

Built for Zero Housing Stabilization Learning Cohort (HSLC)

GUIDE TO BUILDING YOUR CORE PREVENTION TEAM

March 2024

This working document is intended to be used by communities as a first step in building a Coordinated Prevention System that is designed in collaboration with key partners, Continuum of Care leadership, “upstream” service providers/partners, and people with lived experience of housing insecurity. Following the HSLC model and **Foundational Priorities**, communities should begin by building a local team that will organize and lead the planning, development, and implementation work. The local Core Prevention Team (Core Team) should be a diverse, representative group that includes people with lived experience of homelessness (PLEH). In addition to a Core Team, communities should identify a Lead Organization and staff to serve as the local Coordinator and a local Data Lead.

This document and related HSLC tools can be used to help communities identify and engage stakeholders who should be participating on your Core Prevention Team, including establishing [Roles and Responsibilities](#) for each entity, the estimated time/commitment needed, and the [Key Indicators of An Effective Team](#). This guide also includes worksheets to help you [Identify and Recruit Core Team Members](#) and offers suggested [Initial Steps](#) for successful team formation and implementation.

Audience:

- Backbone entity(ies)
- Local Core Prevention Team and key stakeholders

HSLC Foundational Priority:

- **1. Establish Core Team, Staff Roles, & Roadmap (months 1-2)**

Topics:

- [Roles & Responsibilities Of The Coordinated Homelessness Prevention Core Team & Local Leads/Coordinators](#)
- [Key Indicators Of An Effective Core Team](#)
- [Identifying & Recruiting Core Team Members](#)
- [Initial Steps For Successful Core Team Formation + Implementation](#)

Related Tools/Guidance:

- [Framework for Coordinated Homelessness Prevention](#)

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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COORDINATED HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION CORE TEAM & LOCAL LEADS/COORDINATORS

Below is an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the different community partners and leads in a coordinated prevention system. **Communities should use this as a working document to build-out what a local team will look like**, including expected roles, responsibilities and an estimated time commitment for Core Team members and the staff supporting the planning and development work.

LEAD ORGANIZATION ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY:

- Provide backbone agency support while developing the Coordinated Prevention System, including support and funding for the local Prevention System coordination, data analysis, and support for people with lived experience to participate in planning, development and implementation
- Manage potential pass-through funding to help support coordination, data capacity, and engagement of people with lived expertise, as well as other planning, development, and implementation costs
- Ensure funding to compensate PLEH involved in the Core Team and any planning, development, or implementation work
- Document, continually review and maintain current [Coordinated Prevention Roadmap](#) for the community
- Other Responsibilities: *[TBD: Add in others that are applicable to your local community]*

Local Lead Agency:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i>
Estimated time commitment:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i> (i.e. how many hours a month/week do you anticipate this person needing to dedicate to this cohort?)

LOCAL COORDINATOR ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY:

- Oversee and manage a Core Prevention Team that will develop and implement the Coordinated Prevention system or community approach, including:
 - Coordinate, schedule, convene and document regular Core Team meetings, as well as planning and development processes:
 - Coordinate additional meetings and/or workgroups/subcommittees, as needed
- Support the Core Team to adopt a group charter to outline how community stakeholders will work together to build a coordinated prevention system, including roles, decision-making, accountability, etc.)

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- Engage and develop partnerships and commitment from local leaders to engage them in prevention work and build community will and buy-in
- Ensure local PLEH participants are supported, prepped and compensated for their participation in the planning, development and implementation
 - This may be the role of the coordinator or other partners and typically includes pre- and post- Core Team meetings to prep and debrief, support coordination for PLEH meetings, setting up a compensation infrastructure and distributing payment, and providing access to technology needed to participate in calls
- Support the Core Team to develop, review and maintain a current **Coordinated Prevention Roadmap**
- Support the Core Team with early piloting and testing of the Core Elements of Coordinated Prevention
- Other Responsibilities: *[TBD: Add in others that are applicable to your community]*

Local Coordinator:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i>
Estimated time commitment:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i> (i.e. how many hours a month/week do you anticipate this person needing to dedicate to this role?)

HMIS DATA LEAD ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY

- Participate on the Core Team
- Lead work on HMIS data useability and inflow investigation and Housing Insecurity Heat Mapping (see **HSLC Foundational Priority 2**)
- Assist with obtaining data from HMIS and other data sources
- Assist with implementing steps to ensure HMIS data useability
- Leverage HMIS data to establish a data baseline for inflow overall and by sub-cohorts
- Assist in developing a process for reporting and analyzing monthly inflow data to measure changes to inflow
- Prepare and present data reports for the Core Team and local stakeholders
- Coordinate with other local efforts to ensure data alignment and leveraging

HMIS Data Lead:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i>
Estimated time commitment:	<i>[To be filled in by community]</i> (i.e. how many hours a month/week do you anticipate this person needing to dedicate to this role?)

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CORE PREVENTION TEAM (“CORE TEAM”) ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY

- The core group that meets regularly to inform and oversee the design and implementation of the community-wide Coordinated Prevention system
- The Core Prevention Team:
 - a. Meets at least monthly
 - b. Establishes a clear, cross-sector accountability structure, including how the team will engage other partners, build community commitment and collective decision-making.
 - c. Establishes a **Coordinated Prevention Roadmap** to guide planning, development and implementation work, establishes milestones and target dates, and regularly updates as work is completed or is adjusted
 - d. Develops and commits to a shared understanding of prevention that defines:
 - i. Different types of housing insecurity and risk levels for literal homelessness
 - ii. The targeted homelessness prevention and “housing urgent care” responses the community currently has in place or intends to develop,
 - iii. Measurable goals to reduce literal homelessness and crisis response system inflow and advance equity
 - e. Examines local data gathered as part of system development work (**HSLC Foundational Priorities 2 & 3**) on housing Insecurity, emergency needs and local responses to inform targeting and system development
 - f. Adopts and implements a local model for Coordinated Homelessness Prevention (**HSLC Foundational Priority 4**) based on initial review of data that includes racial and other equity indicators, is tied to promising- and evidence-based practices, and accounts for the **Core Elements of Coordinated Homelessness Prevention**.
 - g. Regularly reviews data on outcomes and prioritizes areas for improvement
 - h. Serves as community champions around prevention work to obtain buy-in and build excitement/community will with leaders and stakeholders in the community
 - i. Participates in national HSLC peer learning opportunities related to building, testing, measuring progress, and scaling community-wide and regional models

Estimated time commitment:

[To be filled in by community]

(i.e. how many hours a month/week do you anticipate this group needing to dedicate to this cohort?)

KEY INDICATORS OF AN EFFECTIVE CORE TEAM

Core Teams can have a variety of functions and roles, which may vary at different times during the work, depending on the key activities you are focusing on. **As communities recruit and engage partners for the Core Team**, consider the indicators and characteristics of successful, effective teams below and build a Core Team that can do the following:

- **Catalyze systems change** within the prevention/homelessness system
- **Adopt and implement** a [*Coordinated Prevention Roadmap*](#). *Well coordinated work that is tied to an action plan will keep all planes flying in the same direction, following a planned path to success*
- **Cultivate and develop** new, diverse “upstream” partners with the goal of coordinating an effective, diverse, and immediately accessible Coordinated Prevention system or network, including community-based organizations, cross-sector partners, and other “non-traditional” partners in the community (e.g., recreation centers, library branches)
- **Build capacity** within the local system to support ongoing work and disseminate learning and tools
- **Communicate** learnings, needs and progress system-wide
- **Collect and analyze** data for documenting, measuring, and evaluating progress
- **Champion** the work – *having a Core Team that consists of a diverse, passionate and visionary team leading the way can drive a path forward to reach your goal(s)*
- **Cultivate continuous improvement** - *intentionally building in ongoing learning and evaluation to continually improve the journey and expand impact*

Key characteristics of successful individual Core Team Members:

- Willing to commit to systems-level change around homelessness prevention
- Knowledge of the current prevention/housing stabilization system
- Analytical skills and/or background are important for systems thinking and continually centering around what works and doesn't for people most at-risk
- Collaborative work style; ability to work well with different groups
- Leadership skills/experience - someone able to make changes within systems (authority and accountability to navigate through obstacles to make changes and/or keep things on track)
- Creativity - can think outside of the box and willing to challenge the status quo
- Humility and curiosity to continually learn and try things differently

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Core Teams **organize the work towards a common direction** and can **facilitate moving** things from talk to action, from problems to solutions and from one-off reactive responses to well-coordinated systemic strategies. Having a team that **develops shared, concrete and actionable goals**, paired with an **action plan** with **delegated tasks and timelines**, will help keep you focused on your aim - establishing a Coordinated Homelessness Prevention approach that works for your community and complements existing housing emergency and non-emergency resources and responses.

A Core Team that **authentically engages** people with lived experience and **represents the diversity** within the community can model how to **design and implement an effective and accountable strategy** that can be sustained and replicated within the broader community.

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IDENTIFYING & RECRUITING CORE TEAM MEMBERS

Core Prevention Teams should be comprised of a ***diverse group of people*** across race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and experience and include key prevention providers, Continuum of Care representatives, HMIS staff, people with lived expertise of homelessness (PLEH), and Upstream/Cross-Sector partners who will serve as the core group. As community's begin to develop or "roster" the Core Prevention Team, consider the following questions:

- Does the team reflect/represent the local population and those who face housing insecurity and homelessness in the community?
- Do those closest to the problem have direct input/decision-making?

Ensuring Diversity and Lived Expertise of Homelessness on the Core Team

As community's build the team, assess how the following are represented and engaged:

- People with Lived Experience/Expertise of homelessness
- People with experience accessing your local prevention system
- Black, Asian Latinx, Pacific Islanders, and Indigenous populations
- People who identify as LGBTQ and transgender and gender-expansive people
- People living with disabilities
- People with experience with the criminal justice system
- People who are aging and on fixed income
- Youth and young adults, including those formerly involved in foster care
- Veterans
- People who reflect multiple identities (ex. Black transgender-identified, black women w/ low incomes)
- Other representatives that reflect the population of your community, especially those living in areas with the highest housing insecurity

TIPS:

- Avoid tokenizing people by having a team that is truly representative of the populations experiencing severe housing insecurity and homelessness in the community (including any subcommittees or ad hoc workgroups).
- Don't ask people belonging to multiple identities to speak to all facets of themselves (meaning, don't have just one person who "checks off all the boxes")
- Consider having people on the Core Prevention Team who self identify as having lived experience or representing a certain population be a part of the recruitment and outreach process for peer to peer connection, if applicable.

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- Have a plan to keep people engaged once recruited (*refer to [Definition of Meaningful Engagement of PLEH](#) and [Recruiting, Engaging & Hiring PLEH](#) for more information on recruiting, engaging and compensating PLEH on your Core Team*)
- Helpful tool to reference: [HUD Homeless Response System: Untapped Expertise: Strategies for Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement When Developing Your Coordinated Investment Plan](#)

Engaging Non-Traditional and/or Upstream Partners

Communities should think about key partners outside of the homeless response system as the Core Team is being developed. Consider which partners play a key role and/or have direct input on the systems that directly or indirectly drive literal homelessness. Identify key partners already serving areas with higher housing insecurity and that are trusted sources for help within a neighborhood or community.

Determine which partners need to be part of an initial working group to form the Core Prevention Team or who otherwise need to be engaged through a broader community partner group. Consider the entities identified through the examination of local emergency needs and responses (HSLC **Foundational Priorities 2 & 3**) and related [Coordinated Prevention Environmental Scan](#)

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Consider the following types of partners and what their role may be:

Partner/System	Where/how should they be involved:		
	During initial planning	On the Core Team	Keep engaged/informed as a broader system of partners
Secondary and postsecondary education partners			
Justice system partners			
Local advocacy organizations			
Child and adult welfare partners			
Elected officials			
Public assistance agencies			
Workforce development boards and providers			
Private foundations, funders			
Local government community development departments			
Alcohol, drug, and mental health boards			
VA Medical Center(s) and providers			
Youth and young adult providers			
Healthcare systems and providers			
Legal aid, mediation, and eviction prevention			

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providers			
Public Housing Agencies/Authorities			
Other			

INITIAL STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CORE TEAM FORMATION + IMPLEMENTATION

Once communities define the roles and expectations of team members, understand key indicators and characteristics of successful teams, and identify the types of partners that need to be on the Core Team, work through the steps below for successfully forming and implementing your team:

- Conduct outreach and partner meetings to roster the Core Prevention Team
 - complete the chart below as you identify Core Team members
- Agree on roles, responsibilities and commitment (time and other)
 - Document roles, expectations, meeting commitments, etc. in a *Team Charter*
- Take time to build relationships and trust amongst your Core Team
 - Create a *Team Agreements* that will guide how you will work together (and document them in your *Team Charter*)
- Develop agreed-upon priorities
 - Use your [Coordinated Prevention Roadmap](#) as your guide
- Set & maintain regular meetings & other workgroups/subcommittees
 - Including monthly Core Team meetings with your BFZ Coordinator/team
- Develop a plan for onboarding new Core Team members on a rolling basis
 - Continually assess your team composition and be prepared to bring in/onboard new members as needed, based on focus of the work
- Identify a plan and cadence for broader communication (with other community stakeholders/leaders) to keep them engaged and informed
 - This is important for buy-in and future support that you may need as you implement system-wide changes and plan for sustainability

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Fill in this section as you form your Core Team, working to ensure there are representatives from all partners below (at a minimum):

[Community Name] Core Team Members Worksheet:

Representative	Name/Organization/Affiliation
Local Coordinated Prevention Lead(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead Organization: Point of Contact Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Local Coordinator Name/Organization:
CoC Staff/Representatives (if different than above)	<input type="checkbox"/> Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Name:
Local HMIS Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Data Lead: <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
PLEH Leaders <i>*At minimum, you should have 2- 3 reps on your Core Team</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Name: <input type="checkbox"/> Name:
Currently Funded Targeted Homelessness Prevention Providers (including HUD ESG and VA SSVF prevention providers)	<input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization:
Key Upstream/Cross-Sector Partners	<input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization:
Local Advocacy/Organizing Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization:
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization/Affiliation: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Organization/Affiliation: