



CHARTER OF THE 12-TO-24 COLLABORATIVE (as of SEP 2024)

1. Legal Structure

1.1. The 12-to-24 Collaborative will operate as an unincorporated association.

2. Mission and Vision Statements

2.1. Mission Statement:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative aims to provide Frederick County's young and emerging adults with the resources that they need to reach their full potential by increasing nonprofit collaboration, uplifting the voices of those ages 12 through 24, and creating a central hub for services.

2.2. Vision Statement:

Our vision is a community where every young and emerging adult in Frederick County has the resources and opportunities needed to thrive and shape their future.

3. Core Strategies

3.1. Collective Decision-Making:

Foster a governance model that incorporates diverse insights and decisions from all members, partners, and collaborators.

3.2. Resource Optimization:

Strategically identify, share, and develop resources to maximize impact.

3.3. Central Hub:

Maintain a centrally located physical space that acts as a beacon for engagement and service coordination amongst Frederick's young and emerging adults.

3.4. Youth Empowerment:

Amplify the voices of all young and emerging adults aged 12 through 24 through the Youth Council and other mechanisms, engaging them in the network of support and ensuring they have roles in shaping programs and policies.

3.5. Strategic Partnerships:

Cultivate partnerships with local businesses, educational institutions, and other community stakeholders to expand opportunities for young and emerging adults.

4. Interim Governance Structure

4.1. Interim Charting Committee:

The group that issued the Steering Committee report will serve as the Interim Charting Committee.

4.2. With the exception of the Interim Charting Committee, which will operate for two years

from the date of the charter signing, all governance structures and procedures outlined in this charter will be fully implemented. During this initial two-year period, the voting rules and structure specific to the Interim Charting Committee will apply and members are exempt from the charter's membership conditions to allow for flexible governance setup. After this period, the charter's governance structures and procedures will take full effect, and the Interim Charting Committee will be dissolved, transitioning responsibilities to the permanent Steering Committee as defined in the charter.

4.3. Interim Charting Committee Composition:

4.3.1. Interim Chair: The Interim Chair, appointed by the Interim Charting Committee, will have the right to determine the structure of the Interim Charting Committee, and its rules of governance during the interim period, including decisions regarding the composition of the Interim Committee.

4.3.2. Interim Governance Committee: A temporary body responsible for establishing foundational structures and processes, performing the essential functions of an executive committee. Initially appointed by the Interim Chair, this Committee will have different voting rules and structures specific to the interim period, and is appointed by the Interim Chair.

4.3.3. Interim Planning Committee: A temporary body operating alongside the Interim Governance Committee, focusing on planning and setting up the necessary structures for the 12-to-24 Collaborative. This Committee will have majority voting rules and structures specific to the interim period, and is appointed by the Interim Chair.

4.4. Interim Charting Committee Operating Guidelines:

The Interim Charting Committee will adhere to specific temporary operating guidelines to ensure effective governance and decision-making during its initial two-year period, as determined by the Interim Chair. Operational and structural details specific to the Interim Charting Committee will be located within its own operating guidelines document.

5. Permanent Governance Structure

5.1. The 12-to-24 Collaborative shall be governed by the Steering Committee.

5.2. 12-to-24 Collaborative:

Organizations and individuals who are part of the voting body of 12-to-24 Collaborative, including community partner members, nonprofit members and The Frederick Youth Council. The 12-to-24 Collaborative is responsible for nominating individuals to the Steering Committee by an established process detailed within the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines.

5.2.1. Community Partner Members:

Organizations and entities that support and have a vested interest in the 12-to-24 Collaborative's mission, including workforce and healthcare providers,

businesses, and community groups. Community partner members shall be approved for membership according to the procedures outlined in the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines. They contribute resources, participate in decision-making, and have voting rights on major decisions and charter amendments.

5.2.2. Nonprofit Members:

Nonprofit members shall consist of 501c organizations dedicated to serving the needs of young people ages 12 through 24 within the community. Nonprofit members shall be approved for membership according to the procedures outlined in the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines. They contribute resources, participate in decision-making, and have voting rights on major decisions and amendments.

5.2.3. Frederick Youth Council:

A diverse group of individuals ages 12 through 24, representing the voices of youth within Frederick County, providing insights and feedback on programs and policies that are a part of the 12-to-24 Collaborative. The Youth Council will report to the 12-to-24 Collaborative Steering Committee, with two (2) Youth Council members being appointed to the Steering Committee as voting members for two consecutive one-year terms. Other than the two Voting Members appointed to the Steering Committee, the Youth Council does not vote on 12-to-24 Collaborative matters.

5.2.4. Steering Committee:

The governing body responsible for strategic direction, decision-making, and oversight. The diversity of the Steering Committee will be ensured by including representatives from nonprofits of varying sizes and budgets. These members should bring expertise in critical areas of need identified by the 12-to-24 Collaborative, ensuring the Steering Committee's composition reflects the scope and services needed in the community.

5.2.4.1. There will be 11 voting members, including two youth members, with a two-thirds quorum required for decisions.

5.2.4.2. In addition, there will be a minimum of 5 non-voting ex-officio members appointed annually by vote.

5.2.4.3. The seats on the Steering Committee filled by the 12-to-24 Collaborative Membership shall be held by organizations and not by specific individuals.

5.2.4.4. Each organization holding a seat on the Steering Committee shall designate a primary representative and may designate a secondary representative. Each organization (other than the Youth Council) holding a seat on the Steering Committee shall attend and vote at Steering Committee meetings with only one such representative

participating at any given time, except for the Youth Council, which is permitted two representatives with voting rights.

- 5.2.4.5. Terms on the Steering Committee shall be two (2) years for those seats elected by the 12-to-24 Collaborative. Positions elected by the 12-to-24 Collaborative shall be staggered so that one-third are to be elected each year. An organization filling a seat on the Steering Committee may serve for two consecutive terms but then must wait two years before again serving.
- 5.2.4.6. Members of the Frederick Youth Council serving on the Steering Committee may serve two consecutive one-year terms. Members may serve again after a waiting period of one year.
- 5.2.4.7. The Steering Committee shall develop and maintain the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines to supplement this document, which shall provide further detail regarding the organization's structure, procedures, and protocols for conducting business.
- 5.2.4.8. The Steering Committee shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and any other necessary officers from among its members. The duties and responsibilities of each officer shall be outlined in the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines.
- 5.2.4.9. The Steering Committee shall oversee two standing committees to support its governance and operational functions: the Governance Committee and the Resource Development Committee. The function, duties and responsibilities of each standing Committee shall be outlined in the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines.
- 5.2.4.10. The Steering Committee may create any number of subcommittees, task forces, and workgroups. The Steering Committee may appoint any individual it prefers to serve on subcommittees, but the Chair of a subcommittee must be from the voting seats on the Steering Committee.
- 5.2.4.11. The Steering Committee shall hold regular meetings, the frequency and format of which shall be determined by the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operating guidelines. Special meetings may be called as necessary by the Chair or a majority of the committee members.
- 5.2.4.12. Decisions of the Steering Committee shall be made by unanimous consensus whenever possible. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, decisions may be made by a majority vote of the Steering Committee members present at a meeting where a quorum is established. T
- 5.2.4.13. Steering Committee votes may be made electronically, as allowed by Maryland law.

5.3. Staff:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative Steering Committee is empowered to hire and oversee staff to support the 12-to-24 Collaborative's operations and initiatives. Staff members are non-voting, but may serve as a backbone support for any and all Collaborative activities, in accordance with the operating guidelines.

5.4. Ex-Officio Members:

Non-voting members of the Steering Committee, typically including representatives from key stakeholder organizations such as but not limited to government, law enforcement, educational institutions, higher education, workforce and healthcare providers, businesses, and community groups are appointed annually based on evolving needs in accordance with the operating guidelines.

6. Membership

6.1. Eligibility:

Eligible members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative should fall within the following categories:

- Ex-Officio Members
- Community Partners
- Nonprofit Members
- Youth Council

All members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative will be eligible to participate in standing committees, subcommittees, task forces and workgroups to address issues of concern to the members.

6.2. Eligibility Conditions:

6.2.1. Serving organizations must have a board of at least five members and must have been in operation for a minimum of 3 years and in good standing with the IRS and the MD department of Secretary of State at the time of the application.

6.2.2. To ensure the integrity and independence of the board's decision-making process, organizations with boards that include spouses, life partners, or immediate family members serving concurrently, or those that have family members on both board and staff levels are not eligible.

6.2.3. Members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative must be present at the annual meeting.

6.3. Approval:

Except for the inaugural members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative who sign this charter at the earliest opportunity, membership in the 12-to-24 Collaborative will require the approval of the Steering Committee.

6.4. Commitment:

Members must commit to the 12-to-24 Collaborative's mission, vision, and goals, including supporting youth empowerment and ensuring equitable access to services and commit to their organization being listed by the 12-to-24 Collaborative on all

public-facing materials and for purposes of fundraising. To remain in good standing as members, members must also adhere to other requirements as outlined in the charter and the operating guidelines.

6.5. Engagement:

Members must actively participate in the 12-to-24 Collaborative activities and decision-making processes, and pledge to welcome engagement and input from the Frederick Youth Council in their programs and activities.

6.6. Data Sharing:

Members are required to share data to contribute to the 12-to-24 Collaborative's collective impact and receive comprehensive reports, as outlined in the operating guidelines.

6.7. Public Support:

Members agree to generally support the 12-to-24 Collaborative publicly and refrain from making disparaging or damaging public statements as outlined in the operating guidelines.

6.8. Withdrawal:

Members can withdraw by providing 30 days' written notice but must return any unexpended funds received from the 12-to-24 Collaborative and cannot request the removal of previously shared data.

7. Voting and Decision Making

7.1. 12-to-24 Collaborative

The collective body of all 12-to-24 Collaborative members who are eligible to vote on major decisions, including the election of Steering Committee members, annual initiatives, and amendments to the charter when called together. 12-to-24 Collaborative votes may be made electronically or in writing, as allowed by Maryland law.

7.2. 12-to-24 Collaborative Voting Structure:

Each voting-eligible organization within the 12-to-24 Collaborative may designate two representatives but can only cast one vote in any decisions made by the 12-to-24 Collaborative. If neither representative can attend a meeting, they may vote electronically, provided they give a week's written notice and must place their vote by the designated deadline.

7.3. Removal of Members:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative may decide by a two-thirds vote of all eligible members (other than the member that is the subject of such vote) to remove a member for causes related to noncompliance with the requirements of membership.

7.4. Removal of Steering Committee Members:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative may meet to remove certain members of the Steering Committee for cause related to performance. Removing a member of the Steering Committee shall require a majority vote of the 12-to-24 Collaborative.

8. Meetings

8.1. Regular Meetings:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative shall convene at least once a year to conduct business and vote on key decisions. Meetings can be called to meet at other times by the Steering Committee or by a request of two-thirds vote of 12-to-24 Collaborative members.

8.2. Announcement of Meetings:

Meetings of the Steering Committee shall be announced at least 72 hours in advance and shall be open to all members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative.

8.3. Operating Procedure:

All meetings and operations of the 12-to-24 Collaborative will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

9. Financial Management

9.1. Fiscal Sponsor:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative shall operate any finances through a fiscal sponsor selected by the Steering Committee.

9.2. Resource Development:

The 12-to-24 Collaborative shall manage its resource development through a dedicated committee, seeking grants and other monetary and/or physical resources from within and outside Frederick County to support its general operations and collaborative-specific initiatives. The 12-to-24 Collaborative will list its existing membership within its case for support and for resource development purposes. The Steering Committee shall ensure that all assets are handled according to gift requirements and funding restrictions and the operating guidelines, and shall prioritize program-specific funding toward projects involving multiple parties, ensuring they are put to the best possible use to advance the 12-to-24 Collaborative's goals.

9.3. Re-Granting to Youth Council:

The members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative agree that funds may be provided through the 12-to-24 Collaborative to the Frederick Youth Council to disburse according to best practices, specific grant restrictions, and/or through a collaborative re-granting process.

9.4. Fundraising Conflicts:

The Steering Committee shall coordinate with the members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative to ensure that any specific fundraising or re-granting activity does not overarchingly conflict with the members' fundraising or programming.

10. Data and Reporting

10.1. Data Collection:

12-to-24 Collaborative shall arrange a process of collecting summary data on services provided by any members.

10.2. Data Sharing:

Only members of the 12-to-24 Collaborative will be eligible to receive comprehensive data and reports. The 12-to-24 Collaborative will make an annual summary report available to the community.

11. Amendments and Reviews

11.1. Charter Amendments:

The charter may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the 12-to-24 Collaborative membership. A charter amendment can be proposed at any time by any member of the 12-to-24 Collaborative.

11.2. Charter Review:

A full charter review must occur at minimum biennially.

12. Dissolution

12.1. In the event of dissolution of the 12-to-24 Collaborative, all major donors must be notified of the unused balance of the amount they granted. Authorization must be obtained from these donors to either disperse or return the funds according to their preferences.

Any remaining assets, after the return of unutilized funds to funders and the authorization from major donors, shall be distributed to one or more organizations dedicated to serving the needs of young individuals aged 12 to 24 within the community. The specific organizations will be determined by a majority vote of the Steering Committee members remaining at the time of dissolution.

13. Adoption

13.1. The charter shall be adopted upon approval by a two-thirds majority of the initial members who sign the electronic membership form, provided a quorum of signatories is established.

14. Effectiveness

14.1. The charter shall take effect immediately upon adoption and shall supersede any previous bylaws or operating procedures of the Steering Committee.

15. Interpretation

15.1. In the event of any conflict or ambiguity regarding the interpretation of the charter, the decision shall be made by the Steering Committee, subject to review and approval by the governing body responsible for overseeing the Committee's operations.

16. Severability

- 16.1. If any provision of the charter is held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, the validity, legality, and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected or impaired thereby.

17. Authority

- 17.1. The charter is established under the authority granted to the Steering Committee by the governing body responsible for overseeing its operations and are subject to any applicable laws, regulations, or policies governing nonprofit organizations within the jurisdiction.