

Bylaws for Homelessness Advisory Committee of Austin (Advisory Committee)

December 2017

ARTICLE I. Background and Purpose

The Homelessness Advisory Committee of Austin (Advisory Committee) was created in the fall of 2017 by the City of Austin's Office of Innovation in coordination with the Department of Public Health and ECHO. Collectively, these entities are the "Organizers" for Advisory Committee.

The role of Advisory Committee is to have conversations, share stories, and get feedback from the group to:

- Educate and inform policy makers on the realities of homelessness, including disability, mental health, substance use disorder, and other issues faced by individuals who are homeless
- Obtain feedback on current services and resources for persons experiencing homelessness
- Better understand the realities of homelessness and to inform the improvement of services
- To inform the design of materials and outreach for individuals experiencing homeless

Advisory Committee members may be asked to:

- Provide feedback on iTeam Communications and created content
- Share lived experiences and knowledge on how to exit homelessness
- Test iTeam research tools
- Give ideas and opinions on specific policy issues
- Provide input via different communication channels, including offline (during group) and offline (email, text, in writing)
- Co-create possible solutions for current issues
- Help engage other previously or currently homeless individuals to participate in the group and be a spokesperson for the committee

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

Application for Advisory Committee membership is open to anyone who is currently or has previously experienced homelessness in Austin, Texas. To apply, an individual must express their interest on the [Advisory Committee Interest Form](#).

Membership is offered at the discretion of the Organizers. Membership may be offered after receipt of the interest form, completion of a Advisory Committee orientation, and agreement to the requirements outlined in these Bylaws including attendance expectations.

Section 2. Number of Members and Composition

The number of members of Advisory Committee will be between nine and 13. Organizers will work to ensure that the diversity, both demographic and in terms of experiences, is reflective of the diversity of the City of Austin.

Section 3. Terms

A normal term for a Advisory Committee member is 18 months. When a Advisory Committee member's term expires they can express interest in joining the group but individuals who have not participated in the past will be considered for membership first. Terms will be staggered so there are always experienced members in the group.

Section 4. Resignation and Termination

Any Advisory Committee member may resign at any time by contacting the Organizers. A member may be terminated:

- At the end of their term.
- If they do not attend two consecutive meetings and do not notify the Organizers ahead of time.
- If a majority of Advisory Committee members move to consider termination of a member.
 - Termination by members should be a last resort to disruptive or detrimental behavior and cannot be an immediate action. Members must move to consider termination which will give the members and Organizers

an opportunity to mediate conflicts or resolve issues before resorting to termination.

If a member resigns or is terminated their position on Advisory Committee may be filled and resigning members are not entitled to reinstatement or future compensation.

Section 5. Vacancies

Whenever an unplanned vacancy on Advisory Committee occurs due to termination or resignation it shall be filled by the Organizers from the interest list within two months.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the members shall be held on the second and fourth Monday of each month at Terrazas Library from 11:00 to 1:00. Members will be paid \$20/hour to attend the regular meetings. Compensation for an individual cannot exceed \$80/month. Lunch will also be provided by the Organizers.

Section 2. Voting

All issues to be voted on shall be decided by a simple majority of those members present at the meeting in which the vote takes place. Organizers do not have a vote.

ARTICLE IV. Organizer's Responsibilities

In addition to responsibilities stated in other Articles of these Bylaws, the Organizers will:

- Before regular meetings the Organizers will help with setting up the group meetings by
 - Reserving the meeting space
 - Sending a text reminder for the group
 - Providing lunch
- After regular meetings the iTeam will be available for thirty minutes
 - To answer any questions
 - To help with anything that needs to be followed up before the next meeting

Organizers will also be responsible for recruiting, selecting, and orienting new Advisory Committee members.

Article V. Confidentiality

Part of Advisory Committee's purpose is to share stories and Members are asked to agree to allow their stories and images to be shared. However, if a member shares a story or opinion and requests confidentiality Members and Organizers shall respect that request.

Article VI. Bylaws

The Organizers may recommend changes and amendments to these Bylaws which may be adopted by a majority vote of Advisory Committee Members at any regular or meeting.

The undersigned members agree to the Advisory Committee Bylaws:

Name	Signature	Date