



## **Guidelines for National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition**

### **I. Purposes**

These Guidelines provide the broad framework for a mutually beneficial working relationship between and among the National Center for Healthy Housing (“NCHH”) and all organizations participating in the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition (“Coalition”). Each organization has recognized expertise and has demonstrated leadership in its respective field(s).

The Coalition is a broad, voluntary coalition of organizations working to improve housing conditions nationwide through education and outreach to key national stakeholders and federal public decision-makers. The Coalition shall focus on promoting healthier and safer housing conditions in the U.S., particularly for low-income, children, the elderly, minorities and other vulnerable populations. These purposes may be modified by mutual agreement.

### **II. Membership**

A. The Coalition will seek members and organizations which: (1) represent the diversity of the safe and healthy housing community; (2) contribute to and support the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition Policy Agenda; and (3) actively help to achieve the purpose and goals of the Coalition.

B. Organizations and individuals may join the Coalition at any time through the Coalition’s online membership form.

C. Each member retains the sole right to terminate its participation in the Coalition with or without cause by providing notice to the Coalition Coordinator or Steering Committee Chair(s).

### **III. Retention of Individual Entity Independence and Responsibilities**

Each member is and remains an independent tax-exempt or other organization. No additional corporate entity is being created. The intent of these Guidelines is to describe the general operations of an informal Coalition. Each organization retains final authority to determine the types and amount of collaborative activities it will engage in. Each is responsible for adhering to its own internal policies. No member shall seek to represent any other member outside of the procedures of the Coalition.

### **IV. Joint Responsibilities**

A. Each Coalition member is committed to:

1. Timely communication among members on relevant activities and developments;

2. Reaching consensus before formally communicating with Congress, federal agencies, the media or other stakeholders on behalf of the Coalition, such as through a written letter or press release;
3. Maintaining an open, respectful, substantive and collaborative relationship through attendance at meetings, and in response to emails, telephone conversations, and correspondence;
4. Keeping the leadership of the member's organization informed of major activities and developments related to the Coalition;
5. Identifying and proposing additional ways to enhance the effectiveness of the Coalition.

## **V. Membership Dues and Expenses**

- A. No periodic membership dues or other regular forms of payment will be required as a condition of participation.
- B. Each member will finance its own activities. Where, however, specific members agree in advance to share a joint expense (e.g., printing and mailing a document to all members of Congress), the costs shall be apportioned as agreed on.

## **VI. Coalition Structure and Meetings**

- A. Coalition functioning: The Coalition Steering Committee provides leadership and direction to the Coalition, and the Workgroups conduct activities in support of the Coalition's goals and objectives. Authority for carrying out Coalition policies is generally delegated to the Steering Committee and to the Steering Committee Chair(s). For further information about the Steering Committee and Workgroups, see Articles VII and VIII, respectively.
- B. Frequency of meetings: The Coalition will meet quarterly or as needed. One meeting every other year will be designated the "biennial meeting" for elections and other Coalition business.
- C. Chairing of meetings: Coalition meetings are chaired by the Steering Committee Chair (the Chair position may be shared by two persons as "Co-Chairs") or the Chair's designee.
- D. Coalition Coordinator: The Coalition Coordinator is responsible, with input from the Steering Committee, for planning and scheduling Coalition meetings. NCHH, as the fiscal and administrative agent for the Coalition, shall serve as the Coalition Coordinator.
- E. Each member organization of the Coalition is entitled to one vote in Coalition decisions.

## **VII. Steering Committee Leadership**

- A. Policy Positions: The Steering Committee may take positions or make statements on behalf of the Coalition. Members may request that their names not be listed on Coalition positions.
- B. Composition: The Steering Committee shall consist of at least 8 and no more than 16 organizations that represent a cross-section of the membership. The Coalition will strive to ensure that the Steering Committee is balanced to represent diverse populations and housing types impacted by unhealthy housing. Two permanent slots on the Steering Committee shall be designated for a local government organization and a local community-based organization. As the founder of the Coalition, NCHH shall remain a permanent member of the Steering Committee.

- C. Representatives and Vacancies: Each Steering Committee member organization shall appoint one primary representative who can attend scheduled meetings consistently on its behalf. Each Steering Committee member organization may designate an alternate representative who is knowledgeable about the Coalition to attend Coalition meetings in the absence of the primary representative. In the event that the primary representative leaves the organization, the organization shall designate the alternate as its primary representative or appoint a new representative. In the event that a Steering Committee organization terminates its participation in the Steering Committee, the remaining Steering Committee members may select a new organization to fill that vacancy.
- D. Meetings: The Steering Committee sets its schedule of conference calls or in-person meetings to be held as needed to manage Coalition business items and ensure progress toward the Coalition's goals and progress on policy priorities.
- E. Attendance: Any Steering Committee member who misses three consecutive meetings without notice or without sending an alternate will be removed from the Steering Committee. Written notice shall be given to the Committee member being removed. Reinstatement may be considered by the Steering Committee.
- F. Terms: The term of the Steering Committee members shall be two years.
- G. Membership: Nominations for Steering Committee members will be solicited from the Coalition's general membership for election every other year. Coalition members or non-members may be self-nominated or nominated by someone else by the announced deadline date. The Steering Committee will review the nominations based on the following criteria and present a slate of candidates for election by a supermajority of at least 60% of those voting from the full Coalition membership:
  - a. Steering Committee members represent organizations with a vested interest in and willingness to advance the Coalition's Policy Agenda;
  - b. Steering Committee members balance and represent the diverse populations and housing types impacted by unhealthy housing as well as the diverse organization types that comprise the full Coalition membership, including: low-income communities and communities of color; rural and urban housing and health concerns; and national, state, and local perspectives;
  - c. Steering Committee members bring content expertise to the Coalition, including an understanding of national, state, and local policy processes.
- H. Officers: The officers shall consist of the Steering Committee Chair and other Officers that the Steering Committee chooses by majority vote.
  - 1. Responsibility of the Chair or Co-Chairs: Chair responsibilities include planning and facilitating Steering Committee meetings and Coalition meetings and providing leadership to maintain focus on Coalition's goals.
  - 2. Term of office: Steering Committee members select the Chair or Co-Chairs for a term of two years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a Chair may serve, if re-elected by the Steering Committee.

## **VIII. Workgroups**

- A. The Steering Committee may establish workgroups to assist in carrying out its mission and goals.

- i. Membership: Workgroups are open to all Coalition members and non-Coalition members.
- ii. Selection of Leaders: Workgroup leaders are selected by each Workgroup's own members or designated by the Steering Committee.
- iii. Roles and Responsibilities of Workgroup Leaders:
  1. Maintain communication with the Steering Committee and the Coordinator regarding the Workgroup's activities;
  2. Facilitate Workgroup meetings and provide direction to develop goals, objectives, and action plans;
  3. Engage in active and ongoing communication with Workgroup participants to fulfill Workgroup's objectives.

#### **IX. Steering Committee Voting**

- A. Fifty percent of the Steering Committee members shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of decision making. The Steering Committee shall guide the material activities of the Coalition by a supermajority vote of at least 60%. On all decisions deemed major or important by the Steering Committee (e.g., the annual Policy Agenda), the Steering Committee will provide a recommendation to the full Coalition membership, which shall modify if needed and approve or disapprove by a supermajority of at least 60% of those voting.
- B. Each member organization of the Steering Committee is entitled to one vote.
- C. Decisions may be made by email in lieu of a meeting provided members are given one week to cast a vote.

#### **X. Amendments**

- A. These Guidelines may be amended by the Steering Committee to meet the needs of the Coalition.

#### **XI. Miscellaneous**

These guidelines do not create a legal entity, or joint venture, and no member has the authority to bind any other. All activities of the members hereunder will be consistent with federal, state, and local laws, including antitrust laws and I.R.C. Section 501(c)(3) tax exemption requirements.