

**East Texas Human Needs Network
Governance Charter**

Article 1: Organization

- A. The name of this affiliation shall be the East Texas Human Needs Network hereinafter referred to as "ETHNN".
- B. ETHNN covers Tyler and Smith County Texas.
- C. The business address for ETHNN is East Texas Human Needs Network, 1920 Stonegate Valley Dr., Tyler, Texas 75703.

Article 2: Purpose and Mission:

The mission of ETHNN is to strengthen services to meet diverse human needs through the collaboration of individuals and organizations. ETHNN shall accomplish this mission by conducting the following activities:

- A. ETHNN provides a single, coordinated, inclusive planning effort as well as develops and manages the annual Comprehensive Community Assessment process to ensure that ETHNN members have a common tool for planning and collaborative efforts.
- B. ETHNN fosters and promotes comprehensive, cohesive and coordinated approaches to education, employment, housing and healthcare for low-income and vulnerable populations:
- C. ETHNN identifies and prioritizes the service needs of low-income and vulnerable populations, and gaps within the service area;
- D. ETHNN partners with the planning and development efforts of other local networks to develop long-term solutions to address these needs and gaps;
- E. ETHNN develops goals and specific action steps to address identified needs throughout the service area and participates in planning activities with the Statewide and the Regional efforts for education, employment, housing and healthcare;
- F. ETHNN advocates for necessary funding at the county, state and federal level to address the needs of the community;
- G. ETHNN participates in the development and support of public policy to assist low income and vulnerable populations in Tyler and Smith County, Texas; and
- H. ETHNN educates the public and advocates for low income and vulnerable populations and for support of those agencies that help people in need.

Article 3: Meetings:

- A. ETHNN shall hold regular meetings at a time agreed upon by the membership.
- B. All regular meetings of ETHNN are open to the public.
- C. A quorum must be present to hold a vote or conduct business at regular ETHNN meetings. A **quorum** is the minimum number of eligible voting members (51%). According to [*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, Tenth Edition*](#), the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, the "requirement for a quorum is protection against totally unrepresentative action in the name of the body by an unduly small number of persons." If a quorum is not present, business will not be conducted. Committee meetings shall not require a quorum.
- D. Notice of meetings will be sent out to full ETHNN membership.
- E. Voting shall be conducted as outlined in Article 5 for general meetings.
- F. In all procedural matters not otherwise specified in this document, ETHNN shall be guided by the relaxed rules of procedure. Under the relaxed rules of procedure for committees and small boards:
 - a. You can make motions or speak without the necessity of formal recognition.
 - b. Your motions don't have to be seconded.
 - c. You can speak as often as you can politely obtain the attention of the other members. In fact, motions to Limit Debate aren't in order, and the motion to reconsider practically knows no limit in a committee.
 - d. You can discuss things without a motion being on the floor.

- e. You don't need to take minutes. However, having some record is useful, and it may be customary for the chair to keep notes of committee proceedings for reference.
- f. The Chair can make motions, participate in discussion, and vote.

Article 4: ETHNN Representatives Membership:

Each member of the ETHNN Representatives is a vital link in a collaborative community network, and as such, shares in ideas, concerns and decisions as well as the development and deployment of resources to address the needs of low income and vulnerable populations.

- A. ETHNN Representatives are appointed by their organization or network.
- B. Each Organization may have multiple representatives but will be represented by a one (1) voting Representative without regard to the population size of the community that Organization represents.
- C. Representatives may participate in ETHNN committees, and those elected by committee members to co-chair those committees will serve on the Steering Committee.
- D. Regular meeting attendance will be recorded and maintained by the East Texas Human Needs Network and reviewed in conjunction with the Co-Chairs to determine voting eligibility.
- E. An attempt will be made to contact inactive members and reengage them.

Article 5: ETHNN Representatives General Voting Rights:

- A. There shall be one vote per Representative present and determined eligible to vote on all ETHNN matters that come up at general ETHNN meetings and committee meetings.
- B. For voting purposes: A Representative is defined as "a member of a community Organization within the ETHNN".
- C. Any representative having a vested interest on any item brought to the table for a vote, will recuse themselves and abstain from voting.
- D. It is the intention of Article 5 that there is only one vote allowed per Representative who serves as co-chair of committee(s). It is the responsibility of each *Organization* to appoint a Representative who will cast a vote.
- E. The general Representative membership will be free to participate in discussion items prior to the vote.
- F. However, a steering committee comprised of committee chairs will make the deciding votes on all items that come before this planning group.
- G. Three regular ETHNN meetings in the prior 6 months must have been attended to be eligible to vote (Committee meetings will not be included for voting or quorum calculation purposes).
- H. All items placed for voting must be submitted as agenda items by a committee co-chair one week prior to the monthly ETHNN Representatives meeting.
- I. A simple majority (at least 51%) affirmative vote by roll call of those present and eligible to vote shall determine the outcome of the vote.
- J. Votes may be taken without a meeting and shall have the same force and effect as a vote if all members of the Steering Committee consent to the action in writing.
- K.

Article 6: Officers and Elections:

- A. East Texas Human Needs Network (ETHNN) steering committee shall have two Co-chairs. Co-chairs shall be nominated and elected by steering committee members on an annual basis.
 - o Co-Chairs shall be responsible for planning and conducting general and Steering Committee meetings.
 - o Both the Co-Chairs shall be the designated signatories for ETHNN Representatives. Detailed "minutes" will be kept and shared with representatives electronically.
- B. Nominations for Co-Chairs will be taken prior to and at the November ETHNN meeting on an annual basis. Elections shall be held at the November meeting. Any participating committee member may stand for nomination.

- C. Term of Office shall be one year. There is no limit on terms for any officer, but all officers must be re-nominated and re-elected to continue for an additional year.
- D. Officers may resign during their term. Any vacancies shall be filled for the remainder of the term by nomination and election at the next regular meeting.

Article 7: ETHNN Committees:

- A. The committees detailed below shall be Standing Committees of ETHNN. In addition to the duties detailed below, Committees may investigate other topics or perform other tasks as assigned by ETHNN.
- B. With the exception of the Steering Committee, each committee shall elect a Chair and Co-chair annually. These Chairs are responsible for planning, calling and conducting meetings. The Chair and Co-chair of each Standing Committee will also participate on the Steering Committee.
- C. With the exception of the Steering Committee as detailed below, Committees shall not make any policy or funding related decisions. Committees may make recommendations to ETHNN, which may be placed for voting approval by the ETHNN steering committee.
- D. All Standing Committees shall record minutes of meetings and make them available to ETHNN. See minutes recording procedure under Article 6.A.
- E. All ETHNN Representatives are eligible to participate on one or more committees and/or sub-committees.

- **Steering Committee** – The Steering Committee shall be comprised of the two ETHNN Co-chairs and the two Co-Chairs of each of the other Standing Committees. The Steering Committee will coordinate with the other committees to ensure that information is disseminated to ETHNN.
 - The Co-Chairs may call a Steering Committee meeting at any time to address an immediate need.
 - Recommendations from the standing Committees shall go to ETHNN to be voted on at the next regular meeting.
 - The ‘One Representative- One Vote’ rule shall also apply to the Steering Committee.

- **Data Committee**

Purpose: Attends to tasks that involve obtaining, compiling, analyzing, and disseminating ETHNN planning data. The Data Committee oversees the Comprehensive Community Assessment and the needs and gaps analyses and any additional data collection effort deemed necessary by the Steering Committee.

- **Education Committee**

Purpose: Provides direction to ETHNN related to Education. The Education Committee reviews the Comprehensive Community Assessment and offers recommendations for addressing gaps in education services.

- **Employment Committee**

Purpose: Provides direction to ETHNN related to Employment. The Employment Committee reviews the Comprehensive Community Assessment and offers recommendations for addressing gaps in employment services.

- **Housing Committee**

Purpose: Provides direction to ETHNN related to Housing. The Housing Committee reviews the Comprehensive Community Assessment and offers recommendations for addressing gaps in housing services.

- **Healthcare Committee**

Purpose: Provides direction to ETHNN related to Healthcare. The Healthcare Committee reviews the Comprehensive Community Assessment and offers recommendations for addressing gaps in healthcare services.

Ad-hoc Committees: Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the ETHNN membership as needed to complete specific tasks approved by the ETHNN. Ad hoc committee chairpersons will not have voting powers on the Steering Committee.

Article 8: Adoption and amendment of Governance/Conduct Guidelines

These Guidelines shall be adopted and thereafter amended at a regular ETHNN meeting by a simple majority (at least 51%) affirmative vote of the members present and determined eligible to vote. Proposed amendments must be in written form and distributed to the members of the ETHNN prior to the presentation and vote.