



**SACRAMENTO  
STEPS FORWARD**

Ending Homelessness. Starting Fresh.

## **Racial Equity Committee Questions and Answers**

### **Acronyms**

Committee = Racial Equity Committee

CoC = Sacramento Continuum of Care

BIPOC = Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

HUD = U.S. Housing and Urban Development

SSF = Sacramento Steps Forward

### **Q and A from applications received through 12/21/2020:**

Q: Will there be changes made to better serve us African Americans?

A: The expectation is that the Committee's Action Plan will lead to changes that result in African American's being better served by the homelessness response system and the systems that feed into it.

Q: Will we be in the position to make sure all voices are heard?

A: The Committee will be in the position to invite diverse voices to inform its work, both inside and outside of the monthly Committee meetings.

Q: What is your attendance policy for participants?

A: Members are expected to attend all Committee meetings, with rare exception for illness, vacation, or other reasonable accommodation.

Q: How is the group gathering information about unsheltered people of color? Are we using studies? Personal accounts? Asking folks directly?

A: It is up to the Committee to decide how it will collect information about unsheltered people of color. The draft workplan (found here, on page 66), which has been approved by the CoC Board and will be brought to the

Committee for approval at its first meeting, includes information collection through interviews, forums, and existing studies.

Q: Do we offer any housing vouchers to relieve people of their homeless problems? Do we do Outreach Services to reach those who are homeless? Is this committee in direct contact with those who are homeless? Is there any funding available for the committee to allocate resources for the homeless?

A: This is not a direct service committee. It will not be in a position to offer vouchers or allocate resources. The members may be in direct contact with those who are homeless in order to better understand the causes, consequences and potential solutions of BIPOC homelessness, and to incorporate recommendations from that research into the action plan it will submit to the CoC Board.

Q: When will the committee member be chosen for the slot open?

A: Committee members will be recommended at the CoC Board meeting on 01/13/2021 and will be notified by email that day.

Q: What are the goals of the committee, short and long term? Will the committee be working with other established committees to reach these goals? Are there any viable suggestions presently being considered?

A: The Committee is tasked with developing an Action Plan by July 2021 that has been fully informed by BIPOC with lived experience of homelessness, as well as input and recommendations from stakeholders, studies, pilots, our local gaps analysis and Coordinated Entry evaluation, and the learnings of other communities to guide the decision-making process of the CoC Board over the next 3-5 years. The ultimate vision is to create an equitable, accountable, and transparent homelessness system that catalyzes structural change both inside and outside of our current sphere of influence. It is possible that the Committee will work with other established committees of the CoC to reach these goals. There are no suggestions presently being considered for the Committee's Action Plan so that the Committee can start with a clean slate.

Q: How does the Committee anticipate engaging the planning process with other pertinent and intersecting agencies and plans?

A: The CoC Board is seeking a diverse Committee membership that includes participants involved in other pertinent and intersecting agencies and plans so that they can bring that knowledge to the Committee, along with recommendations on how best to engage and coordinate.

Q: What are the expectations and how does the committee get out into the community?

A: The commitment is January - July 2021, with the expectation that members may serve additional terms if the tenure and scope of the Committee is extended by the CoC Board. The Committee will meet monthly by Zoom, currently proposed for the third Wednesday of the month from 9:00-11:00 a.m., but subject to change if there are significant conflicts. Member responsibilities include reviewing materials prior to meetings, attending meetings, advising staff in advance if a meeting will be missed, and following up on any additional commitments the member makes over the course of the committee's work. The time commitment is estimated at 4.5 - 6 hours per month for all committee members, and 7-9 hours per month for co-chairs. The Committee will decide how it will get out into the community in the safest possible way during the pandemic.

Q: We really already know the root causes of homelessness and racism... but what are we going to do about it? Are we going to hold our leaders accountable?

A: The root causes of BIPOC homelessness and racism may be different in Sacramento versus other places. The Committee will look at existing research on root causes as well as conduct its own local research, and it will decide how that research will drive its Action Plan and corresponding accountability recommendations.

Q: Are the ideas that come out of this going to be recommended to Sacramento County and HUD for policy changes in services?

A: The CoC Board will have the option of presenting recommendations from the Committee to Sacramento County and HUD for policy changes in services.

Q: How far in advance will we be receiving the materials prior to the meetings?

A: Materials are anticipated to be available one week prior to the meetings.

Q: How many total members will this committee consist of?

A: The CoC Board will determine the final number, which will be in the range of 15-20.

Q: Will someone from SSF serve as a Lead Independent Director/Chair, or are the Co-Chairs the designated leadership for the committee?

A: The Co-Chairs are the designated leadership for the Committee.

Q: What is the commitment from the broader CoC and the city/county to enact what the committee's recommendations will be?

A: The CoC Board established the Committee and approved its draft work plan, but it is not obligated to enact recommendations from any of its committees and has made no commitment to do so preemptively. The City and County of Sacramento have not been asked about their commitment to enact the Committee's recommendations prior to knowing what those recommendations will be.

Q: Has a framework for looking at race and equity been developed by SSF staff? How about a draft mission statement with any goals or objectives for this committee? Or is the committee expected to drive all discussion and decision making on where to take the committee?

A: SSF staff have initiated training on race and equity and will conduct a series of additional training in the Spring of 2021. Staff have also drafted a work plan to guide the Committee, which does not include a draft mission statement with goals and objectives. The staff will support the Committee with its discussions and decision making, but have allowed for ample

independence of the Committee to bring its own expertise, ideas, frameworks, and recommendations to the table.

Q: How might I use the education gained in this committee to better serve the homeless population?

A: It is not currently known how each member will use the education garnered to better serve the homeless population, but it is hoped that there will be both individual and collective benefits. Each member will have a sphere of influence that they can impact and collectively the members will form a network that is able to achieve different accomplishments than they could do as individuals.