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Burlington County Continuum of Care Governance Charter

I. Mission Statement

The Burlington County Continuum of Care, hereafter referred to as “CoC”, through community-wide strategic planning, data collection and analysis, project and program performance evaluation, community capacity-building, and resource development, shall design and implement comprehensive strategies for the response to, reduction in and hopeful elimination of homelessness in our community.

II. Vision Statement

By working together, we will create a more livable community, where emergency housing placements are used only for emergency transitions and every family and individual has a permanent place to live.

III. Purpose of the Charter

This Charter defines the roles, responsibilities, leadership, and committee structure of the Burlington County Continuum of Care ".

IV. CoC Responsibilities

The CoC has primary responsibility to coordinate and maximize public and private resources required to attain our goal of ending homelessness in Burlington County. The CoC is authorized by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act and the CoC Interim Rule (24 CFR 578) to provide a comprehensive response to homelessness that includes, but is not limited to:

- Plan for, develop, and amend as needed the Continuum of Care Plan. defined as the community-wide homeless response system;
- Implement the Continuum of Care Plan;
- Designate the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the CoC and a HMIS lead agency;
- Prepare and submit, on behalf of the entire community, the annual CoC application for funding to HUD;
- Coordinate funding streams and resources - federal, local, and private needed to carry out the Continuum of Care Plan; and
- Plan, design, and implement a coordinated assessment system for the entire CoC for all persons in need of assistance to prevent and end homelessness.

V. Organizational Structure

To carry out its responsibilities, the CoC has created a governance structure that includes an elected Governing Board delegated by the CoC to direct the development and implementation of the CoC plan and ensure compliance with the requirements of the HEARTH Act and CoC Interim Rule. The CoC has

also delegated authority to the Governing Board to create and charge any sub- committees as it deems necessary to carry out the responsibilities assigned to it by the CoC.

A. CoC Membership

Membership in the CoC is open to any interested individual and includes, but is not limited to, representatives of the following:

- Nonprofit homeless providers
- Victim service providers
- Faith-based organizations
- Governments
- Businesses
- Advocates
- Public housing agencies
- School districts
- Social service providers
- Mental health agencies
- Hospitals
- Colleges Universities
- Affordable housing developers
- Law enforcement/Correctional facility
- Organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans
- Homeless or formerly homeless persons
- Landlords

Any person interested in improving the response to homelessness who either lives or works in Burlington County may participate in the CoC Membership as defined by attendance and participation in at least one CoC meeting annually, including attendance at any sub-committees created to carry out the responsibilities of the CoC.

B. The CoC Governing Board

The CoC Governing Board is a body elected by the CoC membership to carry out the duties and responsibilities as delegated by the CoC to ensure compliance with the requirements as described in the HEARTH Act and the CoC Interim Rule.

Specific responsibilities of the Governing Board include, but are not limited to:

- Lead organization for the planning, development, and implementation of the response to homelessness in Burlington County, also referred to as the CoC Plan
- Drafting and approving all formal documents related to the above described responsibilities
- Strategic planning and goal setting
- Monitoring and evaluating performance goals for all homeless housing and service providers in Burlington County, including all CoC/ McKinney-Vento and SSH (Support Services for the Homeless) funded programs.
- Monitoring and evaluating the performance of the CoC Lead Agency
- Monitoring and evaluating system-wide goals related to ending and preventing homelessness
- Ensuring the availability of data for planning and goal setting

- Establishing priorities and making decisions about the allocation of CoC resources
- Developing written guidelines that define CoC priorities, eligibility standards for all components of the CoC Plan, and data collection and reporting requirements for all providers
- Provide letters of consistency to the CoC Plan for those homeless housing and service providers seeking funding from other state, local or federal sources.
- Aligning and coordinating CoC and other homeless assistance and mainstream resources
- Establishing sub-committees and task forces, as needed, to carry out the work of the CoC
- Enter into contracts and MOU's on behalf of the CoC and monitor performance under these contracts
- Establish and implement a communications plan to ensure transparency of CoC operations and results to the CoC and the general public

Selection of Governing Board Members: (See Article II, Section 2 of the CoC By-Laws)

C. HMIS Lead Agency

The Burlington County CoC along with the State of New Jersey has concurred on the decision to operate a statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and, along with the other CoC regions in the state, has designated Foothold Technologies and New Jersey Home and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) as the lead agency of that system, a role which includes:

Operate the CoC HMIS

- **Data and Technical Standards Compliance**
New Jersey Home and Mortgage Finance Agency will ensure that this operation will be in compliance with the HMIS Data and Technical Standards (69 FR 146, March 10, 2010). NJHMFA will review this compliance on an annual basis and report to the CoC Governing Board on the review results with any corrective action if it is required.
- **Policies and Procedures**
NJHMFA will maintain comprehensive HMIS operational policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, a privacy plan, security plan, and data quality plan. These policies and procedures will be reviewed for any needed updates annually.
- **Training and Technical Assistance**
NJHMFA will provide regular and ongoing training and technical assistance and support to all homeless system agencies using the HMIS network.
- **Monitor System Participation / Data Quality Performance**
NJHMFA will monitor regularly the number of homeless system agencies utilizing the network and report the percentages to the CoC. NJHMFA will work collaboratively with the CoC to develop a plan to address low participation rates, as needed.

Reporting / Analysis

- **Performance Reporting**
NJHMFA will coordinate a collaborative effort with the CoC to design a CoC-wide performance outcomes report, consistent with the expectations of

the HEARTH Act.

- **Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR)**

NJHMFA will manage the collection of all data elements required for the Annual Homeless Assessment Report and enter the data as required into the HUD Homeless Data Exchange on behalf of the CoC.

D. The Designated CoC Lead Agency: Burlington County Department of Human Services

The CoC Lead Agency is the Burlington County Department of Human Services, Division of Community Development and Housing. The Lead Agency is the agent assigned by the CoC with principle authority for the development and submission of the annual CoC application to HUD for McKinney-Vento homeless assistance funding. The Lead Agency is also the agency that is authorized to enter into a contract with HUD to do CoC- wide planning and development

Administrative Functions of the Lead Agency:

- Provide staff support for scheduling meetings
- Managing communication with community agencies and other partners on all issues related to the work of the CoC
- Provide staff support for the work and functioning of the CoC Governing Board
- Manage and keep current information on the work of the CoC, including meeting times and locations, all CoC-related reports and information related to the performance of the CoC and each of its participating agencies.

E.

Continuum of Care Program Application:

The Lead Agency shall design a collaborative process for the development and submission of the Consolidated Application for the annual CoC grant competition, and coordinate with the CoC and the CoC Governing Board to evaluate applications for funding and determine rank order for all applications to be included in the Consolidated Application.

The Annual Point-in-time [PIT Sheltered and Unsheltered Count and the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)]:

The Lead Agency is responsible for organizing and implementing the annual point in time count, including the collection, analysis, and submission to HUD and the CoC of all data obtained in the count. The Lead Agency also has principle responsibility for assembling the information required to complete and submit to HUD and the CoC the annual Housing Inventory Chart covering the entire CoC.

E. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

- E1.** The Coordinated Assessment Planning Committee
- E2.** The CoC Working Groups
- E3.** The Funding & Allocations Committee
- E4.** The Consumer Advisory Council
- E5.** Communications and Membership Outreach Committee
- E6.** Burlington County Coalition for the Homeless

E7. Code Blue Work Group

E.8. Other Committees, standing or ad hoc, as determined by the Governing Board to be Necessary to fulfill its responsibilities

E1. The Coordinated Assessment Planning Team

The Coordinated Assessment Planning Team has been created to develop an implementation plan for Coordinated Assessment in Burlington County, to include a comprehensive financing plan, a communications plan, and a HMIS data sharing plan.

Membership includes any persons interested in coordinated assessment, designated coordinated assessment providers and county government.

The Coordinated Assessment Planning Team reports directly to the CoC Governing Board.

E2. The CoC Working Group

The CoC Working Group has been established to develop, implement and provide oversight for the work responsibilities of the CoC Governing Board necessary for full compliance with the CoC requirements as defined by the HEARTH Act and the CoC Interim Rule. This responsibility covers developing recommendations for the Governing Board and overseeing the implementation of:

- CoC By-Laws, charter documents, MOU's or agency agreements, and documents required for HMIS data sharing
- CoC-wide and provider-specific performance goals and evaluation plans along with a data collection and analysis plan to monitor and evaluate program and system wide performance.
- Selection criteria for applicants for CoC, ESG and SSH funding
- Written guidelines for eligibility determination for each housing and service component that make up the CoC Plan
- Additional tasks as assigned by the CoC or the Governing Board

The Working Group is further tasked with assisting the Lead Agency with gathering information required for the preparation and submission of the CoC Consolidated Application to HUD.

The Working Group membership is voluntary and open to any interested community member.

The Working Group reports directly to the CoC Governing Board.

E3. The Funding & Allocations Committee

The Funding & Allocations Committee members are recruited by the CoC Governing Board with the goal of having sufficient racial, cultural, and experiential sufficient expertise on homeless programs and the CoC Plan to make intelligent, objective recommendations.

All funding recommendations from the Committee must be reviewed and approved by the CoC Governing Board.

The HUD NOFA Ranking Committee is a subcommittee of the Funding & Allocations committee responsible for reviewing all provider applications for HUD funding under the annual CoC NOFA and making funding recommendations based on selection criteria established by the CoC Governing Board that may include reallocation from currently funded programs to create new programs with a higher CoC priority.

E4. The Consumer Advisory Council

The Consumer Advisory Council consists of volunteers who either are, or have previously experienced homelessness. Members of this Council are charged with reviewing the CoC Plan and making recommendations on all aspects of the homeless response system with the goal of ensuring system development and prioritization is informed by the experiences of those who must use the system.

The Consumer Advisory Council reports directly to the CoC Governing Committee.

E5. Communications and Membership Outreach Committee

The Communications and Membership Outreach Committee is responsible for regular and broad-based community education on the role and performance of the CoC. Additionally, this committee is charged with outreach, recruitment, and orientation for membership of the CoC; including quarterly CoC community update presentations on the operation of the CoC and our progress in ending and preventing homelessness.

E6. Burlington County Coalition for the Homeless (BCCH)

BCCH is an open monthly meeting of providers, advocates, policy makers, and current and formerly homeless persons for the purpose of information sharing on programs, resources and initiatives that make up our community's response to homelessness and the risk of homelessness.

E7. Code Blue Work Group

The Code Blue Work Group is responsible for ensuring that there is an adequate system of response to sheltering needs during extreme cold weather events. The Work Group reviews Code Blue guidelines, ensures that there is training for all provider sites, troubleshoots any issues as they arise, and coordinates the provision of services throughout the code blue season.

E8. Other Standing or Ad Hoc Committees

The Governing Board may, at its discretion at any time, set up additional standing and ad hoc work groups, as needed, to meet the needs of the CoC.

F: CoC Priorities for Administering Assistance:

Short Term Goals:

- 1) Develop an implementation platform from which goals will be monitored, with a focus on establishing timeframes and guidelines for all goals.
- 2) Conduct community wide education/information on the state of Homelessness in Burlington County. Use the 10 year Plan to End Homelessness as the foundation for a forum to put the plan into “real time use”.
- 3) Create structure for continued engagement with municipal and elected leaders and other elected officials, educators and residents. Establish and maintain a municipal point of contact list. Develop a contact list for providers and referral agencies.
- 4) Sanction a Planning and Implementation body to carry out the objectives of the plan and monitor progress.

Immediate and Long-Term Goals

A.) Create a Single Point of Entry into a uniform, shared system:

- 1) Create a universal on-line system that is updated daily
- 2) Create a uniform initial intake form
- 3) Protocols [review and enhance all protocols]
- 4) Create uniform procedures
- 5) Ongoing training for all case managers working with any aspect of homelessness/potential homelessness, including skill building and issue specific training
- 6) Bring hospital social workers, prison staff and educators into the planning and placement
- 7) Utilize HMIS to effectuate this change

B.) Improve Sheltering options that track quickly to permanent housing:

- 1) Prevent loss of housing whenever possible
- 2) Utilize Rapid Re-Housing model to address the needs of families and short term homeless
- 3) Eliminate the use of hotel/motel placements for Emergency Housing
- 4) Expand options for sheltering to include low demand shelter, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and affordable permanent housing

C.) Improve System Coordination:

- 1) Develop more resources for the continuum of sheltering needs
- 2) Integrate transportation, housing and employment planning
- 3) Advocate for more effective use of emergency resources including legislation changes as needed
- 4) Foreclosure Prevention and Re use of housing stock
- 5) Focus on the problem as a Growing Emergency Issue throughout the county: Use the County's Emergency Preparedness template to create uniformity of homelessness response at the municipal level including a point of contact in each municipality.

D.) Integrate Services:

- 1) Mobilize One Stop Career Center employment services to outreach to the community and work with existing homeless service providers.
- 2) Engage and educate the population on the employment and life skills services the One Stop Career Center has to offer
- 3) Explore funding avenues to ensure that case management is available to all clients who enter through a single point of entry
- 4) Prioritization of mental health and substance abuse services for those who need services
- 5) Electronic application for mainstream services provided by the Burlington County Board of Social Services

E.) Improved Electronic & Data Monitoring:

- 1) Uniform assessment
- 2) Shared Outcome monitoring
- 3) Shared Goals for success

F.) Create a task force to monitor efficiency of use of local resources and to explore new avenues of funding for County directed projects:

- 1) Assess areas for system cost savings
- 2) Legislative and system change
- 3) Identify sources for new funding
- 4) Quantify the true cost of managing homelessness, including ancillary services (i.e. medical care through emergency rooms, etc.)

BURLINGTON COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE

Section 1: Name Burlington County Continuum of Care

Section 2: Geographic Area of Coverage Burlington County, New Jersey

Section 3: Oversight Responsibility:

The Burlington County Continuum of Care, hereafter referred to as "the CoC" is responsible for planning and implementing the homeless response system in Burlington County and carrying out the duties identified in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act and the Continuum of Care Interim Final Rule (24 CFR 578).

Specifically, those duties are to:

1. Operate the Continuum of Care
2. Designate a Homeless Management information System for the Continuum of Care; and
3. Plan for the Continuum of Care

Additionally, the CoC must be involved in the coordination of funding streams and resources - federal, local, or private - of targeted homeless programs and other mainstream resources.

The CoC is responsible for promoting community-wide goals to end homelessness; provide funding to quickly rehouse homeless individuals (including unaccompanied youth) and families while minimizing trauma and dislocation; promote access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs; and optimize self-sufficiency for all persons experiencing homelessness.

The CoC shall meet monthly at a regular time. A schedule of CoC meetings shall be made available to the public with an open invitation for any interested person to attend and participate.

ARTICLE II: CoC MEMBERSHIP

The CoC is composed of representatives of organizations including, but not limited to:

- Nonprofit homeless providers
- Victim service providers
- Faith-based organizations
- Governments
- Businesses
- Advocates
- Public housing agencies
- School districts
- Social service providers
- Mental health agencies
- Hospitals
- College/Universities

- Affordable housing developers
- Law enforcement
- Organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans
- Homeless and formerly homeless persons
- Criminal Justice: Burlington County Jail
- Organizations serving homeless and formerly homeless with specific barriers posed by involvement or past involvement with the criminal justice system

Any person interested in improving the response to homelessness that either lives or works in Burlington County may participate in the CoC. Membership is defined by attendance and participation in CoC meetings, including attendance at any subcommittees created to carry out the responsibilities of the CoC.

ARTICLE III: GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Creation and Selection of a Governing Board:

A Governing Board (hereafter referred to as "the Board") consisting of an **odd** number of members **not less than 5 and not more than 11**, shall be elected by the CoC to carry out the responsibilities as assigned by the CoC. One-third (1/3) of the membership shall represent public agencies and two-thirds (2/3) of the membership shall represent private entities. Public entity representation shall consist of at least one (1) representative from each of the following: County Government, Burlington County Board of Social Services, and Burlington County Department of Human Services. Any CoC member may run for a seat on the Board, although the CoC may establish guidelines, at its discretion, to ensure that membership includes a racial, cultural, and experiential diversity that reflects the greater community as well as the community served by the CoC Plan, and enhances its capacity to carry out all responsibilities delegated to it by the CoC.

Elections for all open seats on the Board shall be held **annually**. A special election may be held at the discretion of the CoC. Terms of office shall alternate over **three** years and shall be renewable no more than 2 times if desired by the member and approved by the CoC. No more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the members of the Board may be representatives of agencies funded through the annual CoC application to HUD, and, unless waived by the CoC, no organization may be represented on the Governing Board by more than one person.

The Board must include a homeless or formerly homeless person from the jurisdiction covered by the Burlington County CoC (Burlington County Office of Human Services).

Section 2: Governing Board Voting Eligibility:

Any member elected to the governing board by the CoC is permitted to vote on matters before the board as long as they have maintained active membership status (see Section 3 below) and such vote does not represent a conflict of interest (see Section 4 below).

Any voting CoC member must be an active participant in the Continuum of Care, as defined by attendance of no less than 50% of Coalition meetings over the course of the preceding year. Each voting agency shall be represented by no more than 3 service units (1 vote per unit/regular attendee).

Section 3: Active Membership Status / Termination Policy:

A person elected by the CoC for membership on the governing board shall be considered an active member unless there are **three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or 50% missed meetings in any 12 month period**. Board members may apply to the CoC for reinstatement if they are deemed inactive for the above reasons.

Governing board membership can be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the entire governing board. A vote on terminating membership can only be taken when there has been advance notice of this vote of at least 5 days sent to all members.

Section 4: Conflict of Interest:

A Board member shall be deemed to have a conflict of interest related to any business before the Board if the member has a material or substantial personal stake in the outcome of that business. Members are asked to declare any potential conflict of interest and either recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the issue in question or ask the Board membership to vote on whether the potential conflict of interest rises to the level of recusal.

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNING BOARD OFFICERS

Section 1: Officer Positions:

Officer positions shall be **Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary**.

Section 2: Eligibility:

Any active governing board member is eligible to serve as a governing board officer.

Section 3: Officer Selections:

Officers shall be elected by a simple majority of all voting members at the last meeting of the calendar year or at an alternative time approved by a majority of the members. Vote by email may be accepted in a members absence.

Section 4: Terms:

Officers shall be elected for a two year term and no officer may serve more than 4 consecutive years in the same office.

Section 5: Officer Roles:

The **Chair** shall preside over governing board meetings and have responsibility for assembling the agenda for each meeting.

The **Vice-Chair** will act as chair in the event of the absence or recusal of the Chair.

The **Secretary** shall record and distribute meeting minutes to all CoC members and send notices of each meeting.

Together, the three Board officers shall operate as the Governing Board Executive Committee which has responsibility for preparing the agenda for each meeting and ensuring adequate communication with all Board members regarding meeting times and places, and other issues necessary for the proper functioning of the Board.

ARTICLE V: GOVERNING BOARD MEETINGS

Section 1: Meeting Schedule:

The governing board shall meet no fewer than 6 times per year on a yearly schedule determined by the Board members.

Section 2: Special Meetings:

Special meetings may be called by any member as long as the full Board membership is informed at least five (5) days in advance. Advance notice must include agenda items for discussion and only items not part of the advance notice may be considered at the special meetings.

Section 3: Public Meetings and Executive Sessions:

Unless otherwise posted, Governing Board meetings are open to the public. Non-members may participate in discussions and may suggest agenda items for the meetings but are not eligible to vote.

Executive Sessions may be held at the discretion of the Board membership at which time, only active voting members will be allowed to attend and participate.

Section 4: Quorum Rules:

A quorum shall consist of **no less than one half of the elected, active voting members available either in person, by phone, or by E-mail**. In the absence of a quorum, meetings and discussion can continue but no motions or votes may be taken.

Section 5: Decision-Making:

All decisions regarding Board planning, funding and governance must be formulated as a motion by active members of the governing board. Voting can only take place in the presence of a quorum. Decisions shall be by a simple majority vote, **except** funding reallocation, By-law amendments, and member termination decisions, which may only be decided by a two-thirds majority.

Section 6: Subcommittees:

The Board is empowered to create any sub-committees it deems necessary to create and carry out the work delegated to it by the CoC.

ARTICLE VI: FUNDING DECISIONS

Section 1: Program Evaluation:

The Board shall be responsible for establishing ranking criteria and a process for selecting and ranking projects for funding. It is also responsible for collecting information and evaluating the effectiveness of all Continuum of Care McKinney- Vento and Support Services for the Homeless (SSH) funded projects. Based on those evaluations, the governing board may elect to reallocate Continuum of Care funding, in whole or in part, from existing vendors to new projects with a two-thirds majority vote.

Section 2: Ranking Committee:

Annually, based on the HUD application schedule, no fewer than seven (7) people shall be selected by the governing board membership to serve on the Continuum of Care Ranking Committee. The role of the Ranking Committee is to read and evaluate all proposals for inclusion in that year's Burlington County Continuum of Care application to HUD. Decisions will be based on HUD eligibility, the quality of the proposal, project idea, program outcomes, for existing programs, and the amount of money available through the Continuum pro-rata share, potential bonus funding, and the amount approved by the Board for reallocation.

Board members or members of the community at large may serve on the Ranking Committee. Potential members will be asked to sign a conflict of interest disclosure form prior to participating.

Representatives of organizations with new or renewal applications competing for funding are barred from participation on the ranking committee or on Board voting on Ranking Committee funding recommendations.

Ranking Committee members shall maintain confidentiality of the committee discussion and voting on project ranking until after the Board decision on those recommendations.

Section 3: Final Funding Decisions:

Recommendations from the Ranking Committee will be **voted** on by all governing board members who do not *have* a conflict of interest with any of the proposals submitted. Approval of the recommendations will be based on a simple majority.

ARTICLE VII: CoC Lead Agency:

Section 1. CoC Lead Agency: The CoC Lead agency shall be responsible for carrying out the administrative duties required by the Governing Board for applications and funding.

Section 2. Duties of the CoC Lead Agency:

- Apply for funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the CoC program and other funding programs for the homeless
- Design and coordinate the HUD CoC grant application process in partnership with the Governance Board Officers
- Publicly represent the Governing Board

- Maintain the Governing Board email distribution list
- Provide support to the Governing Board Chairs and CoC Executive Board by preparing agendas and scheduling meetings
- Record Meeting Minutes and prepare Meeting information

Section 3. CoC Lead Agency Appointment: Every 5 years, the Governance Committee shall seek letters of intent to serve as the COC Lead Agency from non-profit community organizations that are based in and or serve the Burlington County Geographical area. Only organizations that meet requirements set forth by HUD shall be eligible to serve as CoC Lead Agency, in addition to any requirements agreed upon by the Governance Charter as a whole. The Governance Charter shall review letters of intent and submit recommendations to the executive committee, in the absence of any eligible provider the County Human Services Department shall serve as the CoC Lead agency. The CoC Lead Agency shall be appointed by majority affirmative vote of the Executive Board of the Governance Committee. The CoC Lead Agency must agree to uphold the mission and purpose of the Governance charter as defined in these by-laws.

Section 4. Limitations on the COC Lead Agency: By virtue of this role, the CoC Lead Agency is excluded from direct service funding with the exception of eligible general and administrative cost associated with HUD and work as related. Staff members of the CoC Lead Agency shall have no voting privileges at meetings. Staff members of the COC Lead Agency shall not be eligible to serve as elected officers.

ARTICLE VII: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Section 1: Adoption:

Adoption of these by-laws shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members of the *governing* board.

Section 2: Amendments:

A two-thirds majority vote of the governing board will be required to adopt a motion to amend the by-laws. Amendments must be submitted to the Board membership at least 14 days prior to the meeting at which they will be considered.

Section 3: Effective Date:

Once approved, amendments to the by-laws become effective immediately unless the motion passed specifies a later date.