



Sonoma County Continuum of Care Board 2023 Elections

November 1, 2023

TO: Continuum of Care Board and Continuum of Care Members

FROM: Araceli Rivera, Homeless Projects Specialist

RE: Elections to the Continuum of Care Board

Overview

This memo describes the process for choosing elected representatives to the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board at the December 13th, 2023, virtual CoC Quarterly Membership meeting and includes a description of the Sonoma County Continuum of Care, a list of seats up for election, a Nomination Form, and a Statement of Interest form.

The Sonoma County Continuum of Care Governance Charter describes the makeup of the CoC Board, who is eligible to vote, and who may be nominated to serve on the CoC Board. This memo describes the Elections process for 2023, please read it carefully.

The Continuum of Care Board is the decision-making body of the Sonoma County Continuum of Care. Its meetings are open to the public and anyone may speak, but the charter governance establishes voting seats. The 17-member Board currently has three seats up for election by the CoC Voting members. In early 2024, a new designated tribal seat will be available after an election process by tribal representatives has been solidified and approved by the CoC Board. The tribal seat will not be voted upon by CoC Voting Members, this is being provided as information only.

Sonoma County Continuum of Care

Mission

The Sonoma County Continuum of Care addresses the problems of housing and homelessness by having a countywide, community-informed, and person-centered CoC system that is compassionate, inclusive, financially responsible, equitable, coordinated, and outcomes based.

Vision

Our vision for the CoC in Sonoma County is that:

- We have a unified, coordinated, equitable, and integrated system with a clear vision across the community to reduce homelessness.
- The people of our county, via our Continuum of Care, have a system of care in that ensures that all persons experiencing homelessness have a safe, supportive, and permanent place to call home.

- The people of our county are collectively building a future in which there are sufficient resources, political leadership, and community involvement to end homelessness as a permanent fixture in our social landscape.
- Our system ensures quick access to permanent housing, stable and increased income for participants, strength-based consumer relationships, effective and financially responsible services and programming, coordination and collaboration with mainstream partners, policy and resource advocacy, and comprehensive community education.
- Our system provides for programming and services in all regions of Sonoma County.
- Supports policies that address the disparity we have experienced in Sonoma County, between community members' financial resources and housing costs.
- Our commitment to equity and inclusion at the Continuum of Care strives to engage all community members, regardless of background, throughout Sonoma County, especially those whose voices have been traditionally marginalized.

The CoC is committed to upstream investments before problems occur, to reduce overall societal costs, including:

- Diverting those at imminent risk of homelessness from entering shelters;
- Engaging and empowering people who are experiencing homelessness, to reclaim their dignity and to regain housing stability;
- Avoiding high criminal justice and hospital costs, and negative health outcomes, with appropriate housing, income, and access to health services.
- Aligning public and private efforts to address the problems we share.

Nominations

Nominations are hereby invited for three (3) seats to be chosen by eligible CoC voters at the [CoC Quarterly Membership](#) meeting on **December 13, 2023, from 1:00pm – 3:30pm**. Due to the large number of participants, this meeting shall take place virtually via Zoom. If you are an individual being nominated, please reserve this time on your calendar to ensure you are able to attend the meeting for elections.

Meeting login information can be found on our website by using the following link:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/quarterly-membership-virtual-meeting-coc-board-elections-december-13-2023>

For each category of elected seat, the nominee receiving the highest number of votes will be elected to a full two-year term. There are no term limits and indefinite reelection is allowed, provided the person is still eligible for that category of elected seat. CoC Board meetings are scheduled monthly (2024 dates to be determined). With occasional cancellations and special meetings, the time commitment is normally about 12-18 meetings per year and approximately three to five hours at length.

Seats Available for Election (December 13, 2023)

Three (3) seats are available:

- **One (1) At Large:** at large seat as selected by voting CoC members; the candidates need not be CoC members themselves.
- **One (1) Homeless Service Provider:** One representative of a homeless services provider different than the one with an appointed seat, as elected by CoC voting members.
- **One (1) Licensed Health Care Organization:** One representative from a licensed health care organization, as elected by CoC voting members.

Upcoming Available Seat for Election

- **One (1) Tribal:** Newly designated seat to be voted on at a later date by Tribal Committee. Note, this seat will not be voted upon by the CoC Membership, and applications are not currently being accepted for this opening.

Candidates may run for no more than two seats. Should a candidate run for two seats, one of them must be an at-large position.

Under the CoC Governance Charter, nominees are not required to have voting rights, or even to have been regular participants in CoC activities, if they provide the needed representation for the designated seat. Attached to this memo is a Nomination and Statement of Interest forms for this purpose.

Nominations and Statement of Interest forms will be accepted until November 29th at 5pm.

In making nominations, please consider geographic representation, representation of various homeless sub-populations, and diversity—including the criminal justice system, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ serving organizations, housing development or property management, business interests, private hospitals, or health agencies. Newly elected members will receive an email notification after elections for scheduling of the new CoC Board meetings.

Who Can Vote?

CoC voting membership has been established as follows:

As outlined in the Sonoma County Continuum of Care Governance Charter, only one individual on behalf of a Sonoma County organization can apply to vote. Applications are currently being accepted, for more information, including a list of current approved voting members, please visit our website at:

<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/homelessness-services/continuum-of-care/coc-quarterly-meetings>

The Sonoma County Continuum of Care Governance Charter can be found on our website using the following link: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/homelessness-services/continuum-of-care/coc-governance-and-compliance>

While CoC Membership applications remain open all year long, if you are an organization that wishes to vote in the 2023 Continuum of Care Board election, the **deadline to submit your application for Voting Membership is on November 8th, 2023.**

Nomination and Statement of Interest Form Notes

The Nomination and Statement of Interest forms will be posted on our website and noticed through the CoC Listserv. Personal contact information will be redacted for privacy.

If you are nominating someone other than yourself, please forward the Statement of Interest form to the individual being nominated for completion. **Both forms are due by November 29th at 5:00pm.** If you have any questions, please send them to the Continuum of Care Coordinator Karissa White at Karissa.White@sonoma-county.org or 707-565-4080.