 31901

Vice President: Pat Frey email: pfrey@unitedcv.org
Office: 762-250-0643
Website: https://unitedcv.org/hfg/

2. Geographic Area

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC carries out its activities throughout all of Muscogee County, Georgia, and Russell County, Alabama areas.

3. Mission, Purpose, and Description

Mission: Our mission is to work to end the cycle of homelessness in the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC through interagency collaboration, effective allocation of resources, increased access to immediate services, and development of new strategies. Using shelters, the Homeless Resource Network and Home for Good as a point of contact, we will identify the service and housing needs of people who are homeless or about to become homeless and create solutions needed to prevent homelessness and move people from homelessness to housing and self-sufficiency.

Purpose:

- Promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness;
- Provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers and local governments to re-house homeless individuals and families rapidly while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness;
- Promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families; and
- Optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Description: The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC is the voluntary association that provides leadership, strategic planning services, advocacy, and information for the Columbus — Muscogee/Russell County region's homeless population.

4. Responsibilities

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC is responsible for fulfilling four major duties, as follows:

4.1. Operation of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC

- Hold meetings of the full membership, with published agendas, at least semi-annually.
- Issue a public invitation annually for new members to join within the geographic area.
- Adopt and follow a written process to select a COC board and review, update, and approve the process at least once every five years.
- Appoint additional committees, subcommittees, or workgroups.
- Adopt, follow, and update annually a governance charter in consultation with the collaborative applicant and the CMIS lead.
- For COC and ESG grants, establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type in consultation with recipients and sub-recipients, then monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, take actions against poor performers, and report to HUD.
- Establish and operate a centralized or coordinated assessment system in consultation with recipients of ESG Funds; and
- Establish and follow written standards for providing COC assistance in consultation with recipients of ESG Funds. At a minimum, these written standards must include:
  a. Policies and procedures for evaluating individuals' and families' eligibility for assistance.
  b. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible individuals and families will receive transitional housing assistance.
  c. Policies and procedures for determining and prioritizing which eligible families and individuals will receive rapid rehousing assistance.
  d. Standards for determining what percentage or amount of rent each program participant must pay while receiving rapid rehousing assistance; and
  e. Policies and procedures for determining which eligible individuals and families will receive permanent supportive housing assistance.
  f. Policies and procedures for eligibility are in accordance with 24 CFR part 5 (Docket No.FR 5863-F-02) RIN 2506-AC40, which provides equal access regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

4.2. Designation and operation of a Community Management Information System (CMIS)

- Designate a single CMIS for its geographic area and designate an eligible applicant to manage its CMIS.
- Review, revise, and approve privacy, security, and data quality plans.
- Ensure consistent participation of recipients/sub-recipients in CMIS.
- Ensure that the CMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements; and
- Provide funding for adequate operation of the CMIS system.

4.3. Continuum of Care Planning

- Coordinate implementation of a housing and service system within its geographic area that meets the needs of homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families. At a minimum, such system encompasses the following:
    (i) Outreach, engagement, and assessment.
    (ii) Shelter, housing, and supportive services.
    (iii) Prevention strategies.
- Planning for and conducting, at least biennially, a point-in-time count of homeless people within the geographic area that meets the following requirements:
    (i) Homeless people who are living in a place not designed or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans must be counted as unsheltered homeless people.
    (ii) People living in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects must be counted as sheltered homeless people.
    (iii) Other requirements established by HUD by Notice.
- Conducting an annual gaps analysis of the homeless needs and services available within the geographic area.
- Providing information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s) within the Continuum's geographic area.
- Consulting with State and local government Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients within the Continuum's geographic area; on the plan for allocating Emergency Solutions Grants program funds and reporting on and evaluating the performance of Emergency Solutions Grants program recipients and subrecipients.

VAWA emergency transfer plan. The Continuum of Care must develop the emergency transfer plan for the Continuum of Care that meets the requirements under 24 CFR 5 Docket No. FR-6330-N-01 Document Number 2022-28073.

4.4. Preparation of a COC Application for Funds

- Design, operate, and follow a collaborative process for the development of applications and approve submission of applications in response to a COC Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).
- Establish priorities for funding projects.
- Designate the collaborative applicant to submit the application.
- The collaborative applicant must collect and combine the required application information from all projects within the geographic area and potentially apply for funding for COC planning activities.

5. COC Membership

5.1. Open Membership and New Members

Membership in the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC is open to all stakeholders in Muscogee / Russell County, including nonprofit homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, homeless or formerly homeless persons and organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.

Annually, the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall issue a public invitation for any interested person within Muscogee / Russell County, to become a member of the COC. The invitation will be sent to relevant organizations in Muscogee / Russell County and published in a daily newspaper with wide circulation in Muscogee / Russell County.

New members may enroll at any time during the year by providing to the COC their names, contact information, and any relevant affiliations.

5.2. Responsibilities of Members

Most of the responsibilities of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC will be carried out by its Board (with input from Members), with the following exceptions:

- Members will vote directly to approve the governance framework set forth in this Governance Charter and any subsequent changes or additions to the Governance Charter.
- Every five years following initial approval of this Governance Charter, members will review, update, and approve changes to the Governance Charter.
- Unless the Board selection process is changed by a subsequent amendment to the Governance Charter, members will vote annually to elect directors to vacant/expiring board positions.

5.3. Membership Meetings

The full membership of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall meet at least semi-annually. The semi-annual meetings shall include a report on the CoC's activities, funding, and progress toward meeting goals. All Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members shall be notified of the date and location of membership meetings.

The final meeting of the year will be the Annual Meeting. The agenda for the Annual Meeting will include, but not limited to:

- The election of directors to serve on the Board.
- A review of any proposed changes to the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Governance Charter followed by a vote on those changes; and
- Any other business the Board chooses to put before its members.

5.4. Notice of Meeting and Attendance

Notice of the place, date and time of each Membership Meeting, including the Annual Meeting, shall be sent to members by email or other reasonable means of communication at least five business days before the meeting date, along with the agenda for the meeting.

5.5. Attendance and Participation

A. **Continuum of Care Grantees**: All Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Supportive Services Only (SSO), and Shelter Plus Care (S+C) grantees are required to actively participate in the COC. Executive Directors or program decision makers may designate an agency representative. HUD COC grantees must attend at least 75% of the previous twelve Program Grantee meetings in order to maintain funding or be included in the combined HUD application to receive new funding.

B. **Other Agencies**: Attendance and participation is crucial in meeting the mission of the CoC. As such, active participation is also a must to maintain funding. Additionally, the active participation of other agencies is essential in workload distribution. Participation ensures the fair distribution of workload; each agency is required to actively participate on a minimum of one working committee.

C. **Individuals**: Individual attendance and active participation are essential in meeting the mission of the CoC. Therefore, all individual members are expected to actively participate on a minimum of one working committee. This will assist in equal workload distribution of the CoC.

5.6. Quorum and Voting

The members present at any properly announced meeting of Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members shall constitute a quorum. Issues presented to Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members for a vote will be decided by simple majority of the votes cast.

6. Board

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall be governed by a Board which will provide oversight and accountability for all Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC responsibilities.

6.1. Responsibilities of the Board

Except for those responsibilities assigned to the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members (in paragraph 5.2 above), the Board will act on behalf of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC to fulfill the regulatory duties of a continuum of care set forth in 24 CFR § 578. The Board shall be responsible for approval and implementation of all COC policies and procedures,

6.2. Board Membership

6.2.1. Composition

The Board will consist of an odd number of Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members totaling no less than 7 and no more than 11 members. The Board must be representative of the stakeholder organizations identified in paragraph 5.1 and must include a representative of the COC Collaborative Applicant and the CMIS Lead, as well as representatives of each of the following four groups: 1) Government; 2) Nonprofit Homeless Service Providers; 3) Consumers and Advocates; and 4) Community Stakeholders. The Board must, at all times, include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual. Examples of each of the four categories are provided below.

Government Representatives

- City of Columbus, GA
- City of Phenix City, AL
- Muscogee / Russell County Law Enforcement
- Veterans Administration

Nonprofit Homeless Assistance Providers

- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) provider
- Veterans Services provider
- Domestic Violence Services provider
- Emergency Food and Shelter provider
- Homeless Service provider

Consumers and Advocates

- Homeless/formerly homeless person
- Health Care for the Homeless Consumer Board
- HIV/AIDS Consumer Board
- Community advocacy agency
- National Alliance Mental Illness

Community Stakeholders

- Regional funders (United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, Community Foundation)
- Faith-based Organizations
- Affiliated Chambers of Commerce (Columbus and Phenix City)
- Hospitals

6.2.2. Term of Office

Directors will serve staggered terms of three years so that approximately one-third of directors will stand for election each year. In the first year, newly-elected directors will draw lots to determine the length of their term—one, two, or three years. There is no limit to the number of terms a director may serve.

6.2.3. Nomination and Voting

Each year the existing Board will solicit recommendations from COC members and develop for Membership approval a slate of candidates for election to the Board. The Membership will vote for vacant/expiring Board positions at the Annual Meeting.

6.2.4. Resignation and Removal

Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, any representative may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair. In addition, directors may be removed from the Board by a majority vote of remaining Board members for repeated absence, misconduct, failure to participate, or violation of conflict of interest policies.

6.2.5. Vacancies

When a director resigns or is removed from the Board or cannot serve his/her full term for any reason, the Board may appoint another Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC member to fill the unexpired term.

6.3. Officers

6.3.1. Officers

The officers of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary.

6.3.2. Election and Term

The officers shall be elected by the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Members annually, at the Annual Meeting. Each officer shall hold office for a term of one year or until their successors have been elected and qualified. No person may hold more than one office.

6.3.3. Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair is responsible for scheduling meetings of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC, ensuring that the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC meets regularly or as needed, and for setting the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the Steering Committee. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair assumes the duties of the Chair.

6.3.4. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep accurate records of the acts and proceedings of all meetings of the COC Board or designate another person to do so at each meeting, including documenting all actions taken without a meeting. Such records will include the names of those in attendance. The Secretary shall give all notices required by law and by these Regulations. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC may designate and shall chair Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC meetings in the case of the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.

6.3.5. Resignation of Officers

Unless otherwise provided by written agreement, any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair or the Secretary. Any such resignations shall take effect at the time

specified within the written notice or if the time is not specified therein upon its acceptance by the Columbus Muscogee / Russell County COC.

6.3.6. Officer Vacancies

Vacancies among the officers may be filled for the remainder of the term by a vote of the majority of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC directors at any meeting at which a quorum is present.

7. Rules of Governance for the Board

7.1. Quorum and Voting

A number equal to a majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting.

At all meetings, business items may be decided by arriving at a consensus. If a vote is necessary, all votes shall be by voice or ballot at the will of the majority of those in attendance at a meeting with a quorum represented. If no quorum is present, votes may be taken electronically or telephonically. Each representative seat shall have one vote. No member may vote on any item which presents a real or perceived conflict of interest.

7.2. Proxies

Board members may have non-voting proxies to attend meetings in their place.

7.3. Action Without a Meeting

Any action that may be taken at any meeting of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Board may be taken without a meeting if that action is approved, in writing (e.g. letter, email) by a majority of all Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Board members who would be entitled to vote if a meeting was held for such purpose.

8. Committees and Working Groups

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC will carry out its responsibilities through the work of a number of Committees and Working Groups. All COC Members may participate on Committees and Working Groups, with the exception of the Steering Committee, which must be made up -of members of the Board of Directors. Policies and policy decisions made by Committees and Working Groups must be approved by the Board before taking effect.

8.1. Standing Committees

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC shall have four standing committees, as follows:

8.1.1. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall set agendas for Board meetings and shall carry out the work of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC between quarterly Board meetings. The Committee shall be made up of the representative of the Collaborative Applicant, the Board Chair, the Board Vice Chair, the Board Secretary, and up to three additional members of Board.

8.1.2. Performance and Outcomes Committee

The Performance and Outcomes Committee will collaborate with the Collaborative Applicant, CoC-funded entities, and COC Membership to:

- Review PIT and HIC data, conduct a gaps analysis, and make recommendations for Board approval of the priorities to be used in ranking requests for COC funding.
- Establish performance targets appropriate for population and program type in consultation with recipients and sub-recipients, then monitor recipient and sub-recipient performance, evaluate outcomes, and recommend to the Board actions to be taken against poor performers.
- Develop performance measures to evaluate Muscogee / Russell County 's overall success in eliminating homelessness, using guidance available from HUD and making changes over time as necessary to incorporate new regulations or guidance available from state or local authorities.
- Evaluate outcomes of projects funded under the COC Program, and provide outcome data to the Collaborative Applicant to report to HUD; and
- Consult with state and local government agencies, homeless service providers, private funders, and other relevant entities and organizations to evaluate available resources and reach an agreement about how those resources can be allocated effectively to implement plans to eliminate homelessness.

8.1.3. COC Application Committee

The COC Application Committee will:

- Work with the Collaborative Applicant to design and implement a collaborative process for developing a consolidated application for Muscogee / Russell County programs and projects seeking COC funding.
- Review findings of the Performance and Outcomes Committee, the program priorities established by the Board, and the applications for new programs or projects, and make recommendations to the Board about which programs/projects to include in the annual COC application, and rank projects for the application, suggest reallocation of monies from renewal projects; and
- Develop and oversee operation of a grievance process for agencies whose applications for funding have not been selected by the COC.

8.1.4. Mainstream and Outreach Committee

The Mainstream and Outreach Committee will work with Service Providers to:

- Develop strategies and programs to improve connections between people experiencing homelessness and mainstream services, especially in the areas of vocational training, employment, and supportive services,
- Oversees education and outreach to the homeless population, as well as the general population through collaborative relationships and public education efforts; and
- Updates the Board as to any areas of concern or gaps in services.

8.1.5. CMIS/Data Committee

The CMIS Committee will work with the CMIS Lead to:

- Develop, annually review, and, as necessary, revise for Board approval a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan for the CMIS, as well as any other CMIS policies and procedures required by HUD.
- Develop for Board approval and implement a plan for monitoring the CMIS to ensure that:
    - Recipients and sub-recipients consistently participate in CMIS.
    - CMIS is satisfying the requirements of all regulations and notices issued by HUD.
    - The CMIS Lead is fulfilling the obligations outlined in its CMIS Governance Charter and Agreement with the COC, including the obligation to enter into written participation agreements with each contributing CMIS organization.
- Oversee and monitor CMIS data collection and production of the following reports:
    - Sheltered point-in-time count.
    - Housing Inventory Chart.
    - Annual System Performance Measures
    - Longitudinal System Analysis

8.1.6 Coordinated Entry (CES) Committee

The Coordinated Entry Committee will work with the CES Lead to:

Develop, annually review, and, as necessary, revise for Board approval a plan to ensure that homeless people and people at risk of homelessness are matched, as quickly as possible, with the intervention that will most efficiently and effectively end their homelessness required by HUD.

- Allow anyone who needs assistance to know where to go to get that assistance, to be assessed in a standard and consistent way, and to connect with the housing programs and services that best meet their needs.

- Ensure clarity, transparency, consistency and accountability for homeless clients, referral sources and homeless service providers throughout the assessment and referral process.

- Facilitate exits from homelessness to stable housing in the most rapid manner possible given available resources.

- Ensure that clients gain access as efficiently and effectively as possible to the type of intervention most appropriate to their immediate and long-term housing needs;

- Ensure that people who have been homeless for the longest and/or are the most vulnerable have priority access to scarce permanent supportive housing resources.

8.1.7 Point in Time Count Committee

- The Point in Time Committee comes together during December and January each year to plan for and undertake the annual point-in-time count.
- The Point in Time Count will be a complete Count of all those experiencing homelessness to include Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing and Unsheltered in accordance with HUD Guidelines.

8.1.8 Lived Experience Committee

- The lived experience committee will be comprised of individuals with live experience of homelessness.
- The committee will use their unique expertise to support planning and implementation efforts and to strategically target resources to increase housing placements, prevent homelessness, and improve our homeless system by advancing equity throughout.

9. Appointment of Agents and Designation of CMIS

9.1. Collaborative Applicant

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley serves as the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CoC's Collaborative Applicant.

9.2. CMIS Lead

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley currently serves as the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CoC's CMIS Lead.

9.3. CMIS Designation

The Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC designates Client Track as the single Community Management Information System for its geographic area.

9.4. CMIS Governance Charter

The duties and responsibilities of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC, the CMIS Lead, the CMIS/Data Committee and Contributing CMIS Organizations are set forth in further detail in the CMIS Governance Charter, approved simultaneously with this Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Governance Charter.

10. Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

10.1. Conduct and Attendance

Directors, committee members, and other Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC agents and employees must exercise care, diligence and prudence when acting on behalf of the Columbus Muscogee / Russell County COC. These individuals must timely complete work they have agreed to undertake on behalf of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC. In addition, they must attend Board and committee meetings and be prepared to discuss matters presented for their deliberation. Active participation is critical to the success of our mission. As such, members who are absent from two meetings without notice or explanation will receive written notification regarding their absences. The third absence without notice or explanation within a calendar year or repeated failure to complete work assignments will be grounds for removal from the Board and/or committee assignments.

10.2. Conflict of Interest

10.2.1. Rules Regarding Conflict

Directors, committee members, and other Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC agents and employees must abide by the following rules in order to avoid conflicts of interest and promote public confidence in the integrity of the COC and its processes. Failure to honor these rules will be grounds for removal from the Board and any of its committees.

- Directors, committee members, and other Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC agents and employees may not participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefit to:
    - Any organization that they or a member of their immediate family represents; or
    - Any organization from which they or a member of their immediate family derives income or anything of value.
- Whenever Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC directors, committee members, agents, employees, or any of their immediate family members have a financial interest or any other personal interest in a matter coming before the Board or one of its committees, they must:
    - Fully disclose the nature of the interest; and
    - Withdraw from discussing, lobbying or voting on the matter.

10.2.2. Disclosure

At the beginning of every meeting of the Board or committee, Board and committee members must disclose if they have any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest regarding any business included in the meeting's agenda.

10.2.3. Abstention from Decision-Making

Any matter in which directors or Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC committee members have an actual or potential conflict of interest will be decided only by a vote of disinterested individuals. In addition, the minutes of any meeting at which such a vote is conducted must reflect the disclosure of interested directors' and committee members' actual or potential conflicts of interest and their abstention.

10.2.4. Annual Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form

Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC directors and Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC committee members must sign a conflict of interest form annually, affirming that they have reviewed the conflict of interest policy and disclosing any conflicts of interest that they face or are likely to face in fulfillment of their duties as directors.

11. Approval of Governance Charter and Subsequent Amendments

This Governance Charter and every subsequent amendment to it must be approved by a majority of Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC members, in consultation with the Collaborative Applicant and the CMIS Lead, the Board will review the Governance Charter annually and recommend to the Members changes to improve the functioning of the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC and maintain compliance with federal and state regulations. In addition, every five years, the Board will invite interested COC Members to participate in a review and discussion of the Governance Charter. Based on the consensus achieved in that discussion, the Board will ask Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County COC Members to ratify the existing Governance Charter or approve proposed changes to the Governance Charter at their next Annual Meeting.

Certification

I, Dr. Lakeita Arrington-Judkins, the undersigned, the duly elected and acting Chair of the COLUMBUS MUSCOGEE / RUSSELL COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE, GA-505, do hereby certify the foregoing Governance Charter was duly presented to the full membership of said Coe and approved by same. This replaces the previously amended Governance Charter of August 17,2023.

Dr. Lakeita Arrington- Judkins
Chair
Muscogee/Russel County Continuum of Care

I, Tiffany Cole, the undersigned, the duly elected and acting Chair of the COLUMBUS MUSCOGEE/ RUSSELL CMIS Committee, GA-505, do hereby certify the foregoing Governance Charter was duly presented to the full membership of said Coe and approved by same. This replaces the previously amended Governance Charter of August 17,2023.

Tiffany Cole *9/5/2025*
Tiffany Cole
Chair
Muscogee/Rusell CMIS Committee

Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County Continuum of Care Community Management Information System (CM/RC CoC-CMIS)

Policy and Procedures Manual

Revised Sept 2019
Effective October 1, 2019

REVISED July 2023
REVISED April 2024
REVISED April 2025
REVISED August 2025
REVISED September 2025

Managed by:
Home for Good
1005 Front Ave
Columbus, GA 31901

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WHAT IS CMIS?

Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County Continuum of Care Community Management Information System (CM/RC CoC-CMIS) is designed for Contributing CMIS Organizations (CCOs) CCOs that provide housing and services to homeless people. Counties or Continuum's of Care (CoC) are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) [CoC Program interim rule 24 CFR 578] to operate an CMIS and meet all requirements. Programs targeted for participation include outreach services, supportive services for homeless persons, homelessness prevention and intervention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. Beyond meeting the HUD requirements, it is the goal of CM/RC COC-CMIS to assist organizations in recording and tracking client service data and generating reports, providing information helpful to funders, planners and policy makers, and to increase the coordination among organizations.

MISSION

The mission of Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CoC CMIS is to identify gaps in homeless services delivery, provide reporting resources for homeless services providers and funders, reduce duplicate efforts for both providers and recipients of homeless services, and facilitate access to services for persons who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

BENEFITS OF CMIS

The benefits of the CM/RC COC-CMIS are to:

- Inform government and the community about the extent and nature of homelessness in the Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County area.
- Assist in numerous planning processes including but not limited to the 10-year plan to End Homelessness, Continuum of Care planning, and the Consolidated Plan.
- Enable organizations to have accurate information about the clients they serve.
- Provide information on successes and challenges of homeless programs.
- Prepare informational reports for funders.
- Facilitate funding needed for housing and other related services, thereby ultimately benefiting homeless households.
- Enable the participating CCOs and the community to understand client needs, resources and gaps through the use of aggregated data.
- Help programs identify processes that are problematic, support redesign efforts, and improve the quality of the services provided by the organization.

Benefits of using the (CM/RC CoC-CMIS)**:**

- Automated reporting – complete monthly, quarterly, and annual reports for key funders (including local funders, the State & HUD) with training.
- No technical expertise or IT staff required – the CM/RC COC-CMIS is centrally maintained, and training is provided for all CM/RC COC-CMIS users by the CMIS Administrators
- Designed to meet HUD, HIPAA, and local provider needs
- Captures changes in clients' needs over time
- Enables client data sharing between CCOs when programs and clients agree, eliminating redundant intake forms for clients and service providers.

STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

STAGE 1: INITIATING ORGANIZATION CMIS PARTICIPATION (FOR NEW ORGANIZATIONS)

1. Complete the training on use of forms (CM/RC COC-CMIS Client Consent form, Privacy Policy).
2. An Internet connection—DSL or Cable with static IP address is secured for the CCO.
3. A CCO CMIS Contact is designated by the CCO.
4. CCO completes and submits to the CMIS administrator all participation agreement materials including:
    - Signed CM/RC COC-CMIS Organization Partner Agreement
    - Signed CM/RC COC-CMIS User Agreement form for each individual user that will be using CM/RC CoC CMIS.
5. The CCO director designates organization staff to receive access to the system.
6. The CMIS Administrator(s) visit the site to assist the CCO CM/RC COC-CMIS Contact in initial operative tests on the program's equipment and completeness of security checklist (if needed).

STAGE 2: DATA ENTRY BEGINS

1. The CM/RC COC-CMIS Contact, and users receive training on using the CM/RC COC-CMIS application.
2. Access codes and passwords are assigned to all end-users.
3. Data entry begins and includes the required data elements.
4. The CMIS Administrators are available for a site visit to assist with any questions after initial use of the system.
5. The CMIS Administrators track problems, opportunities to improve the process and track coverage.

STAGE 3: SYSTEM FULLY INTEGRATED IN DAILY OPERATION

1. CCO specific training is provided on querying reports and additional functions accessed in the CC-CMIS.
2. CCOs begin using the information for internal evaluation and reporting requirements.

MAINTENANCE OF DATA AND ONSITE COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

Policy: CCOs commit to a reasonable program of data and equipment maintenance in order to sustain an efficient level of system operation.

Standard: CCOs must meet the technical standards for minimum computer equipment configuration, internet connectivity, data storage, and data backup.

Purpose: To ensure that CCOs adopt equipment and data maintenance programs.

Responsibilities:
The CCO staff or designee will be responsible for the maintenance and disposal of on-site computer equipment and data used for participation in the CM/RC COC-CMIS Project as follows:

- **Computer Equipment:** Each CCO is responsible for maintenance of their computer equipment. This includes purchase of and upgrades to all existing and new computer equipment for utilization in CC-CMIS.
- **Backup:** ClientTrack is responsible for supporting a backup procedure for the server on which the CM/RC COC-CMIS database resides.
- **Internet Connection:** CCOs are responsible for troubleshooting problems with their agency's Internet Connections.
- **Data Storage:** ClientTrack is responsible for storing data in a secure format and for performing daily backups of the data.
- **Data Disposal:** The CCO is responsible for disposing of documents that contain identifiable client level data by shredding paper records, deleting any information from any recording media used to retain digital data before disposal, and deleting any copies of client level data from the hard drive of any machine before transfer or disposal.
    - **Retention of paper copies of personally identifying information:** The CCO may not retain paper copies of personally identifying information derived from CM/RC COC-CMIS longer than seven years after the last day the person is served by the CCO. Paper copies will be destroyed through the use of a paper shredder or through a contract with a shredding management company.

Minimum Workstation Requirements: User's computers must have, at a minimum, a DSL connection or faster connection to the internet. ClientTrack is designed to run on Microsoft Internet Explorer version 7.0 and higher or Google Chrome. The operation of Client Track is dependent on the browser, not on the operating system installed on the computer.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of the data in the system is of the utmost importance. The information in this system is confidential. Confidential information is sensitive or secret information, or information whose unauthorized disclosure could be harmful or prejudicial. Only those who have been explicitly granted their own Login ID and password by the CMIS Administrators may access this system. Any printed information obtained from this system must also be treated as confidential.

ROLES

The CMIS Administrators are responsible for:

- System Administration
- Authorizing usage and access to the CC-CMIS.
- Limiting access to users who need access to the system for technical administration, data entry, editing of client records, viewing of client records, report writing, administration of other essential activity associated with carrying out CMIS responsibilities.
- Developing reports and presenting data.
- Mining the database to respond to the information needs of CCOs, community stakeholders, and consumers.
- Documenting work on the database and in the development of reports/queries.
- Provision of technical assistance as needed with program sites.
- Providing training to CCOs on policies and procedures, system use, authorizing access to the system including set-up, in response to questions from users, and in response to network and system functionality questions.
- Coordinating technical support for the system.
- Communicating with CCOs regarding problems with entry and support for data quality.
- Monitoring CCO participation including timeliness and completeness of entry.
- Communicating any planned or unplanned interruption in service.
- Reviewing and communicating as needed pertaining to the CCOs' monthly quality assurance reports.
- Auditing Policy and Procedure Compliance.

ClientTrack is responsible for:

- Administration of the internal network.
- Administration of product servers including web and database.
- Monitoring access to these systems through auditing.
- Monitoring functionality, speed, and database backup procedures.
- Backup and recovery of internal and external networks.
- Operating the system web site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.
- Communicating any planned or unplanned interruption of service to a CMIS Administrator.

All Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CMIS users are responsible:

- To be aware of the data's sensitivity and take appropriate measures to prevent unauthorized disclosure.
- For reporting security violations.
- For complying with relevant policies and procedures.
- For their actions and for any actions undertaken with their usernames and passwords.

CONTACTS

Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CMIS

Charles Jeffries, CMIS Administrator
1005 Front Ave
Columbus, GA 31901
Phone: 762-233-5450
cjeffries@unitedcv.org

Columbus-Muscogee / Russell County CMIS CoC CCO Partners:

- Chattahoochee Valley Jail Ministry
- Southwest Georgia Housing Solutions
- House of T.I.M.E
- New Horizons CSB
- Open Door Community House
- Salvation Army
- Home for Good
- Dept of Community Affairs
- Valley Healthcare
- CaseWorthy
- Changing Faces Within
- Community Schools United
- Coordinated Entry System
- Valley Rescue Mission
- Housing Authority of Columbus
- Phenix City Housing Authority
- VA

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Reminder: CCOs may not use the CC-CMIS, participation or data as a reason to deny services or housing to a client.

Policy: CCOs agree to use the following procedures in implementing the CM/RC COC-CMIS at an organization level.

Training: Adhere to the commitment of site Agency Administrators and designated staff persons to attend training(s) prior to accessing the system online. In the event the Agency Administrator changes, the new administrator must attend training before accessing the CC-CMIS. Training can be coordinated by contacting the CMIS Administrator.

The basic training provided to CCOs will, at minimum, include the following:

- Introduction to the CM/RC COC-CMIS
- Review of applicable policies and procedures, including relevant security policies
- Connecting to the Internet
- Logging on to the CMIS
- Entering client information including data from Intake, Ongoing Assessment, and Discharge
- Ensuring good quality data
- Overview of system administrative functions
- Entering and updating information pertaining to the CCO.
- Oversight of data quality
- Sessions will be designed and coordinated by CMIS Administrators.
- Advanced training will be provided as requested by individual CCOs, subject to availability.

CMIS User Agreement

- Each user must sign a CM/RC COC-CMIS User agreement stating full understanding of system rules and protocols before receiving a username and password to access the system. These agreements will be reviewed annually.
- Each user must receive training in the use of the CM/RC COC-CMIS from a CMIS Administrator.
- CCOs will request the number of users accessing the CC-CMIS. Each user must have his or her individual username and password and must not share that information with anyone else. Sharing is strictly prohibited.
- CCO Directors must approve each individual user from their CCO.
- Access permission is contingent on continued employment at the CCO and will be terminated immediately if the user is no longer employed by the CCO.
- CCO will notify an CMIS Administrator immediately if a user's employment is terminated; to revoke access rights.

Data Protocols:

- Only authorized users may view or update client data.

- CCOs must have signed CM/RC COC-CMIS Client Consent forms prior to data entry.
- Each adult member of a household that is receiving housing or services will be expected to sign the CM/RC COC-CMIS Client Consent for Network Data Sharing Form.
- Consent for data entry for minors will be provided by the parent/guardian.
- If the client refuses entry of identified information into CMIS, the CCO must have a mechanism in place to track the entry of de-identified information.
    - Additionally, the CCO will only use the first name, last name combination of "anonymous, anonymous," and nothing else for de-identified clients. (**The Lead agency is currently looking at best practices on this subject and will update later based on what is learned.)*
- A client always has the right to view his or her own data and request corrections.
- Any user found to be intentionally backdating Case Notes or other data entered in ClientTrack (CMIS) will be subject to the immediate suspension of their system access pending review.

Aggregate Data Sharing and Release:

- Each CCO, in partnership with the CC-CMIS, owns the client data for housing and/or services provided by them.
- CCOs are encouraged to use their own CMIS data for public relations, reporting and funding as long as client confidentiality is maintained.
- Aggregate CMIS homeless data (not client specific) will be published at an interval (TBD) by CC-CMIS. Any CCO may use published CMIS data.
- CM/RC COC-CMIS staff may use CMIS data for planning, research and analysis, reporting, and grant writing processes including the Continuum of Care application, the Consolidated Plan, HUD reporting, etc., and may reconcile and release aggregate data.
- Client confidentiality needs to be upheld, and a signed release must specify that the client agrees to have their data shared with other CMIS partner CCOs.

HMIS/CMIS data quality baseline minimum requirements:

CCOs are required to sign a participation agreement stating their commitment to adhere to the policies and procedures for effective use of the system and proper collaboration with CMIS.

- Universal and Program Data Elements are to be entered into CMIS system within three days of residential intake. (Residential = emergency shelter stay, transitional housing stay, permanent-supportive housing stay, prevention and rapid re-housing subsidy assistance).
- Universal and Program Data Elements are to be entered into CMIS system within three days of residential exit. (Residential = emergency shelter stay, transitional housing stay, permanent-supportive housing stay, prevention and rapid re-housing subsidy assistance).
- Additional Services and program-specific data are to be entered into the CMIS system within three days of receiving a service.
- HMIS/CMIS Data Quality reports will be required to be submitted monthly for each project.
- Data Quality reports for the previous month are due by the 10th of the current month. If any data quality elements have errors of 5% or greater, a Data Quality detail export needs to be run, and errors need to be corrected. The corrections need to be completed by the 15th of the month. If you have made all possible corrections

and still have error rates over 5%, a Data Quality detail export spreadsheet with explanations/notes will need to be emailed along with the second DQ Summary report. Failure to comply will result in actions up to the loss of CMIS privileges.

PRIVACY PROTECTION PROTOCOLS

CM/RC COC-CMIS Client Consent form: These must be signed by clients to authorize the entry and/or sharing of their personal information electronically with other participating CCOs through the CMIS where applicable.

Posting of the CMIS Privacy Notice: The CMIS Privacy Notice must be posted and clearly visible to clients at any data collection station.

Individual Data Sharing, Release and Confidentiality: The CM/RC COC-CMIS Client Consent form does not authorize the CCO to release information about a client from the database; except to other CCOs.

Grievance Procedure:
A CCO client has the right to appeal his or her individual issues related to CMIS in accordance with CCO dictated grievance policy. If no grievance procedure is in place as it relates to CMIS, it may be appealed by the following progression:
1. Case Worker
2. Case Worker's Supervisor
3. Executive Director of the CCO.

SECURITY - CCOs

Policy: Access to all computing, data communications, and sensitive data resources will be controlled. Access is controlled through user identification and authentication. Users are responsible and accountable for work done under their personal identifiers. Access control violations must be monitored, reported to the CoC and CMIS Committee, and resolved. CCO staff will work to ensure that all sites receive the security benefits of the system while complying with all written policies.

Physical Security: CCOs must develop rules to address unattended workstations and physical access to workstations which minimize the risk of confidential data being accessed by unauthorized people. Monitors displaying client data should be oriented to minimize viewing by unauthorized people. Workstations should automatically turn on a password protected screen saver when the workstation is temporarily not in use.

Access to data:

A. User Access: Users will only be able to view the data entered by users of their own CCO or shared client records. Security measures exist within the CMIS system which restricts CCOs from viewing each other's data without permission.

B. Raw Data: Users can perform reporting functions which will address each CCO and programs' individual data.

C. CCO Policies Restricting Access to Data: Each CCO must establish internal access to data protocols. These policies should include who has access, for what purpose, user

account sharing, and how they can transmit this information. Other issues to be addressed include storage, transmission, and disposal of these data.

I, Dr. Lakeita Arrington-Judkins, the undersigned, the duly elected and acting Chair of the COLUMBUS – MUSCOGEE / RUSSELL COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE, GA-505, do hereby certify the foregoing Governance Charter was duly presented to the full membership of said CoC and approved by same. This replaces the previously amended Governance Charter of August 17,2023.

Dr. Lakeita Arrington-Judkins
Chair
MUSCOGEE / RUSSEL COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE, GA-505

I, Tiffany Cole, the undersigned, the duly elected and acting Chair of the COLUMBUS – MUSCOGEE / RUSSELL CMIS COMMITTEE, GA-505, do hereby certify the foregoing Governance Charter was duly presented to the full membership of said CoC and approved by same. This replaces the previously amended Governance Charter of August 17,2023.

Tiffany Cole *9/5/2025*
Tiffany Cole
Chair
MUSCOGEE / RUSSEL CMIS COMMITTEE, GA-505