

Coordinated Access & Assessment: Family Placement Committee (FPC)

Terms of Reference

Background

Throughout 2012 and 2013 CHF engaged in a thorough community consultation plan regarding CAA; the community was vocal about participating in the placement of families in their housing programs. In order to respect the agency autonomy over family program placements, the concept of Placement Committees was developed. The committees would allow for dialogue, discussion and placements to be made in a group rather than one agency making the decisions in silo.

Much of the policy, process and practices are outlined in the CAA Manual. These Terms of Reference help define the purpose, process, and structure of this committee.

Membership

Will comprise of no more than 3 representatives from each:

- Inn From The Cold
- Children's Cottage
- Aspen Family and Community Network Society
- Calgary Homeless Foundation
- Distress Centre Calgary
- Discovery House

The Placement Committee will ask their management to attend if there are issues needing to be resolved that cannot be addressed with the current membership.

Guests are welcome to attend Placement Committee so long as they understand the purpose and goals of the committee and are respectful of the process. The committee can decide to prohibit guests from attending if the common goals are not respected, understood or followed. If a member would like to invite a guest, please notify the Chair and Co-Chair by email prior to the meeting. The guest will be introduced and the goals of the committee will be reviewed with the guest. They will be asked to sign a confidentiality form if they are not affiliated with a Family Placement Committee member agency (and thus obliged to comply with their agency's confidentiality policies and procedures). The CAA member who has invited the guest is responsible to ensure the guest understands the purpose of the committee and has signed a confidentiality form.

Chair Responsibilities

This Committee will be Chaired by a voluntary member of the CAA Family placement committee and Co-chaired by Cathy Deck, CAA, Distress Centre. The CAA Chair will commit to a minimum one month term on a rotational basis.

- Ensure the structure of the meetings is followed and time is respected.

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- Guide the group through difficult decisions; if consensus cannot be achieved items will be tabled for the next meeting or specific plans will be implemented to find resolution on contentious issues (i.e. Agency leadership consulted).
- Designated Chairperson will communicate any changes in meetings via email or telephone to the committee.

Co-Chair Responsibilities

The Co-Chair is responsible for completing all the family HMIS notes during the meeting. It is important the notes make sense to people that are not in attendance at the meetings.

- All referrals and exits will be documented, completed and entered into HMIS.
- Prepare spread sheets and complete necessary set up for meetings.
- In accordance with the Data Quality Plan the Co-Chair will ensure: completeness, timeliness, accuracy and consistency of placement notes and data collection related to the placement process.
- The Co-Chair will document learnings from each meeting and ensure the CAA Manual reflects these learnings in conjunction with CHF staff.
- Ensure the Terms of Reference are up to date and reflect the purpose and vision of the group.

Members Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of each member are outlined in the CAA Manual and MOU.

- The Placement Committee is authorized to make referrals to housing programs with open spaces as indicated by program staff and Shelter Point data.
- The Placement Committee will not address issues leading families into homelessness. The group recognizes the pathways into homelessness are extensive and outside of the scope of this committee.
- The Placement Committee will only address placement of people into programs with available space based on triaging those with the highest need.
- All case management activities within the housing programs are not in the scope of this committee.
- The Placement Committee will provide feedback on policies, process and operations to be included in the updates of the CAA Manual.

CHF Staff Responsibilities

- Ensure the guidelines set in the MOUs are adhered to.
- In conjunction with the Co-Chair, CHF Staff will work to collect and disseminate data regarding families who do not fit into the System of Care. This information should be shared with partners from other systems and outside our system of care (health, justice, treatment centres) in the form of briefing notes provided by CHF. The CHF team will

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share these documents with the committee prior to distribution for feedback and approval.

- CHF staff will document learnings from each meeting and ensure the CAA Manual reflects these learnings in conjunction with the Co-chair.

Meetings

This Committee will meet every Tuesday morning at 9:00am. Communication for meetings will be via email and in person. Phone numbers for all agency members that sit on the committee should be given in case of emergencies so they can be contacted.

Some agencies from the membership list have capacity to host meetings; if an agency is unable to attend a meeting, the date and time will not be changed but the agency hosting should have the capabilities to conference call or have a phone line available for the meetings.

Agenda Item	
i.	Introductions (if required)
ii.	Agency updates
iii.	Updates on program placements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. “Leave on one week” – the agency is still trying to connect with the client or establish a plan for intake. They cannot be exited from CAA because the program placement has not been finalized for a variety of reasons. b. “Exit success” – the agency has met with the client, explained the program to the client and both parties agree the client is a good match and can be exited from CAA. For some programs this means the client has physically moved in. c. “Return to Triage List” – the client is not a match for the program due to client not wanting the services, client’s needs could not be met by the program, or the client does not meet program eligibility. d. “MIA” – multiple and varied attempts to find the client have been unsuccessful. e. “Needs Contact Info” – lacks contact information, more information required f. “Needs Update” – information outdated, more information required
iv.	Celebrating Success – this is the time during the meeting program will report which clients have been housed!
v.	Transfers – when clients require a different program a SPDAT should be completed and entered into HMIS CAA. Please ensure the transfer question is answered. A new program placement can be examined during this time of the meeting.
vi.	SPDATs reviewed and through collaboration and available program spaces matches will be made by the group.
vii.	Other agenda items as required
viii.	Committee meeting end

The committee has the option to meet if there are no spaces; the committee can use this time to discuss housing options outside CHF funded programs. The committee will meet to make recommendations to CHF on funding based on gap analysis.

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Triage Model Acuity

- All FSPDATs with a score of 50 and higher are prioritized for a Supportive Housing program. Exceptions of a FSPDAT score below 50 may be made with the consensus of all members at the table, given extenuating circumstances.
- The most acute families with the highest score will be provided a program match first. If a family does not have children in their care, the committee may decide to de-prioritize them and offer the program placement to the family with children in their care. This is especially relevant if the family with children is in an emergency shelter.
- The committee will aim to prioritize 50% of available placements to families residing in emergency shelter.
- For all families without children in their care, collateral with Child and Family Services will be required, and thus should be completed upon intake into CAA by the original Housing Strategist. Based on the collateral information regarding reunification, a placement may or may not be prioritized at the committee's discretion. The committee may also unanimously vote to transfer the family to the singles homeless sector.
- Vulnerabilities for each family are determined on an individual basis. The placement committee has developed triage questions (Appendix A) to support in determining a placement between families of the same or similar acuity scores. The following are specific vulnerability factors to be considered (as reflected in the triage questions):
 1. Safety factors
 2. Current shelter situation
 3. Physical/mental health conditions
 4. Child and Family Services involvement (children in care)
 5. History of homelessness
 6. Pregnancy and due date

Goals of the Committee

- The Agency representatives will ensure housing programs within the System of Care maintain a minimum of 95% occupancy.
- All members of the Placement Committee will follow the process for program placement ensuring timely and efficient service delivery as defined in the CAA Manual.
- All members of the Placement Committee will participate in good faith, with respect, integrity and ethically towards the common goal of ending homelessness with a family-centered approach. Placement Committee operates under the principle sharing of family information is necessary to ensure effective provision of services, continuity of care and efficient use of resources.

Guiding Principles

- All families experiencing homelessness are ready for housing with supports, as necessary.
- The most vulnerable families experiencing homelessness need to be prioritized.
- The selection of housing and provision of services should be guided by family choice and self-determination.

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- Families should not have to change support services as their service needs change.
- All children benefit from a healthy, safe and nurturing family environment. Whenever possible to do so, the integrity of the family unit will be maintained.
- All families benefit from social, cultural and community connection.
- All families have strengths and resources to improve their circumstances.

Governance & Reporting

The Committee seeks consensus on all placement decisions and Terms of Reference policies.

The Committee Reports to:

- Each representative on the Committee will report to their own agency's leadership.
- The Committee representatives will report back from our respective agencies to the group.
- If an agency cannot send a member to a meeting an email to the Chair and/or Co-Chair should be sent.
- If attendance is not at all possible for one or several members (i.e. due to weather), the meeting will continue without them; at the agency's request placement decisions will be made and forwarded to the agency not attending. The Co-Chair will call the agency with a follow-up.
- Distress Centre's Co-Chair will make decisions if there is an emergency referral and no one can attend.

Placement Process

- When a match is confirmed and a referral made, the staff person accepting the family will, within two days, make the first attempt to contact the family to notify them a placement has been made. Within seven days, a minimum of two attempts will be made to contact the family, each time using all of the means of contact provided by the family. Where attempts have been unsuccessful, the attempts made to notify the family will be documented in HMIS as per agency policy.
- The agency which is receiving the family referral will be responsible for making the notification of placement. The family will be provided the option to have a Warm Transfer or they may choose to communicate directly with the program. If the family requests a Warm Transfer, the receiving agency will make the required arrangements.
- Notify the family by using only the contact information provided by the family. This may include methods such as phone number, email, mailing address, shelter or third party contact information (for more information please refer to Notification of Housing Placement Match in the CAA Policies & Standard Operating Procedure).
- If a family has refused a program placement by an agency, a rationale will be presented at the next placement committee and documented in HMIS.
- If the family refuses the placement, their F-SPDAT and rationale will be presented at the next meeting and should be documented in HMIS. A family can refuse a referral as

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many times as they wish without penalty. They will be put back on the triage list and offered a program match based on acuity and open spaces.

- Family choice for program placement or preference should always be respected; it should be considered but it does not mean they will get into the program due to acuity and open spaces.
- If a family is no longer in need of a match they will be exited from CAA.
- If they re-connect, their F-SPDAT should be updated in HMIS in order for their assessment to be reviewed at the next Placement Committee.
- Families are deemed MIA if staff members cannot contact the family. This is done case by case; the family is given a minimum of two weeks to make contact before they are deemed MIA. Once a family makes contact, an HMIS note will be made and their CAA status will be changed and they will be put back on the triage list.

Transfers Guidelines

- Prior to the consideration of a transfer, the family should receive information regarding available singles/family housing and supports they can expect to receive. The family should have an opportunity to make an informed decision regarding their service provision.
- As appropriate to do so, if a family wishes to remain in their current singles program, the referring program will make all efforts to maintain the family in the program. The Family Placement Committee programs (Aspen, IFTC, Children’s Cottage, and Discovery House) can serve as a resource to support single and youth programs in accessing appropriate community resources to maintain the placement.
- Families requesting a transfer to the family sector, will not be required to be triaged back into the system of care. All transfers will be prioritized on a case by case basis and will require an updated F-SPDAT and rationale for the transfer request. All transfer requests will be received and coordinated through the CAA Coordinator.
- Families who no longer have custody of their child(ren) will be re-assessed for their continued need for housing supports. As appropriate to do so, if families continue to require housing with supports, they may remain in the program for up to three months to support the successful discharge transition to a singles, youth or community program. The Case Manager will be aware of and follow the transfer guidelines from the receiving sector.

Grievances & Appeals

There are two types of grievances related to CAA. For simplicity’s sake, the family has been directed to bring any grievances forward to the CAA/SORCe team. The CAA/SORCe team should direct the family as appropriate to their type of grievance per the descriptions below:

Type of Grievance	Example	Process to follow
CAA Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client thinks their confidentiality has been 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Client presents at SORCe with grievance 2. SORCe engages client in Distress Centre grievance protocols

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	<p>breached at placement committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client wants to withdraw from CAA but is informed that their electronic record will continue to exist (locked) • Client is frustrated they have not been placed yet • Client thinks a decision was made that did not comply with CAA Policies or Standard Operating Procedures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. If client still unsatisfied with grievance procedure, can pursue grievance with CHF per the grievance process for CHF clients with grievance against CHF funded agency that has not been resolved at the agency level
<p>Housing Strategist</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client feels they were not treated fairly by the Housing Strategist • Client feels they should have been given a full assessment but only received the pre-screen • Client feels their assessment is not reflective of their situation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Client presents at SORCe with grievance 2. SORCe team helps client identify the agency the Housing Strategist works for. SORCe CAA Team Lead assists the client to establish contact with the Housing Strategist and agency. 3. SORCe CAA Team Lead ensures that client is appropriately supported to pursue grievance process at Housing Strategist's home agency per the Case Management Standards. Support from CAA Team Lead may include offering SORCe as a place to meet to resolve the grievance, attending the meeting with the client, debriefing, and other types of support. 4. If client still unsatisfied with grievance procedure, can pursue grievance with CHF per the grievance process for CHF clients with grievance against CHF funded agency that has not been resolved at the agency level

Term

The term for this committee will be from 2013 to 2018.

*Last updated November 2016

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Appendix A

Triage Questions – Family Placement Committee

Principles

1. Clients must meet program and table criteria. Where family or homeless status is in question or likely to change, further information is considered.
2. Clients with higher acuity scores are prioritized. Between clients with similar acuity, those whose safety is more threatened by their housing status are prioritized.

Triage Questions

Principle 1

- Are there children in their care?
 1. If CFS is involved (or pregnant with previous PGOs), is there collateral information from CFS regarding status, timeline, and likelihood of return?
 2. If children are in others' care without CFS status, is there a plan for their return? Is the situation formal or informal?
 3. If pregnant, when is the client's due date? Priority is given to clients who are closer to giving birth and women who have a high-risk pregnancy.
- Homelessness status
 1. If couching, how safe is the couching situation? How likely to break down? Is their stay putting the host's housing at risk?
 2. If in transitional housing, how long can they stay?
 3. Will housing status impact family reunification?
- Is there a history of family or partner violence?

Principle 2

- What factors may make staying in the homeless situation especially risky, or less risky for families?
 1. E.g. cognitive capacity, mental health, addictions, ESL, physical health, presence of and age of children
 2. Does the family have a history of chronic, frequent, or recent homelessness?
 3. Are natural or formal supports present? Are there other resources available to the family that increase their likelihood of being able to exit homelessness without case management?

Deadlock Questions

- Do we need more information to answer a key question?
- What are your concerns about taking this family?
- What would make you comfortable to take this family into the program?

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Appendix B

Triage Guideline – Family Fee for Service

1. Agency must have a Family Fee for Service (FFS) agreement with Calgary Homeless Foundation to accept Family Fee for Service placements.
2. Currently CHF-funded housing program contracted spaces need to be filled (100% caseload) before opening a family to a fee-for-service program space.
3. Programs accepting FFS referrals must have capacity to immediately service and house families being referred.
4. Families that have extended stays in family shelters will be targeted for FFS placement. It is encouraged that all families in shelter spaces have FSPDATs completed. In rare cases, if families do not have a FSPDAT completed, a VI-SPDAT and ROI will be required for placement. For families without a FSPDAT completed upon intake, the accepting program will ensure an F-SPDAT is completed (if agency does not have the capacity to complete F-SPDAT, support will be provided by CAA and CHF) within the first week. FFS payment is contingent on the completion of the assessment entered into HMIS.
5. A client-centered approach will be taken with respect to referrals. Families will have a voice with respect to service provision and housing with the goal of maintaining established supports and relationships. Both the client voice and program perspective will be considered for placements.
6. Triage priority will give to families with the longest stays in shelters. **If all long-stayers have been placed, priority will be considered for families with multiple episodes of homelessness in the last three years.** Second to this is vulnerability of the family and acuity score.

The referrals for FFS spaces will be made at regular FPC meeting. Family Placement Committee members and programs with a completed FFS agreement will remain at the table for placement. The FFS placement will continue each week till open spaces have been fulfilled.