



The Alliance to End Homelessness

www.endhomelessnessottawa.ca

TERMS OF REFERENCE

May 2006, revised September 2009

Vision

An inclusive community that ensures everyone has an appropriate home.

Mission

The Alliance to End Homelessness (ATEH) is a non-partisan coalition taking action to end homelessness.

Priorities

1. **Advocacy**
2. **Partnerships**
3. **Research**

Values & Operating Principles

Inclusion

We respect the diversity of perspectives and opinions of ATEH members. We maintain an atmosphere of open communication and find creative ways to incorporate differences into our collective development and implementation of ATEH activities.

Collaboration

ATEH members work together and with partners: to generate ideas and solutions that help individuals and families who are homeless or "at risk" of homelessness. We do this by sharing information, listening with open minds, supporting each other and acting together.

Innovation

We use research and evaluation to develop creative solutions to homelessness. We employ innovative approaches in public affairs activities.

Membership

Membership is open to all individuals and organizations upholding the ATEH's Vision, Mission and Values. The ATEH strives to involve representatives from all organizations concerned about homelessness and to have those who have personal experience of homelessness included as members. ATEH welcomes the participation of our diverse community.

The full ATEH meets four times per year to network, share information, and provide input to the strategic direction and working groups established by its Steering Committee.

Organizations are asked to renew membership annually. An organizational membership fee package will be provided.

Individuals are asked to submit a one-time membership form.

Members are required to attend at least one ATEH meeting within a twelve months period and to provide notification when ending their membership. ATEH members are welcome to contact the Coordinator with a request to attend a Steering Committee meeting as an observer or to speak on an item and are encouraged to participate in the ATEH Working Groups.

Steering Committee of the Alliance to End Homelessness

Purpose/Function

The Steering Committee is the coordinating, decision-making, and implementing body of the ATEH. It meets at least nine times annually.

The Steering Committee is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the ATEH, such as communication with members, media and public relations, and overseeing staff and resources. It develops a strategic work plan, and may appoint working groups to undertake specific actions to achieve identified priorities.

The ATEH seeks financial support from its members and funders for the coordination and implementation of the overall work plan.

The finances of the ATEH are administered through an incorporated non-profit member agency with registered charitable status.

While the Steering Committee directs the work of staff, they are supervised by and directly accountable to the Chair.

Voting and Decision Making

Organizational representatives on the Steering Committee should have the authority to make decisions on behalf of their organizations, recognizing that in some situations official endorsement of the ATEH's position may require specific board approval from member agencies. Community representatives with lived experience of homelessness are full voting members. Ex-officio members are non-voting.

During a vote, Steering Committee members have the right to "opt out without prejudice" from decisions that they cannot support but do not wish to oppose.

Decision-making strives to be consensual. However, if a vote at meetings is necessary, a decision must receive the support of two-thirds of voting members present.

The Steering Committee members are responsible for decisions on the strategic direction of the ATEH. To this end, the Steering Committee reviews the Terms of Reference of the ATEH at least once every eighteen months.

Accountability

The Steering Committee is accountable for keeping the ATEH membership informed of progress on and changes to activities. Steering Committee minutes are made available to ATEH members on request.

All Steering Committee members will maintain confidentiality on matters under discussion until consensus is reached and confirmed by the Chair.

Chair & Vice-Chair

The Chair of the ATEH serves for a two-year term. The Vice-Chair is selected from the members of the Steering Committee with the expectation of becoming the next Chair. The Vice-Chair replaces the Chair as necessary.

Membership Term

Organizational representatives, persons with lived experience of homelessness and ex-officio representatives are asked to sit for at least two years.

Organizational Representatives

The interests of the following sectors are to be represented:

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|----------------------------------|---|
| Aboriginal | Post-incarceration Support |
| Day Program | Shelters for Families, Men, Women & Youth |
| Disability | Social Housing Network |
| Francophone | Supportive Housing Network |
| Health | University Sector |
| Housing Loss Prevention | Women's Sector |
| Housing Search and Stabilization | Youth Sector |
| Immigrant and Refugee | |
| Mental Health and Addictions | |
| Outreach | |

Members with Lived Experience of Homelessness

At least three positions on the Steering Committee are reserved for individuals experiencing or who have experienced homelessness. These representatives will reflect strategic sectors. Expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with the participation policy.

Ex-officio Members

Ex-officio members are appointed by their organizations. Currently, they include; the City of Ottawa Housing Branch, the local offices of the Ministry of Community and Social Services & the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care, Service Canada/Human Resources and Skill Development Canada, United Way/Centraide Ottawa and the Champlain Health Integration Network (LHIN).

Members in Good Standing

The Chair will contact members if more than three consecutive meetings are missed.

Working Groups of the Alliance to End Homelessness

Purpose and Function

Working Groups develop and implement work plans within the mandates assigned to them by the Steering Committee. Work plans and subsequent changes are approved by the Steering Committee. Working Group minutes will be provided to the Steering Committee.

Membership on Working Groups is open to ATEH members and other resource people as required, along with at least one representative from the Steering Committee.

In those instances where there are decision and discussion items for the Steering Committee, a Working Group Chair or their briefed designate will attend Steering Committee meetings to clarify or answer questions on behalf of the working group.

Working Groups are accountable to the Steering Committee for adherence to the ATEH Vision, Mission and Values.

Standing Working Groups

Research and Evaluation Working Group

The focus of this group is to transfer knowledge on the causes of homelessness and on effective interventions to the community at large; to monitor local research priorities; and to facilitate, monitor, advocate and support research.

Public Affairs Working Group

The focus of this group is to develop and facilitate the implementation of advocacy and communications strategies and activities and to support partnership development

Ad Hoc Working Groups

Ad hoc working groups may be established by ATEH to complete a specific task and/or function that ATEH has identified as requiring attention or focus for a finite time period. Ad hoc working groups will develop a workplan that is approved by the Steering Committee. Reports are made at Steering Committee meetings as required and minutes circulated. Working Group membership will include at least one Steering Committee member and a majority will be from the ATEH membership. Other individuals with specific expertise may be asked to participate.

Leadership Training Working Group (*W.I.T.H.*)

The focus of the *Welcoming Involvement of the Homeless (W.I.T.H.)* ad hoc working group is to provide opportunities for the involvement of people with a personal experience of homelessness in the work of the ATEH and its members through *W.I.T.H. Leadership Training*. This course involves in-class sessions and mentored placement on an agency board or committee.

Affiliate Groups

An Affiliate Group is a group or network which currently exists in the community, which operates independently, includes ATEH members, and aligns with the Vision, Mission and Values and Principles of ATEH. The interests of such groups are represented within the Steering Committee membership.

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