



Cal ICH Advisory Committee Charter

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BACKGROUND

In 2021, Governor Newsom signed [Assembly Bill 1220](#) into law, which transformed the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council into the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH or Council) to continue California's forward momentum towards greater statewide leadership and coordination around its response to the homelessness crisis. AB 1220 made important changes to statute:

- The Secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency and the Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency will serve as co-chairs of Cal ICH.
- The Council's membership is expanded to include five new members: the State Public Health Officer, the Director of the California Department of Aging, the Director of Rehabilitation, the Director of State Hospitals, and the executive director of the California Workforce Development Board. In addition, the state agencies previously on the Council will now be represented by its Director or Secretary.
- An Advisory Committee will provide guidance to the Council. Membership of the advisory committee will include multiple members who have experienced homelessness, representatives from local Continuums of Care, and other stakeholders.

Members of the Advisory Committee (AC or Committee) are appointed by Cal ICH Council Co-Chairs and must have specific experiences or expertise in homelessness.

According to the California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 8257:

(d) The council shall regularly seek guidance from and, at least twice a year, meet with an advisory committee. The co-chairs of the council shall appoint members to this advisory committee that reflects racial and gender diversity, and shall include the following:

- (1) A survivor of gender-based violence who formerly experienced homelessness.
- (2) Representatives of local agencies or organizations that participate in the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Program.
- (3) Stakeholders with expertise in solutions to homelessness and best practices from other states.
- (4) Representatives of committees on African Americans, youth, and survivors of gender-based violence.
- (5) A current or formerly homeless person who lives in California.
- (6) A current or formerly homeless youth who lives in California.
- (7) This advisory committee shall designate one of the above-described members to participate in every quarterly council meeting to report to the council on advisory committee activities.

Cal ICH staff, along with the Council co-chairs, are responsible for ensuring the representation of the Advisory Committee meets the requirements outlined in statute.

CAL ICH PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

The AC was convened in 2022 to provide guidance to Cal ICH. The Council outlines their Key Principles and Practices in the [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#). Committee members agree to prioritize and practice these in their collective work:

- Pursuing Racial Equity and Justice
- Creating Solutions for the Full Diversity of People Experiencing Homelessness
- Seeking and Valuing the Expertise of People with Lived Experiences of Homelessness
- Strengthening Housing First Approaches
- Balancing Crisis Response and Permanent Housing Solutions
- Advancing Trauma-Informed Care and Person-Centered Services
- Aligning Health, Housing, and Homelessness Strategies

CORE PURPOSE AND KEY GOALS

The AC's purpose and goals will align with the principles and practices outlined in the Council's Action Plan, listed above, elevating fundamental values that guide how members work together in pursuit of their shared purpose. The AC's key goals listed below were created in consultation with the original AC members, and express their broad aspirations for the group, including to:

1. Advocate for the **pursuance of racial equity and justice** as the core principle of all work related to ending and preventing homelessness.
2. **Elevate diverse lived experience perspectives** to directly inform State policy discussions and decisions.
3. **Share local perspectives and experiences** to inform State-level decisions (including best practices, funding needs, and policy impact).
4. **Support opportunities for alignment and connection** among State and local systems addressing homelessness.
5. Leverage member knowledge and expertise to **expand collective understanding** of homelessness issues facing the State and local communities.
6. Identify and **advance approaches that are creative, responsive, and coordinated**.
7. Advance **shared language** related to homelessness.

GUIDELINES AND COMMITMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Guidelines and commitments for participation set the norms of the AC and advance the Council's principles and practices, promoting a safe and trusting space for discussions, and ensuring members fully participate in bringing their experience and knowledge to the AC. Members agree to abide by and support the following guidelines and commitments for participation:

- **Be honest, transparent, and present**
 - Do your best to fully share your own opinion.
 - When sharing an opinion, acknowledge the perspective represented.
 - To the extent possible, commit to joining all AC meetings and fully support and participate in discussions.

- **Support safe space** for engagement and dialogue/examine and act in an equitable and inclusive manner
 - Encourage all members to fully share their opinions. The AC discussions provide an opportunity for expanding members’ understanding of the topics discussed.
 - Practice 'Oops' and 'Ouch' - if you realize you said something harmful, acknowledge it and try again. If someone else has said something harmful, identify it so it can be discussed. Exercise the “Let’s talk it through” option, as needed.
 - Acknowledge and welcome differing perspectives.
- Uphold a **respectful dialogue**
 - Be kind to each other and assume positive intent.
 - Honor time and share the airtime: “Be brief and brilliant in providing feedback and ensure time for others who want to share.”
 - Critique the point, not the person.
 - Use common conversational courtesy – let people finish their sentences and use appropriate and respectful language.
- Intentionally **empower and incorporate lived experience perspectives** in guidance to the Council
 - Identify opportunities to mentor advocates who contribute lived experience to the discussion.
 - Solicit all points of view.
- Anchor conversations with the **shared purpose of providing guidance** to the Council and informing State policy in support of people who experience homelessness
 - Stay focused on key questions identified by the Council
 - While acknowledging that there are numerous important issues to address, focus on requested feedback and questions identified by the Council.
- **Think innovatively** and welcome new ideas.
 - It is ok to voice a thought that is not fully formed.
 - Explore new ways to address ongoing issues.
 - Identify successful local efforts and consider ways to scale up across the State.
 - Recognize that everyone has a piece of the puzzle—involve all AC members as much as possible and the public when appropriate.
 - Shift focus from limited, individual needs to public interest.
 - Focus on interests, not positions
 - Explore interests in detail, consider options without deciding.
 - Interests express underlying motivations and may include needs, concerns, fears, and aspirations.

COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Committee Chair or Co-Chairs

As the AC is currently in its first year of development, there is not a structure or process in place to identify an AC Chair or Co-Chairs. AC members may choose to revisit the need for AC leadership in future years.

Meeting Agendas

AC meeting agendas are developed by Cal ICH staff and are reflective of the Council's agenda and priorities. AC members may elevate topics for consideration as future AC or Council agenda items.

Reports to the Council

Reporting to the Council on AC discussions and guidance will be done by a volunteer AC member, with support of Cal ICH staff, to build and nurture relationships between AC members and State leadership. This role should be rotated among AC members to ensure that all members who wish to volunteer are able to. The report to the Council should include areas of consensus and differing opinions within the AC discussions. Members who report to the Council should be prepared to share back with the AC in its subsequent meeting.

DELIBERATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

While the AC is an advisory body and may not be required to make decisions, the following process is provided to fully engage AC members and support an inclusive dialogue:

Assumptions for Equitable Decision Making

- Every decision point serves as an opportunity to examine and act in an equitable and inclusive manner.
- Our focus should be on:
 - Systems, not symptoms
 - Outcomes, not intentions
 - Continual learning, not what we already know
- It is important to always critically examine our sense of what is “objective.”
- It is important to consistently apply our values and personal commitment to taking action.

Steps for Deliberation

1. Pose open-ended questions and solicit all points of view.
2. Share all relevant information with members and the public.
3. Explain the reasons behind one's statements, questions, and actions. Be specific and use examples. Invite questions and comments.
4. Jointly test assumptions and inferences.
5. Disagree openly with any member of the group without being “disagreeable.” Silence does not always mean consent.
6. Identify areas of consensus and where there are divergent views.
7. Use the Gradient of Agreement (below) to identify areas for further discussion and track differing opinions.
8. Record areas of consensus and differing opinions to share with the Council.

Gradient of Agreement

To determine whether a particular item is elevated to the Council, the AC will use the below tool to measure agreement on topics:.

1	2	3	4	5
I do not support.	I need revisions to support.	I can support with additional information.	I am mostly satisfied and will support.	I strongly support.

Voting

The AC may be asked by the Council to vote on a decision. In cases where voting is needed, a majority (currently 16 members) will be used to pass a decision. Cal ICH staff will facilitate official votes of the AC and record it as part of each meeting’s minutes.

MEMBERSHIP TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Full participation of members in quarterly meeting discussions is critical to the success of the AC in meeting its stated goals. Members are asked to commit their time, actively participate, and share their knowledge and expertise in discussions.

Time Commitment

AC members commit to participating in four regular AC meetings per year. Outside of the regular meetings, members are asked to work on special projects that align with their interest and expertise, once these are established. Members who miss more than one meeting a year will be consulted to identify barriers to their participation.

Membership Terms

AC membership will typically be two years. For the first AC cohort, Cal ICH staff will plan to stagger membership to ensure continuity across groups. In practice, this will mean about half of the members in the initial cohort will have a two-year membership while the other half will stay on for a third year. The AC will be asked for volunteers to volunteer to stay on for another year.

After the initial round of members rotates out, new members will have two-year terms going forward, with possibility to be reappointed by co-chairs.

MEETING STRUCTURE AND GUIDELINES

The primary engagement structure for the AC revolves around its quarterly meetings, which can include presentations on key topics and opportunities for AC members to discuss and provide input on Council priorities. These may be supplemented with engagement through official subcommittees, asynchronous work, and information sharing outside of meetings. These additional engagement approaches will be used as needed to support specific goals for the AC and in response to Council requests for specific input.

Open Meeting Rules

As a group created by statute, the AC is subject to the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#), a California law that covers all state boards and commissions, requiring that these bodies publicly notice their meetings, prepare agendas, accept public testimony, and conduct their meetings in public unless specifically

authorized by the Act. For more information on the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act, please visit the [website of the Office of the Attorney General](#).

Meetings: A meeting is “Any congregation of a majority of the members of a state body at the same time and place to hear, discuss, or deliberate upon any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the state body to which it pertains” ([Gov. Code § 11122.5](#)).

A meeting will be publicly noticed and will have an agenda available at least 10 days in advance.

In order to call a meeting to order and conduct any votes, a majority of members must be present to meet quorum.

Serial Meetings: Bagley-Keene prohibits Serial Meetings. State law stipulates: “A majority of the members of a state body shall not, outside of a meeting authorized by this chapter, use a series of communications of any kind, directly or through intermediaries, to discuss, deliberate, or take action on any time of business that is within the subject matter of the state body” ([Gov. Code § 11122.5](#)).

Common Types of Serial Meetings:

- Daisy Chain – Communicating information on committee-related topics through a series of conversations that involve a majority of members. For example, if member A speaks to member B, who then communicates information from that conversation to member C, this would constitute a serial meeting in the case of a five-person body.
- Spoke and Hub Communications – When one person acts as the hub of a wheel to communicate committee-related topics to a majority of members. For example, if member A speaks to member B and then relays information from that conversation to member C, this would constitute a serial meeting in the case of a five-person body.

Supplemental and Asynchronous Work

The AC may decide to convene at supplemental times to work on specific topics and allow space to inform, solicit input, facilitate discussion, and nurture relationships among AC members. All work completed in these sessions must be brought back to the full group in a public meeting. If these supplemental meetings include a majority of AC members, the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act will apply, and meetings will be run in accordance with those rules.

AC members may also be asked to participate in asynchronous work, for example reviewing information ahead of a meeting to prepare for robust discussion or providing further input on a topic addressed in a previous meeting.

Accessibility

Accessibility accommodation is available to support and can be provided upon request. Cal ICH complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by ensuring that the meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities. Any disability-related accommodation, materials in alternate format, or auxiliary

aids/services, may be requested five (5) days prior to the meeting. Any requests received after will be given consideration, but logistical constraints may not allow for their fulfillment.

Public Participation

Public participation enriches AC discussions. Members of the public are invited to provide feedback at designated public comment times during AC meetings, which may also be shared in writing during or following meetings. Meeting summaries include input from members of the public. Upcoming meeting materials, as well as past meeting summaries and materials, are publicly available on the Cal ICH Meetings Webpage to support public engagement. Members of the public are encouraged to provide input relevant to meeting agenda items and to keep their remarks concise to ensure all public comments are heard.

AC members may also decide to hold public input sessions on topics of their choice, as relevant to their work.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

Clear understanding of meeting topics and objectives is key to robust, meaningful engagement. To support this, AC members will receive timely information to support their preparation for upcoming discussions.

- Meeting dates and times are set at the beginning of the year for the full calendar year.
- Meeting agendas are publicly available approximately 10 days ahead of each AC meeting.
- A meeting packet, including meeting materials and meeting agendas, objectives and discussion questions, are sent approximately one week ahead of each AC meeting.
- Guidance, recommendations, and input provided by the AC to the Council, are shared with the AC ahead of Council meetings.
- Reminders are sent ahead of any deadlines for activities between meetings.
- Meeting summaries are provided following each meeting.
- Updates are provided between meetings as relevant, sharing progress and addressing topics previously discussed.
- All materials will be publicly available on the Cal ICH Meetings Webpage.

MEMBER COMMITMENT TO THE CHARTER

Members of the Cal ICH Advisory Committee are committing to advance the stated goals of the AC, by promoting its guiding principles and abiding by the commitment to engagement and membership requirements.

This charter may be revised, as needed, to support the AC in fulfilling its purpose. Cal ICH will present any relevant changes to the charter in order to get member feedback.