



**Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force**  
**Terms of Reference**  
**4 May 2022**

**1. VISION AND MISSION:**

The Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force (referred to as “Poverty Task Force”) came together in July 2012 to initially address coordination and cooperation issues amongst agencies across Grey and Bruce Counties.

The Poverty Task Force’s vision is to reduce and eliminate poverty in our community. The Poverty Task Force facilitates community partnerships to advocate for poverty reduction and elimination. It does this by focusing on building partnerships with key community stakeholders and networks; and enhancing our common understanding of poverty.

**2. PURPOSE:**

The Poverty Task Force guides the implementation of six Action Groups, one Steering Committee and a Community Voices Group to advocate for poverty reduction and elimination in Grey and Bruce Counties.

The statement of purpose will be carried out with the following Poverty Task Force values:

- Building trust and respect across community stakeholders through dialogue and purposeful partnerships;
- Guiding and monitoring a collaborative consultation and planning process;
- Working together to educate each other, share creative solutions and develop a common understanding of issues related to poverty;
- Working to improve lives within the community, while ensuring the services are accessible, affordable, humanitarian, equitable, and provides choice;
- Acting in partnership to leverage our community knowledge and expertise to advocate for change;
- Acting with compassion to make meaningful change for individuals and families when they need it most;
- Ensuring participation of all key stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive community response;
- Networking with provincial, federal, and community groups who are addressing poverty-related issues;
- Recognizing that our collective energies are greater than that of any individual. Individually we can do little, together we can move mountains.

### 3. FUNCTIONS:

Poverty Task Force members provide an essential link between the Poverty Task Force and the community, acting as ambassadors and advocates for the Poverty Task Force and providing it with feedback about community needs and issues related to poverty. Individually and collectively Poverty Task Force members demonstrate leadership in advocating for the resources and for social, political and economic change that are required for Grey Bruce to develop and implement a comprehensive poverty strategy.

Poverty Task force members have the following responsibilities:

1. To demonstrate leadership and commitment to the fulfilment of the Poverty Task Force's objectives;
2. To regularly attend and participate at meetings of the Poverty Task Force and any Action Groups of which they are members;
3. To come to meetings prepared to listen and contribute to the discussion of issues and business at hand, having read the agenda and relevant resource materials;
4. To represent the Poverty Task Force in a positive and supportive manner at all times and in all places;
5. To respect confidential information to which they have access by virtue of their membership on the Poverty Task Force;
6. To avoid conflicts of interest between their position as Poverty Task Force members and their personal and professional lives. If such a conflict does arise, members will declare that conflict before the Poverty Task Force, and refrain from participating on matters in which they have a conflict.
7. To support in a positive manner all actions and decisions of the Poverty Task Force even when they are in a minority position on such actions and decisions;
8. To keep abreast of community needs and issues related to poverty and the work of the Poverty Task Force and communicate these to the Poverty Task Force

### 4. HOW WE WORK:

The Poverty Task Force has established mechanisms for sharing information with and seeking input from its Action Groups, Community Voices and its external stakeholders.

The Poverty Task Force achieves its objectives through Action Groups and Community Voices that address the key priorities and components required for development of a comprehensive strategy to address poverty issues.

There are six standing action groups (Income Security, Housing, Food Security, Bridges, Transportation and Health Equity) and one Community Voices group. The Poverty Task Force may also establish Ad Hoc working groups from time to time in order to address specific, time-limited tasks and projects.

Each Action Group and Community Voices is chaired or co-chaired by a Poverty Task Force member and is comprised of representatives from key stakeholder groups or poverty advocates with knowledge and/or experience related to that Action Group's focus of attention.

The Terms of Reference of all Action Groups (standing and ad hoc) and the Community Voices are subject to review and approval by the Poverty Task Force.

Each Action Group and Community Voices establishes its own meeting schedule. Minutes are taken at all Action Group and Community Voices meetings. Each Action Group and Community Voices group is responsible for arranging for recording and distribution of its minutes and other documentation.

#### 5. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Each member of the Poverty Task Force is required to maintain confidentiality with respect to confidential information to which the member has access to by virtue of membership in the Poverty Task Force. Members agree to respect the confidentiality of the information and the related discussions. At the end of each meeting, the members present will discuss what information can be shared and what information is to be considered confidential for the time being.

Members of the Steering Committee will abide by confidentiality protocols in the event that information of a personal and private nature (related to staff or PTF initiatives) is disclosed.

#### 6. POVERTY TASK FORCE LEADERSHIP

The Poverty Task Force is supported by a Planning Network Coordinator and a Steering Committee. The responsibilities of the Planning Network Coordinator and Steering Committee are:

- to provide leadership
- to convene regular meetings and special meetings as required
- to prepare the agenda for Poverty Task Force meetings
- to facilitate meetings and ensure that they address the priorities and work plan of the Poverty Task Force,
- to serve as the designated spokespersons for the Poverty Task Force unless otherwise agreed
- to serve as the Poverty Task Force's liaison with municipal and provincial government and with other external stakeholders
- to foster an environment that encourages full participation of Poverty Task Force members
- and to facilitate timely communication among Poverty Task Force members.

#### 7. MEMBERSHIP:

The Poverty Task Force consists of representatives from various sectors that are impacted by and/or address poverty issues within Grey and Bruce Counties. Poverty Task Force Members are individuals who occupy leadership roles in the community and organizations/agencies addressing the following prioritized sectors: food security, income security, housing and transportation.

A complete list of the Poverty Task Force membership will be appended (Appendix 1).

## 8. MEETINGS:

The Poverty Task Force will meet on a regular basis or at the call of the Planning Network Coordinator and Steering Committee. The Poverty Task Force shall meet virtually or in-person alternatively between Bruce and Grey Counties hosted by Bruce or Grey County.

Minutes are taken at each meeting of the Poverty Task Force. The Steering Committee is responsible for reviewing and editing the minutes and approving the agenda of the Poverty Task Force meetings.

Minutes are intended to be informational and thus will reflect the fullness of discussions held at the meeting. As well, the minutes will capture attendance/regrets, decisions made and future action to be taken. The minutes are intended for public dissemination. The meeting minutes and agenda are distributed to members by email. Minutes are distributed no later than 10 days after meetings and agendas are distributed at least one week prior to meetings.

## 9. DECISION-MAKING:

Decision-making will be by consensus.

Poverty Task Force will support campaigns that are non-partisan and solution-based (in partnership and collaborative approach).

All campaign endorsements will be supported by a specific Poverty Task Force Action Group or Community Voices who will send it to the PTF Steering Committee for approval; and when necessary, the Poverty Task Force may circulate to be further endorsed by membership organizations.

All members of the Steering Committee members must approve a Letter of Support and/or endorsement.

The Poverty Task Force will support campaigns that require organizational endorsement only.

## 10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

Committee members have a duty to avoid being in conflict between the committees' interests and their agency's interests. Whenever a committee member has a personal interest in the same subject matter as the committee, a conflict of interest arises. Conflict of interest must be disclosed to the committee when it first becomes known. The individual declaring conflict should not take part in the discussion toward any decision.

Failure to disclose and take measures to avoid a conflict of interest may result in a core committee member being asked to leave the meeting and further conflict may result in the committee member being asked to step down from the committee permanently.

## 11. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually. Subject to approval by the Poverty Task Force, the terms may be altered to reflect changing needs and priorities.