Los Angeles Continuum of Care Bylaws

Los Angeles CoC Overview

In accordance with United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations (24 CFR Part 578), representatives from relevant organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless individuals and other interested, relevant organizations within Los Angeles County, exclusive of Glendale, Long Beach, and Pasadena, have established a Continuum of Care to carry out the duties assigned in the aforementioned regulations. That Continuum of Care is named the Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC) and has established a Board, which is named the LA CoC Board in accordance with the process described in the bylaws included herein.

LA CoC is a coordinated system of public and community-based housing and services that assist homeless and near homeless residents in Los Angeles County to obtain permanent housing, increase economic stability, and promote housing stability. LA CoC addresses critical issues related to homelessness through a coordinated community-based process of identifying and addressing needs utilizing not only HUD dollars, but also mainstream resources and other sources of funding. This charge is often achieved through the work of the local homeless coalitions and sub-committees that help comprise the LA CoC.

The LA CoC Board has adopted the bylaws contained herein to ensure compliance with HUD regulations and to support efforts to assist homeless and near homeless residents throughout Los Angeles County to prevent homelessness and obtain stable permanent housing. These bylaws were developed by the LA CoC Board. The policies were adopted in full by the membership of the LA CoC, the Regional Homelessness Advisory Council (RHAC) on May 17, 2017 and may be amended by a majority vote at any meeting of the LA CoC Board, with a quorum present.

Terms and Definitions

The Los Angeles Regional Homelessness Advisory Council (RHAC) is co-convened by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) and Home for Good as called for by the City of Los Angeles Comprehensive Homelessness Strategy and Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative. The purpose of the RHAC is to provide an enduring forum for broad-based, collaborative and strategic leadership on homelessness in Los Angeles County in alignment with Home for Good, a joint initiative of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. The RHAC, consisting of fifty-eight (58) members, facilitates wide understanding and acceptance of national and local best practices, and communicates goals, barriers and progress to community stakeholders. Further, the RHAC acts as the CoC membership for purposes of HUD CoC Program interim rule requirements (24 CFR Part 578.5(a)) and is
responsible for defining a CoC Board that evaluates and makes recommendations on Los Angeles CoC policies.

**Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Commission** is the governing body appointed by City of Los Angeles and County of Los Angeles to oversee LAHSA, a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) of the City and County of Los Angeles. The LAHSA Commission is comprised of ten (10) members; five (5) members are selected by the County Board of Supervisors and five (5) are chosen by the Mayor and City Council. The LAHSA Commission is the governing body of LAHSA and oversees the staffing and finances of LAHSA.

**Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)** is a City-County JPA that provides staff support for the RHAC, LAHSA Commission, CoC Board, and any CoC Sub-Committees identified by the RHAC or LAHSA Commission as necessary to complete the duties of the CoC. LAHSA conducts strategic planning and manages daily operations of the Los Angeles crisis response system for persons experiencing a housing crisis. Further, LAHSA serves as the **Collaborative Applicant** for purposes of submitting funding applications to HUD through the annual CoC Program competitive process, and as the lead administrator for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

**Continuum of Care (CoC)** is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. CoCs are comprised of representatives of organizations including nonprofit homeless 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, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons. CoCs represent a defined geographic area as determined by the membership of the CoC. The CoC must carry out the responsibilities required under the HEARTH Act and the CoC Program interim rule (24 CFR Part 578).

**Continuum of Care Board (CoC Board)** is the board established by the RHAC to provide advice and counsel to the LAHSA Commission and LAHSA on matters related to HUD CoC-funded operations, policies, and resource allocation.

**HUD CoC NOFA Collaborative Applicant** is the eligible applicant (State, unit of local government, private, nonprofit organization, or public housing agency) designated by the CoC to collect and submit the required CoC Program application for HEARTH Act (formerly, the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act) funding of homeless assistance projects. LAHSA is the Collaborative Applicant for the Los Angeles CoC.

### Article I – Name

**Section 1:** The name of this association shall be the Los Angeles Continuum of Care.
Article II – Mission and Vision

Section 1: The mission of the Los Angeles Continuum of Care is to provide a framework for broad-based, collaborative and strategic leadership on homelessness planning and service coordination throughout the greater Los Angeles metro region. Further, the RHAC acts as the Continuum of Care (CoC) membership for purposes of US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CoC Program interim rule requirements (24 CFR Part 578.5(a)).

Section 2: The vision of the LA CoC is to establish program and systems to ensure that all persons and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness will have access to supports to secure a permanent, safe, decent and affordable place to call home.

Article III – Purpose

Section 1: To receive funding through HUD, under HEARTH Act (formerly, the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act), geographic regions are required to establish and maintain a Continuum of Care.

A. The LA CoC covers: all the cities, towns and unincorporated area of Los Angeles County (except the cities of Glendale, Long Beach and Pasadena).

B. The LA CoC is designed to address critical issues related to homelessness through a coordinated community-based process of identifying and addressing needs utilizing not only HUD dollars, but also mainstream resources and other sources of funding. This charge is often achieved though the work of the local coalitions, planning bodies and CoC sub-committees, and working groups that comprise the LA CoC.

Section 2: The LA CoC assists in the coordination and development of services and housing for homeless and near homeless persons with housing needs through planning, education and advocacy. To achieve this purpose the LA CoC will seek to:

1. Provide strategic leadership to all homeless system stakeholders, including consumers, providers of housing and services, public funders, private philanthropy, education, faith community, business, and public officials.

2. Support the identification of, dissemination of, and knowledge regarding the implementation of best practices and evidence-based approaches to homeless programming and services.

3. Promote alignment of funding across all sectors (e.g. public mainstream, private non-governmental, and homeless-specific) and support prioritization of investments to leverage resources in the most effective way possible.

4. Promote coordination of programmatic approaches across all homeless system providers and mainstream systems.

5. Support a regional strategic response to identify and resolve the primary factors contributing to housing instability and literal homelessness.

6. Identify and articulate barriers across geographic, institutional, and political spheres, in order to promote their elimination.

7. Influence mainstream systems to ensure access and accountability to homeless consumers.
8. Synthesize data collected from various systems regarding homelessness, track progress, evaluate results, and promote regional accountability.

9. Function as the Continuum of Care (CoC) Membership for purposes of federal CoC designation and administration requirements as established by HUD.

Section 3: Lead Agency (also the CoC Collaborative Applicant)

A. The lead agency (AKA “Collaborative Applicant”) for the LA CoC is the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). The lead agency serves as a primary convener for homeless system planning and coordination. The lead agency also serves as the “Collaborative Applicant”, administering a consolidated funding application to HUD for CoC Program assistance funds.

Section 4: Role of Service Planning Areas (SPAs) and Local Coalitions

A. The LA CoC is comprised of multiple local coalitions, many of which have their own planning groups that guide their local community’s work around homeless housing and services. Local coalitions may serve as the core organizing and implementation entities for local implementation of housing and service initiatives intended to help to end homelessness within each SPA. The local coalitions, providers and stakeholders together collaboratively address homelessness and plan for housing and services in their region or SPA.

B. Local coalitions and SPA representatives support LAHSA to complete the Point-in-Time count (PIT) and the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC).

Section 5: Specific Tasks of the Los Angeles Continuum of Care

Although responsibilities of the LA CoC, any of the following tasks may be delegated to other entities to complete on behalf of the CoC.

A. Provide an enduring forum for broad based, collaborative and strategic leadership on homelessness in Los Angeles County in alignment with Home for Good.

B. Facilitate wide understanding and acceptance of national best practices and communicate goals, barriers and progress to community stakeholders.

C. Serve as the LA CoC membership, reviewing and amending, if necessary, the RHAC Governance Charter and CoC By-laws on a regular basis.

D. Establish CoC project performance targets appropriate for population and CoC component type in consultation with Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) recipients and sub-recipients.

E. Monitor CoC and ESG recipients and sub-recipients performance, evaluate outcomes and recommend actions against poor performers.

F. Report to HUD results of CoC and ESG recipients and sub-recipients performance and outcomes.

G. Establish and operate a coordinated entry system (CES) in consultation with recipients of ESG funds.

H. Establish and follow written standards for providing CoC assistance in consultation with recipients of ESG funds.

I. Designate a single Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the CoC geographic area and designate an eligible applicant to manage its HMIS.
J. Review, revise, and approve privacy, security and data quality plans.
K. Ensure consistent participation of recipients/sub-recipients in HMIS.
L. Ensure that the HMIS is administered in compliance with HUD requirements.
M. Coordinate implementation of a housing and service system for persons experiencing a housing crisis.
N. Conduct, at least biennially, a Point-in-Time (PIT) count of homeless persons that meets HUD’s requirements.
O. Conduct an annual gaps analysis of homelessness needs and services.
P. Provide information required to complete the Consolidated Plan(s).
Q. Consult with State and local ESG recipients in the geographic area on the plan for allocating ESG funds and reporting/evaluating performance of ESG programs.
R. 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).
S. Establish priorities for funding projects.
T. Designate a Collaborative Applicant (i.e. LAHSA) to submit the CoC Program NOFA application on behalf of the CoC membership (i.e. RHAC).
U. Establish an appeals and grievance process to consider and resolve conflicts arising from CoC Program allocation decisions.

**Article IV – Membership of the LA CoC**

The Membership of the LA CoC shall be known as the Regional Homelessness Advisory Council (RHAC). RHAC members will be either elected or appointed, and will represent public, private, faith, education, and philanthropic sectors. RHAC membership will consist of 58 seats. Twenty-four (24) seats have been designated for the public sector, twelve (12) for providers, five (5) for the education sector, three (3) for the business community, two (2) for formerly homeless community members, two (2) for advocate organizations, two (2) for health systems sector, two (2) for the philanthropy sector, one (1) for the LAHSA Commission, one (1) designated for the LAHSA Executive Director and one (1) designated as a representative from United Way of Greater Los Angeles and Home For Good. The represented sectors and total membership seats may be adjusted as needed as determined by the co-conveners and ratified on an annual basis with a super majority (two-thirds) vote among RHAC members. Appendix B outlines the RHAC membership structure.

**Section 1: Membership Responsibilities of LA CoC**

The RHAC is not a deliberative or decision-making body for purposes of designing, managing, funding, or evaluating the homeless crisis response system for Los Angeles CoC.

A. Official duties and responsibilities assigned to the RHAC (i.e. CoC membership) by HUD’s CoC Program interim rule may be delegated by the RHAC to other public entities, task forces or administrative entities as determined by official action of a majority of voting RHAC members.
B. The RHAC’s work is guided and assessed through the execution of core responsibilities, derived from the City of Los Angeles Comprehensive Homelessness Strategy, Los Angeles County’s Homeless Initiative and the HEARTH Act amending and reauthorizing the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Section 2: Membership Meetings
The RHAC meetings will occur quarterly and will be open to the public.

Article V – Committees

From time to time the RHAC may establish work groups, committees, or identify existing entities to carry out activities or tasks as defined by the RHAC.

Article VI – The CoC Board

Section 1: Composition of CoC Board
Membership shall be comprised of seventeen (17) individuals concerned with the development and coordination of the homeless assistance system in Los Angeles, through an annual nominating and/or election process initiated by the CoC Board Co-Chairs. Membership shall include both elected members from each SPA and at-large members representing the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region. The CoC Board membership shall include a balanced representation from governmental sectors (e.g. City of Los Angeles vs. County of Los Angeles), subpopulation groups (e.g. providers primarily serving families, single adults or youth), CoC component types (e.g. homeless assistance agencies primarily providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, or supportive services) and service planning areas throughout Los Angeles County. Each member shall serve a two-year term. Terms are renewable. After serving two consecutive terms, members shall be restricted from serving additional future terms until after an inactive period (not serving as a Board member) for two years. All members are expected to demonstrate engaged commitment to the mission of the RHAC and activities of the CoC Board.

No more than eight (8) homeless assistance provider representatives (either elected or at-large) shall be members of the CoC Board at one time.

At least two (2) CoC Board members (either elected or at-large) shall represent persons with lived experience either as currently homeless or formerly homeless persons.

Section 2: Membership from Service Planning Areas on the CoC Board
Each of eight (8) SPAs shall elect one (1) member and may elect one (1) alternate member to attend Board meetings and vote on Board matters when the official member is not available. CoC Board members and alternates shall represent any of the following constituent groups:

- Providers of housing and services for persons experiencing a housing crisis (services may include case management, housing location assistance, supports in increasing income, applying for public benefits, etc.)
• Homeless or formerly homeless individuals and families
• Non-profit organizations representing veterans and individuals with disabilities
• Victim service providers, providing specialized services and advocacy to persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking

All CoC Board members representing a specific SPA shall demonstrate familiarity with the SPA they represent. Evidence of familiarity may include living, working or being employed in the SPA they represent during the period of active membership on the CoC Board.

Section 3: At-Large Membership from Greater Los Angeles Area on the CoC Board
At-large representatives consisting of nine (9) members will be selected by the RHAC or a committee of the RHAC upon recommendation from the CoC Board. At-large CoC Board members will be selected following an open solicitation and application process managed by LAHSA. CoC Board members who are persons with lived experience may be eligible for nominal stipends to be determined at the discretion of LAHSA. At-large members must represent a diversity of constituent groups and be drawn from both Los Angeles City and County jurisdictions but excluding Cities of Glendale, Long Beach and Pasadena. At-large members will be selected in “off” years (i.e. when SPA elections for SPA CoC Board members are not held) through a process managed by LAHSA. At-large members will be comprised from any of the following constituent groups:
• Faith-based organizations
• Public housing agencies
• Advocates
• People with lived experience
• Mental Health agencies
• School districts
• Hospitals or other federally qualified health centers
• Universities
• Affordable housing developers
• Law enforcement
• Representatives of business and financial institutions
• Representatives of private foundations and funding organizations
• Rental property owners and managers
• Victim service providers, providing specialized services and advocacy to persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking

Section 4: Rights of CoC Board Members
Members are entitled to:
A. Have voting rights (one vote per individual member)
B. Receive information and updates via e-mail

Section 5: Expectation of LA CoC Board Members
A. Members are expected to be present and active participants in CoC Board meetings.
B. Members are expected to actively participate in LA CoC Board discussions, activities, correspondence, sub-committees, and/or ad-hoc committees.
C. Members are expected to follow the Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct provisions included as appendices to the Bylaws.

Section 6: LA CoC Board Voting
A. The LA CoC Board operates by consensus whenever possible. When a vote is necessary, each member shall have one vote upon any motion. Elected CoC Board members representing SPAs may have an alternate member who is authorized to vote on behalf of the Board member on matters before the Board only when the primary SPA representative is absent.
B. No member shall vote on any issue where there could be a conflict of interest. (Refer to Conflict of Interest)
C. As needed, Roberts Rules of Order will govern procedural questions during CoC Board Meetings.
D. A simple majority vote of a quorum of members present will be used to settle issues that reach an impasse.

Section 7: LA CoC Board Meetings/Attendance
A. The LA CoC Board shall meet every month.
B. Attendance will be recorded at all CoC Board meetings. Members are expected to have at least an 80%, in-person, annual attendance rate at all CoC Board meetings. An attendance rate of less than 80% may be considered justification for Board member removal.
C. A member can be removed by a majority vote of the full LA CoC Board membership.

Section 8: Quorum at CoC Board Meetings
A. A simple majority of Members (9), at a Board meeting, constitutes a quorum.

Section 9: LA CoC Board Chair and Vice Chair
A. The LA CoC Board shall have a Chair and Vice Chair.
B. Selection of the Chair and Vice Chair will take place biannually.
C. The Chair and Vice Chair will serve a two-year term and can serve two (2) consecutive terms.
D. Election of the Chair and Vice Chair will be by simple majority vote of Members.
E. The Chair and Vice Chair shall preside over all meetings with administrative and management support provided by LAHSA. Meeting agendas shall be set by LAHSA in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.
F. Immediate Past Chair and Vice Chair may assist and advise the Chair and Vice Chair, upon their request, in the performance of their duties.
G. For any SPA-elected vacancies occurring during the year, the alternate shall serve until the respective SPA election can be organized by LAHSA.
H. Any At-large vacancies occurring during the year shall be filled upon the
recommendation of LAHSA staff and ratified by the CoC Board.

**Article VII – Administrative Support Functions**

A. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) manages the day-to-day operations of the LA CoC Board and provides administrative support to assist with CoC Board meeting operations, communications, member selection process, and other functions as assigned.

B. LAHSA is responsible for making public via email announcements all meeting dates, agendas, and supporting documentation at least 72 hours in advance of a scheduled meeting.

**Article VIII – LA CoC Board Duties**

A. Provide advice and counsel to the LAHSA Commission on establishing CoC project performance targets appropriate for population and CoC component type in consultation with Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) recipients and sub-recipients.

B. Provide advice and counsel to the LAHSA Commission on establishing and following written standards for providing CoC Program assistance in consultation with recipients of ESG funds.

C. Provide advice and counsel to the LAHSA Commission on the design and operations of an application process for CoC Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

D. Provide advice and counsel to the LAHSA Commission on establishing priorities for HUD-funded homeless assistance projects.

E. Other duties as identified by LAHSA, RHAC, and/or the LAHSA Commission.

**Article IX – Conflict of Interest & Code of Conduct**

**Section 1: Applicability of Code of Conduct**

LA CoC Board members must conduct themselves at all times with the highest ethical standards. Members are required to follow the LA CoC Code of Conduct. (See Appendix A.) Conflicts of interest, and even the appearance of a conflict of interest, must be avoided.

**Section 2: Conflict of Interest**

All LA CoC Board members who are affiliated with or representatives of organizations who are seeking, or considering seeking funds under the endorsement of the LA CoC must adhere to the following:

A. He or she shall disclose to the CoC Board any conflict or appearance of conflict which may or could be reasonably known to exist.

B. He or she shall not vote on any item that would create a conflict or appearance of conflict.

C. He or she shall not participate in or influence discussions or resulting decisions concerning the award of a grant or other financial benefits to the organization that the member represents.
D. He or she shall not lobby or seek information from any other member of the CoC Board if such action would create a conflict or the appearance of a conflict.

Section 3: Receiving Grants, Endorsements or References
A. LA CoC Board members’ organizations may receive financial support from LAHSA, City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, and/or United Way of Greater Los Angeles to operate homeless assistance projects.

Article X – Nondiscrimination

Section 1: Open, Inclusive and Affirming Participation
The members, officers, and persons serving the LA CoC Board shall not discriminate against any CoC constituent because of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, intellectual disability, or physical disability and will follow all state and federal regulations regarding nondiscrimination.

Article XI – Amendment Process

Section 1: Changes to Bylaws
These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at a meeting of the LA CoC Board, with a quorum present, provided that the proposed amendment(s) shall have been submitted in writing to each member at least 10 business days before action is taken by the LA CoC Board.
Appendix A – LA CoC Board Code of Conduct

This LA CoC Board Code of Conduct represents the CoC’s commitment to high standards. The following standards should be regarded as minimum expectations for conduct. LA CoC Board Members will act in accordance with and maintain the highest standards of professional integrity, impartiality, diligence, creativity and productivity. CoC business will be conducted in a manner that reflects the highest standards and in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

1. Compliance with Policies
   A. Members will conduct the LA CoC business in accordance with the bylaws of LA CoC including conflict of interest policies.

2. Conflict of Interest
   A. A conflict of interest is defined as a contract or transaction between the LA CoC and an entity in which a Member or its family members has a financial or other interest or of which a Member is a director, officer, agent, partner, owner, associate, trustee, personal representative, receiver, guardian, custodian, conservator, or other legal representative.
   B. Members must act in the best interests of the CoC and avoid situations where their personal or financial interests or relationships interfere with acting in good faith on behalf of the LA CoC.
   C. Members may not engage in activities that are in conflict with the interests of the LA CoC or that may negatively impact the reputation of the CoC.
   D. Members are required to follow Article IX of the LA CoC Board Bylaws regarding conflict of interest and code of conduct.

3. Confidentiality
   A. Members must maintain the highest standards of confidentiality regarding information obtained directly or indirectly through their involvement with the LA CoC. This includes but is not limited to information about members and their organizations and funded agencies. Members must also avoid inadvertent disclosure of confidential information through casual or public discussion, which may be overheard or misinterpreted.

4. Impartiality
   Member agencies shall act impartially and with integrity. Members will:
   A. Not knowingly be a party to or condone any illegal or improper activity.
   B. Not directly, or indirectly, seek personal gain which would influence, or appear to influence, the conduct of their duties.
   C. Not exploit CoC professional relationships for personal or financial or professional gain.
   D. Be alert to the influences and pressures that interfere with the professional discretion and impartial judgment required for the performance of members.
5. Fraud
   A. The term fraud refers to, but is not limited to: intentionally entering false or erroneous information into electronic software systems; any dishonest or fraudulent act; forgery or alteration of any official document; misappropriation of funds, supplies, or Continuum of Care materials; improper handling or reporting of money or financial transactions; profiting by self or others as a result of inside knowledge; destruction or intentional disappearance of records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment; accepting or seeking anything of material value from vendors or persons providing services or materials to the Continuum of Care for personal benefit; or any similar or related irregularities.
   B. Fraudulent acts will not be tolerated and may result in termination from CoC Board.

6. Gifts or honoraria
   A. It is not permissible to offer or accept gifts, gratuities, excessive favors or personal rewards intended to influence the LA CoC’s decisions or activities.

7. Harassment
   A. Harassment, interpreted as unwelcome conduct, comment, gesture, contact, or intimidating and offensive behavior likely to cause offence or humiliation, will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures up to and including removal from CoC Board.

8. Laws and Regulations
   A. CoC business will be conducted in manner that reflects the highest standards and in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
## Appendix B – RHAC Membership

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<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th># Seats</th>
<th>Process</th>
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<td>Advocate and TA Organizations</td>
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<td>Group nominates organizational representatives</td>
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<td>Business Community</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce Business Leaders</td>
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<td>Organization nominates</td>
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<td>Selection, followed by rotation</td>
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<td>Business Community</td>
<td>Property owner association representative</td>
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<td>LAHSA LEAG nominate; CSH Advocates nominate</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>UCLA</td>
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<td>Faith Community</td>
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<td>Providers</td>
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<td>9 seats elected by SPAs + 3 at-large seats selected by LAHSA &amp; Home For Good to ensure representation of key subpopulations</td>
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<td>LA County Department of Public Health</td>
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