



West Texas Homeless Network

BYLAWS WEST TEXAS HOMELESS NETWORK ABILENE, TEXAS

ARTICLE I NAME & LOCATION

Section 1: The name of this organization is the West Texas Homeless Network, formerly the Abilene Coalition for the Homeless. The West Texas Homeless Network may also be referred to as “WTHN” or the “Network”.

Section 2: The principal office of the Network will be located at the Community Foundation of Abilene. The address is 500 Chestnut, Suite 1634, P.O. Box 1001, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

ARTICLE II MISSION

The mission of the West Texas Homeless Network is to lead the efforts to identify issues that affect those at risk of and experiencing homelessness and to support the development of community strategies to prevent and end homelessness.

ARTICLE III PURPOSES

The Network exists for the purpose of bringing agencies and advocates in Abilene and the West Central Texas region through a Continuum of Care plan. To accomplish this, the Network will develop a comprehensive, collaborative, data- and census-driven community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people to prevent homelessness and to empower those who are experiencing homelessness to move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency.

The Continuum of Care plan will identify causes and issues, maintain a database of existing resources, track homeless service access, and identify gaps that exist in meeting the needs of those who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. The plan will be developed and evaluated annually. The report will be shared with the general public and other entities for the purpose of educating, raising awareness and identifying resources and needs.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERS

Membership is open to all agencies and advocates having an interest in the health and wellbeing of people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

The Network welcomes members who are currently experiencing homelessness or have in the past. Dues for those individuals unable to pay may be waived by a majority of voting members.

Ad hoc members are non-voting members and may serve on a committee due to expertise.

One voting membership per agency or advocate will be available with a paid membership fee beginning on March 1 of each year. Membership dues will be subject to the current rate as established by the Executive Committee. Dues for new members joining after April 1 will be prorated for remaining quarters of the year. Packets of information will be distributed by the Membership Committee to new members after the dues are collected and the Membership Form has been processed.

Benefits of membership include opportunities to:

- Be involved and informed of current issues at local and national levels
- Network with others who have a common desire to impact homeless issues
- Become aware of more efficient use of limited resources by reducing duplicated services
- Become knowledgeable of specific community services and needs
- Understand the concept of the Continuum of Care
- Receive a letter of support from WTHN to be included with your grant application developed to meet identified needs of the homelessness community
- Be recognized as a WTHN member in good standing
- Have agency/advocate name listed on WTHN website
- Post success stories of your program on the website
- Spotlight your agency/advocate services during a selected regular monthly meeting

ARTICLE V VOTING RIGHTS

Each person in attendance at a properly called meeting of the Network shall be entitled to discuss any matter submitted to the Network.

Voting Members shall be afforded one vote per organization or one vote per individual (advocate) represented by payment of annual dues. Each organization will specify who their voting representative will be on the yearly membership enrollment form.

No member may acquire any interest which will entitle them to a greater vote, authority, or interest in the Network than any other member.

Voting shall be permitted only by those physically attending a meeting where a vote is taking place. A voting member may provide a vote on any item identified upon an agenda posted prior to a meeting, in writing prior to such meeting

and only if the secretary has received such written notice prior to the start of the meeting.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

The officers shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer and elected by the voting membership. The Executive Committee shall consist of the four (4) officers and the chair of each standing committee. The standing committee chairpersons will be elected by the voting membership. Officers and chairpersons must be members in good standing.

Officers and committee chairpersons shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, elected annually by the voting membership at the January meeting and begin serving March 1.

Terms of officers are for one (1) year with a limit of three (3) consecutive terms in the same elected positions.

The Officers are specifically charged to direct and manage the affairs of the Network, and serve in an advisory capacity to the Community Foundation of Abilene's Board of Trustees upon request.

The Community Foundation of Abilene will serve as the Network's Fiscal Agent.

The Chair shall preside over all regular meetings of the Network, as available; and ensure that meeting notices, agendas, calendars, and other duties are carried out as assigned and required by the office.

The Vice Chair, in the absence of the Chair, shall preside over regular meetings and perform duties of the Chair.

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all regular and called meetings, including permanent electronic records and archives, maintain the Network's membership address and email distribution list, and send out any emails that need to go to the entire membership

The Treasurer shall make disbursement requests to the Community Foundation, keep financial records, and present financial reports at all regular meetings. As Fiscal Agent, the Community Foundation will have custody of all financial assets of the Network.

Any officer may be removed from office with two-thirds (2/3) vote by the voting membership whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Network would be served thereby.

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, shall be filled by the voting membership for the unexpired portion of the term at the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII NOMINATING COMMITTEE

There shall be a permanent standing committee for the nomination of officers and committee chairpersons. The Officers shall propose a Nominating Committee including a chairperson and not fewer than three members of the Network to be

approved by the Network membership.

Officers and committee chairpersons shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee at the regular November meeting. The annual election by the voting membership will occur at the regular January meeting. Newly elected officers and committee chairpersons will begin serving March 1.

ARTICLE VII STANDING AND SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEES

The Network shall have standing committees that are recommended by the Officers and approved by the voting membership. The committee chairpersons shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the voting membership. Committees may include but not be limited to Continuum of Care, Surveys, Membership, Special Events, Coordinated Entry, Website, Grants, and Public Relations.

The Officers may create select committees for temporary special projects. The committees will function as long as it takes to accomplish the work and bring recommendations to the Executive Committee to review prior to a presentation to the Network.

Due to expertise, an ad hoc member (non-voting) may serve on a committee, but not chair the committee.

ARTICLE IX CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Network officers and members frequently hold positions, including director level positions, in the agencies of the Network. Therefore conflicts may arise between the best interest of the Network and professional or personal interest of officers and members. To avoid the perception of any impropriety, the potential conflicts, and/or the existence of conflicts of interest by all participating parties must be acknowledged by all voting members. Executive Committee members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting transactions between the Network and the other group.

Officers speaking and acting for the Network can only speak and act with the permission of the Network as stated in a quorum vote.

All official business performed by the officers such as signatures and funds management over \$25.00 can only be performed by the officers with official permission from a quorum vote.

In cases where immediate action must be taken, officers acting for the Network must take action with their estimate of the best interest of the Network and the other agencies in the Network, and must inform the Network of those actions at the next meeting.

Members of the Executive Committee shall not receive any financial compensation for their services.

**ARTICLE X
FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of this organization shall be from the first day of March to the last day of February.

**ARTICLE XI
AMENDMENTS**

The bylaws of this Corporation may be altered or repealed by the voting membership with a vote of the majority present at any regular monthly meeting. Specific notice of proposed changes to the bylaws shall be communicated to each member at least two weeks preceding the vote at the regular monthly meeting.

Any amendment to the bylaws shall become effective immediately upon being approved by the membership.

**ARTICLE XII
NONDISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of the West Texas Homeless Network not to discriminate against any member or applicant for membership because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, marital status, genetic information, or disability.

Revised January 2017

These By-laws were presented to the West Texas Homeless Network membership on _____.

The By-laws were approved by the membership on _____.

John Cooper, Chair
Abilene Hope Haven, Inc.

Becky Almanza, Vice Chair
Christian Ministries of Abilene

Janet Lawler, Secretary
Region 14 Education Service Center

Maura Dela Cruz, Treasurer
City Light Community Ministries