
Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care HMIS Governance Charter

The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is the lead agency for the Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care (CoC) as well as the HMIS Lead Agency for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The coverage area for both the CoC and HMIS is Austin and Travis County (CoC # TX-503). The CoC Membership Council is the governing body of the CoC. The CoC Membership Council relies on Committees, Subcommittees, and Workgroups to develop policy recommendations and provide guidance on implementation activities. These groups are committed to balancing the interests and needs of all stakeholders involved, including but not limited to persons experiencing homelessness, service providers, community partners, funders, and policy makers.

This HMIS Governance Charter delineates the roles and responsibilities of related key aspects of the governance and operations of the Austin/Travis County CoC HMIS Lead Agency. HMIS and its operating policies and procedures is structured to comply with the most recent HUD Data and Technical Standards for HMIS. Recognizing that the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other Federal, State and local laws may further regulate service agencies, the Continuum may negotiate its procedures and/or execute appropriate business agreements with Contributing HMIS Organizations (CHO) so they are in compliance with applicable laws.

Responsibilities of ECHO as the CoC HMIS Lead Agency:

- Execute HMIS Memorandums of Understanding with each participating agency
- Contract with WellSky and locally administrate the local HMIS software system
- Oversee all HMIS access, including end user licensing and PKI (Public Key Infrastructure) certificates
- Provide training and technical support to participating agency end users
- Conduct training and HMIS implementation in a way that respects the privacy and dignity of the people whose data is collected
- Oversee safety and privacy of HMIS data
- Monitor data quality and compliance with applicable HMIS standards at least monthly
- Execute End User Agreements with each end user
- Develop and update as needed all HMIS policies and procedures
- Facilitate the HMIS Workgroup that reports to the HUD CoC and ESG Committee
- Review national, state, and local laws that govern privacy or confidentiality protections and make determinations regarding relevancy to existing HMIS policies
- Provide New User Training, Ethics Refresher Training, Agency Admin Training, and Reporting Training on a regular basis
- Oversee and submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development all CoC-level HMIS reports including the Point in Time Count report, Housing Inventory Count report, Longitudinal Systems Analysis Report (LSA), and System Performance Measure Reports
- Coordinate software enhancement implementations with the software vendor, WellSky

Responsibilities of the COC's Membership Council:

The Membership Council, acting on behalf of the CoC, is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan that follows HUD HMIS regulations and notices.
- Approving data quality standards, policies and procedures for ensuring adherence to data quality standards for the CoC as stated by HUD.
- Approving, and reviewing the Austin/Travis County *HMIS Policies and Procedures Handbook*.

Responsibilities of ECHO's HMIS Staff:

The HMIS division within ECHO is comprised of the following staff:

- HMIS Program Director– Provides oversight of the operations and administration of the HMIS division and oversees the implementation of the HMIS system in the Austin/Travis County CoC. Manages and maintains mechanism for collecting HMIS user feedback.
- HMIS Trainer – Provides regular training on software usage, data security, data entry techniques, and HMIS user ethical responsibilities to participating agencies. Assists with the management of a help-desk support system that processes service requests and provides resolutions.
- HMIS Administrator – Creates systems to maintain high data quality, designs and implements reports based on user needs, and submits HUD program reports. Ensures users comply with all policies and protocols and provides HMIS technical assistance to participating agencies and end users
- HMIS Support Specialist – Offers regular support to other HMIS staff and to the HMIS user community thru the HMIS Help Desk.

Responsibilities of Community HMIS Workgroup:

The purpose of the HMIS Workgroup is governance over the HMIS requirements. Each participating agency's Agency Administrator is a member of this body. The HMIS Workgroup reports to the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Committee, which reports to the CoC Membership Council. Discuss emerging issues identified through help-desk requests.

- Informs and reviews changes to all HMIS policies and leads implementation within their agency
- Informs and reviews changes to the HMIS Data Sharing Policy and Release of Information (ROI) for HMIS client data sharing
- Understands and implements changes from the HUD HMIS Data Standards
- Reviews local reports to HUD ensure accuracy, including the Point in Time Count Report, Housing Inventory Count Report, Longitudinal Systems Analysis Report (LSA), and the System Performance Measure Reports
- Provides feedback to ECHO HMIS staff for continuous quality improvement

Contributing HMIS Organizations:

HMIS contributing agencies agree to:

- Execute the HMIS Partnership Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with ECHO.
- Abide by the *HMIS Policies and Procedures Handbook* and all other applicable policies.