



STAFF REPORT FROM THE CONTRA COSTA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

Contra Costa County Homeless System of Care Quarterly Report for Quarter 3 of 2022 (July-September)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

This quarter the homeless Continuum of Care was busy with funding! We began to apply for funding through a supplemental HUD CoC competition focused on unsheltered homelessness, began planning for 2023, and wrapped up the regular HUD CoC competition, which provides the majority of our community's resources for housing and services. We are also encouraged by the implementation of the CoC-approved program models that ensure a standard of service and set outcomes across various homeless services, including Emergency Shelter and Permanent Supportive Housing. We see great opportunities for collaboration with County and community partners to bring resources to our community to help support our shared clients.

The CoC has been moving forward with efforts to improve equity and increase the engagement of people with a lived experience of homelessness in our planning and decision making. We're continuing to work on evaluating and improving components of our system of care with monitoring, performance-based contracting and a new HMIS evaluation.

Sincerely,

Juno Hedrick, Chair of the Council on Homelessness

and

Jo Bruno, Vice Chair of the Council on Homelessness



INTRODUCTION

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness (CoH) is the governing and oversight body for the County homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Council provides advice and input to the Board of Supervisors on the operations of homeless services, program operations, and program development efforts in Contra Costa County. The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness is the governing body for the Contra Costa County Continuum of Care (CoC).

The Contra Costa CoC is comprised of multiple partners, including service providers, members of faith communities, local businesses, private and public funders, community members, education systems and law enforcement, and others who are working collaboratively to end homelessness. The COH and COC are supported by Contra Costa Health Services Health, Housing & Homeless Services (H3) Division. H3 functions as the CoC administrative entity and collaborative applicant, CoC Lead Agency and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS database) Lead Agency.

The purpose of this report is to share information about the CoC and COH activities with the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and to provide recommendations from the COH to the County Board of Supervisors on long range planning and policy formulation that would support the county homeless CoC. This report includes information on system data, funding and policy activities, and CoC initiatives. All information will reflect activities and data for the prior quarter.

This report was produced on behalf of the CoH by H3 in collaboration with the CoH and CoC partners.

SYSTEM FUNDING

This quarter the CoC continued to evaluate the system of care and pursued funding opportunities to address the gaps in Contra Costa's homeless system, including our largest source of funding, the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

FEDERAL

HUD CoC NOFO: HUD announced the FY 2022 Continuum of Care competition on August 1, 2022 with a due date of September 30, 2022. This year's competition had a shorter than normal timeline and providers worked collaboratively with the CoC to ensure an on-time submission. Council on Homelessness members served as the CoC's Review and Rank panel to create and approve the Priority Listing that was approved by the Council on September 15th, 2022. This Priority Listing included two new projects that, if awarded by HUD, will increase rapid rehousing



dedicated to survivors of domestic violence and permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals in Contra Costa County. (See Appendix B for 2022 CoC Priority Listing)

HUD Unsheltered NOFO: In late June, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released a first-of-its-kind package of resources to address unsheltered homelessness and homeless encampments, including funds set aside specifically to address homelessness in rural communities. The \$322 million available under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will enhance communities' capacity to humanely and effectively address unsheltered and rural homelessness by connecting vulnerable individuals and families to housing, healthcare, and supportive services. This Special NOFO strongly promotes partnerships with healthcare organizations, public housing authorities and mainstream housing providers, and people with lived expertise of homelessness. HUD is prioritizing communities with high unsheltered homeless counts based on the 2019 Point In Time Count. Contra Costa hosted a Technical Assistance workshop for prospective applicants on August 30th, 2022 and received three applications by the due date of September 20th, 2022. The Council on Homelessness convened an additional CoC Review and Rank panel, composed entirely of members with lived experience of homelessness, to create a Priority Listing that the Council will consider for approval in October 2022.

Housing Stability Voucher Program: In October, Housing Authority of Contra Costa County, with support from the CoC, submitted a Letter of Intent to HUD to request Housing Stability Vouchers. These vouchers will be prioritized for Public Housing Agencies and CoCs who are awarded through the HUD Unsheltered NOFO. These vouchers are highly sought after and are competitively awarded.

STATE

Bringing Families Home: Contra Costa Health Services, Health, Housing and Homeless Services (H3) partnered with Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) to plan a Request for Qualifications to award funding from the the State of California Department of Social Services (CDSS)'s Bringing Families Home program. The Bringing Families Home Program will provide housing supports and services to referred families receiving Contra Costa County child welfare services who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, thereby increasing family reunification and preventing foster care placement. The RFQ process will occur in October and November 2022.

Homeless, Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP3): HHAP Round 3 is a \$1 billion grant through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) that provides local jurisdictions, including federally recognized tribal governments, with flexible funding to continue efforts to end and prevent homelessness in their communities. H3 received requests for clarifications on the submitted application in July and provided prompt response to Cal-ICH.



In September, Cal-ICH notified the CoC that there were no further questions on the HHAP-3 application.

Homekey 3: H3 will be applying for a Homekey 3 allocation in September.

SYSTEM INITIATIVES

The CoC regularly engages in multiple activities, partnerships, evaluations, and improvement that are designed to improve services to clients and achieve various system goals.

Equity Upon the recommendations of the Equity Working Group, the Council on Homelessness voted to approve the establishment of an Equity Committee and the following priority for the newly formed committee to focus on for 2023: *Create accessible information, outreach, and educational materials to engage hard to reach or previously unreached communities in Contra Costa County. The Committee will meet for the first time in October.*

Engagement of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness: The Council actively recruited for applicants for the Lived Experience seat and Youth Representative on the Council that will open 12/31/22. This year we added two "Office Hours" for As of 9/30/22, staff received 10 qualified applications (plus 3 more that did not complete the application process) for the Lived Experience Advisor seat and one for the Youth Representative seat.

HMIS Evaluation: H3 contracted with Focus Strategies to assess the configuration and use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to ensure that HMIS workflows, data and reporting enable providers to be successful with new program models and performance-based contracting. H3 and Focus Strategies worked on data collection through surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews with partner providers, H3 staff, and people experiencing homelessness to get a robust understanding of challenges and opportunities in the HMIS.

Monitoring: Homebase is leading the 2022 monitoring process for 19 Continuum of Care-funded projects and will ensure grant activities are following the Department of Housing and Urban Development rules and regulations; improve individual program performance; and increase provider capacity regarding Continuum of Care compliance and financial management. The monitoring process of all CoC funded agencies was completed in late July and Homebase led a supportive process to identify findings and enable providers to remedy deficiencies before planning to provide an overall update to the Oversight committee in November.

Performance Based Contracting: The Council on Homelessness approved standardized program models for homeless services in the Continuum of Care at the June 2nd CoH meeting. CoC providers and Health, Housing, and Homeless Services worked quickly to create workplans for FY22-23 to implement these models and will work throughout the year to adjust and improve the models before formally integrating these standards into County contracts. Upon implementation in July, the CoC worked to create a self-assessment tool and program model



dashboards for providers to understand their outcomes under these new performance based contract work plans. The CoC also hosted Critical Time Intervention trainings for Rapid Rehousing providers as required under the newly adopted program standards.

COLLABORATIONS

Holistic Intervention Partnership (HIP): The Contra Costa County Office of the Public Defender and the Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless Services Department have secured a \$6 million grant from the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to dramatically expand the Holistic Intervention Partnership (HIP) over the next three years.

HIP launched as a pilot program in June 2020 and knits together an integrated, multidisciplinary team of public agencies and community-based organizations. The HIP team is committed to providing support to those involved in the criminal legal system in order to improve outcomes for indigent Contra Costa County residents who struggle with mental illness, substance dependence, and homelessness.

This expanded funding will also include significant dedicated funds to preserve or provide housing for the estimated 35% of Public Defender clients who are unhoused or at risk of being unhoused. Almost half of the grant's budget is earmarked for housing staffing and resources, and this funding provides direct dollars for housing, both permanent and short-term, for those impacted by the local criminal legal system. HIP has proven to be an effective tool to support our County's most vulnerable residents while at the same time reducing incarceration and increasing public safety. With this new award, HIP will provide a substantially expanded and enhanced array of resources, including immediate legal representation, civil legal advocacy, and community-based services for at least 900 people over three years.

Homeless Services-Workforce Development Integration (H-WIN)- These bi-monthly meetings provide an opportunity for people working in Homeless Services and Workforce Development in Contra Costa to connect with and understand each other's resources and services. One meeting was held this quarter, with over 20 partners in attendance.

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Contra Costa is committed to the Regional Action plan which aims to reduce unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024. The Regional Action Plan proposes a 1-2-4 framework which posits that to accomplish this reduction, for every 1 additional interim housing unit funded, 2 permanent housing solutions, and 4 prevention interventions are needed.

PATH Innovations Committee: The Plan for Accelerating Transformative Housing (PATH) Innovations Committee of the Council on Homelessness refined their work to examine prevention and rapid exit resources as mechanisms to reduce unsheltered homelessness. The



committee also engaged with prevention and rapid exit providers to understand referral processes, program components, and outcomes.

Funding Opportunities: All of the funding opportunities mentioned earlier in the report would support Contra Costa’s efforts to achieve the Regional Action Plan goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024.

GOVERNANCE/REPORTING

- The COH Governance Committee developed draft bylaws revisions which have been submitted to County Counsel for review.
- The Chair and Vice Chair presented the Q2 Council on Homelessness report at the October FHS Committee meeting.

MEETINGS, TRAININGS AND EVENTS

Council on Homelessness (COH) Meetings: The Council on Homelessness held three (3) regular business meetings. In addition to the regular Council on Homelessness meetings, the following committees met:

Committee	Purpose
HMIS Policy Committee	Develops and shares updates on HMIS policies and practices, compliance, and troubleshooting; Plans technical assistance and training; Informs standards of practice and monitoring
Homelessness Awareness Month Planning Committee	Developing materials, tools and events to mark Homelessness Awareness Month in November.
Nominating Committee	Reviews and revises application process for potential new CoH members and provides recommendations to the full Council.
Oversight Committee	Reviewing and assessing the development, implementation, and improvement of the CoC, Coordinated Entry System, HMIS database, and system outcomes
PATH Innovation Committee	Work towards the goal of reducing unsheltered homeless in Contra Costa County by 75% by 2024

Trainings

- Connecting Clients to Mainstream Benefits (7/28)
- Fair Housing (8/22/22)
- Connecting Clients to Workforce Services (9/26/22)

Events



- CoC Provider Meetings (3)
- Contra Costa NOFO TA Workshop (8/9)
- H-WIN meeting (8/10)

The recordings, minutes and materials for trainings and meetings can be found on the H3 website¹ and on the County agenda center², and a calendar of upcoming meetings and events can be found on the H3 website.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt resolution to declare December 21, 2022 to be Homeless Person's Memorial Day when presented with resolution by Council on Homelessness in mid-December.

¹ <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#Training>

² <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/agendacenter>



APPENDIX A

Commonly Used Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Definition
APR	Annual Performance Report (for HUD homeless programs)
BIPOC	Black and Indigenous People of Color
CARE	Coordinated Assessment and Resource
CCYCS	Contra Costa Youth Continuum of Services
CDBG, CDBG-CV	Community Development Block Grant (federal and state programs) and the federal Community Development Block Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
CESH	California Emergency Solutions and Housing program (state funding)
Continuum of Care (CoC)	Continuum of Care approach to assistance to the homeless. Federal grant program promoting and funding permanent solutions to homelessness.
Con Plan	Consolidated Plan, a locally developed plan for housing assistance and urban development under CDBG.
CORE	Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement program
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DCD	(Contra Costa County) Department of Conservation and Development
DOC	Department Operations Center
EHSD	(Contra Costa County) Employment and Human Services Division
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESG and ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant (federal and state program) and the federal Emergency Solutions Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant CARES
FMR	Fair Market Rent (maximum rent for Section 8 rental assistance/CoC grants)
HCD	Housing and Community Development (State office)
HEAP	Homeless Emergency Aid Program (State funding)
HEARTH	Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009
HHAP	Homeless Housing and Assistance Program
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HOME	Home Investment Partnerships (CPD program)
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)
MHSA	Mental Health Services Act
NOFA/NOFO	Notice of Funding Availability/ Notice of Funding Opportunity
PHA	Public Housing Authority
PUI	Persons Under Investigation
PWLE	People With Lived Experience of Homelessness
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
SRO	Single-Room Occupancy housing units
SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TA	Technical Assistance



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TAY	Transition Age Youth (usually ages 18-24)
VA	Veterans Affairs (U.S. Department of)
VASH	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing
VI-SPDAT	Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool

Contra Costa County COVID-19 Resources:

Please see below for additional resources on COVID-19.

- *Health Services COVID Data Dashboard-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/dashboard>
- *Health Services Homeless Specific Data Dashboard-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/homeless-dashboard>
- *Health Services COVID Updates-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/health-services-updates>
- *Health Services Homeless-Specific COVID Resources* -<https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/for-the-homeless>



APPENDIX B