

Terms of Reference

Durham Advisory Committee on Homelessness

Background

The Durham Advisory Committee on Homelessness (DACH) was established by the Health and Social Services Committee in December 1998 to address the issue of homelessness in Durham Region. At the time, community service organizations and homeless people were invited to participate in a reference group that would provide input into the distribution of newly announced Provincial and Regional homelessness funds.

In May 2014, Regional Council approved the Region's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – At Home in Durham. The Housing Plan lays out the Region's vision for housing activities over the next 10 years and aligns this vision with the requirement for a housing and homelessness plan under the Housing Services Act as well as the housing strategy required under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

DACH provides an opportunity for organizations and other homelessness service funders to share information about resources, identify service needs, and provide feedback to Regional Council on the implementation of At Home in Durham.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

In 2019, DACH incorporated the Durham Housing Advisory Network – Mental Health and Addictions (DAHNMHA or DAHN) and the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board (CAB) as working sub-committees, and GAP as an advisory committee.

The purpose of each committee is as follows:

Durham Housing Advisory Network (DHAN)

Established in 2016 to bring service providers who support vulnerable populations together to:

- Improve access to housing and homelessness supports for people with mental health and addictions challenges and other vulnerable populations in Durham Region, by focusing on community and system level housing solutions.
- Support service agencies to work collaboratively together and with the Region of Durham to achieve the goals of the Region's ten-year housing plan "At Home in Durham" (and specifically Goal # 3 that addresses diverse communities) by implementing a "Housing First" approach, and specifically to end homelessness in Durham Region.

Community Advisory Board (CAB)

The CAB ensures that the priorities identified in the Community Plan are met through the funding process, and is generally responsible for:

- Developing committee terms of reference for the solicitation, review, and recommendation of projects to the Community Entity, or to Employment and Social Development Canada.
- Assessing progress in addressing the community priorities.
- Ensuring a community plan is developed and community progress reports are completed.

GAP Committee

The GAP Committee was formed to provide a community-based and collaborative approach to issues of homelessness and:

- To provide a forum for people with lived experience to find gaps in services and find solutions to those gaps.
- To develop a system of collaboration between members of the community and local services that is inclusive, well-coordinated, and is accessible to those who are homeless and for those at-risk of becoming homeless.

DACH will create sub-committees and/or working groups as required based on identified priorities. These sub-committees and working groups will meet informally without the requirements of Regional staff liaisons for a defined purpose in achieving a goal. Their primary function will be to carry out assigned tasks that have been identified in a work plan developed and approved by DACH with a requirement of reporting progress and outcomes as specified by DACH.

All sub-committees are required to:

- Meet bi-monthly at minimum
- Provide minutes of meetings for distribution with DACH agenda
- Create and provide outcome-based reporting on initiatives they are working on.

Mandate

1. To provide guidance and advice to Durham Region Housing Services and Durham Regional Council on issues related to homelessness, including the implementation of the Region's 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan – *At Home in Durham*.
2. To assist in the development of a community plan and community progress reports.
3. To enhance service delivery to homeless people or those vulnerable to homelessness by giving direction, support and advice to the sub-committees of DHAN and CAB through:
 - identifying service gaps and barriers that prevent equitable access to service delivery
 - providing advice on addressing service barriers
 - identifying trends in service use across the Region
 - identifying prevention measures that need to be implemented to reduce the

incidence of homelessness in Durham Region

4. To identify resources that will address the needs of homeless people or those who are vulnerable to homelessness across Durham Region and ensure existing Regional funding opportunities are maximized.
5. To provide a forum for information sharing and continuous education regarding new or innovative projects that address homelessness.
6. To oversee the work of the DHAN and CAB.

Membership

Membership will be sought from organizations that are working towards ending homelessness in our community.

Agencies that receive funding through the Region of Durham that is directly related to homelessness are required to have membership in DACH. All agencies receiving homelessness funding are required to attend DACH meetings.

Member representatives will be executive directors, executives or senior level management from the participating organizations who have the authority to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of their organization. Each organization shall have one representative.

Term

Term of participation is determined by the sponsoring agency. A full list of members will be maintained by the Region of Durham.

Meetings

Meetings will be held at least four times a year at the Durham Regional Headquarters – 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby or at other sites as agreed to by DACH members.

Decision Making

Decisions made by DACH include, but are not limited to, advice to Regional staff regarding funding allocations, the Community Plan and Community Progress Reports, advice to Regional Council, etc.

Decisions shall generally be made using the principles of group consensus. If a consensus cannot be obtained, the Chair, at his or her discretion, may ask the members of DACH to vote. Decisions will be reached by majority. In the case of a tie-vote, the Chair of DACH shall have the deciding vote. Quorum must be met to facilitate a vote, representing at minimum, 50 percent of membership plus 1.

All activities regarding homelessness prevention and service provision should be in alignment with the Community Plan established by DACH.

Chair

The Chair of DACH will be appointed from the Regional Municipality of Durham's Health and Social Services Committee for a term that coincides with the Committee member's term of office.

A Vice-Chair will be selected by the membership of DACH for a period not to coincide with the municipal election year and usually in the mid-term of the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will assume the role of meeting Chair and relay information to the Chair for possible consideration by the Health and Social Services Committee.

Reporting

Advice from DACH will be considered and incorporated in Durham Region staff reports to Council through the Health and Social Services Committee. Minutes of meetings will be circulated to members of the Health and Social Services Committee.

DACH will submit an annual report card or the annual Community Progress Report to the Health and Social Services Committee. The Vice Chair of DACH will present the annual report to the Health and Social Services Committee.

Standing agenda items and the reporting of minutes from all sub-committees should be distributed with the DACH agenda of upcoming meetings.