



Maryland Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) April 2025 Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 8th · 1-3pm, [Zoom](#)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Secretary Jake Day, DHCD

- Thank you to all our partners across other agencies, particularly LABOR and Aging, as we work to address systemic challenges and address the shortage of housing and shelter. As you may know, some things we proposed weren't successful in the General Assembly, it was a challenging year in terms of budget. Thank you for your partnership, continued effort on all the things that we can control, and continued efforts on the things within our sphere of influence.

II. Vote to Approve the June 2024 Meeting Minutes

Secretary Jake Day, DHCD

- June 2024 minutes were unanimously approved.

III. 2023/2024 Homelessness Trends and Takeaways

Assistant Secretary, Danielle Meister

- These updates are based on 2024 data, we'll have 2025 data collected and ready to share in the Fall.
- Maryland is performing slightly better on homelessness than the nation as a whole:
 - 28% reduction in overall homelessness & 42% reduction in unsheltered homelessness since 2015
 - Homelessness is increasing, but total homelessness increased 3% in Maryland compared to 18% nationally, and family homelessness increased 1% compared to 39% nationally.
- Breakdown of households experiencing homelessness in Maryland
 - 17% unsheltered locations, 65% Emergency Shelter, 18% transitional housing
- Racial inequity: 32% of Marylanders are black, but represent 57% of the State's homeless population, while 57% of Maryland residents are white, but make up 28% of the State's homeless population.
- Older Homelessness has been increasing since 2018: 8% for residents 55-64, 101% for residents 65+, and increases vary widely by CoC/County from 13% in Mid-Shore to 460% in Howard County.
- Permanent Housing Capacity Challenges:
 - Fair market rents have increased 41% in three years, resulting in less people that can be served with prevention and rapid re-housing.
 - There has been a significant statewide reduction of prevention and permanent housing capacity for homeless households due to the exhaustion of COVID-era funds in FY23/24 that were allocated to homeless services through both state and direct local awards (CARES Act ESG and CSBG funds, ARPA Emergency Rental Assistance and SLFRF)
 - For the first time in a decade, the state had a decrease in homeless permanent housing inventory from FY23 to FY24:
 - Rapid re-housing beds decreased 21%
 - Permanent supportive housing beds decreased 7%

- Right now, there is only 1 new permanent housing opening for every 10 people that will experience homelessness in FY26

IV. Interagency Collaboration Updates

A. HUD Older Adult Home Modification Program (MDOA, MDOD, DHCD)

- DHCD & MDOA collaboratively applied for and were awarded \$1.85m from HUD and Enterprise's THOME Aging Well grant program for 2.5-year pilot program
- Older adult homelessness and housing instability is a growing challenge:
 - Changing national demographics - nearly 40% increase number of older adults between 2010 and 2020
 - Increasing housing costs and fixed incomes/limited assets in retirement
 - Majority of older adults live alone and accessible units can be difficult to find
 - Loss of permanent housing is common while staying in hospital, rehab, or assisted living after a medical event, challenges with a disability or issues maintaining ADLs/IDLs 40%-50% of older adults have difficulty with at least one Activity of Daily Living (ADL)
 - Preserving capacity to live independently is person-centered, trauma-informed, and cost-effective approach
 - HUD prioritization of rural areas aligned with Maryland need for more services in rural areas
 - High quality, effective program models already in Baltimore City and Garrett County to learn from
 - Utilizes evidence-based model developed by the Johns Hopkins CAPABLE Center
 - Can be used to pilot program while sustainable sources of funding are secured - such as Medicare reimbursement
- CAPABLE Model:
 - Interdisciplinary approach: Occupational Therapist (OT), Registered Nurse (RN), and Handy Person
 - Focused on individual strengths and goals in Activity Daily Livings (ADLs), Instrumental Activities of Daily Livings (IADLs), Client-directed, client-centered assessments, education and interventions.
- Next steps:
 - Currently executing grant agreements with local regional service providers: Garrett County Community Action, Southern Maryland Center for Independent Living, MAC Inc
 - Program design and planning phase requirements with HUD and Enterprise, contracting with Hopkins CAPABLE Center for Lower Shore and Southern MD licensing
 - May-July: Licensing of Lower Shore and Southern MD sites, programs hiring staff and contractors
 - Summer: Launch of services to older adults (timing may vary by provider)

B. Community Schools Rental Assistance Program (DHCD, MSDE, GOC)

- Approximately \$10m combined appropriation for FY25/FY26 (pending final adopted FY26 budget)
- Eligibility:
 - a) Family with student enrolled in a Community School
 - b) Renter household at-risk of homelessness OR homeless as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act (includes both literally homeless households and doubled-up/couchsurfing/unstably housed families)
- Assistance available for up to 15 months:
 - a) Current/prospective rent or rent arrears
 - b) Fines or fees associated with rental payments, including late fees

- c) Current/prospective utility costs or utility arrears
 - d) Fines or fees associated with utility payments, including late fees or deposits
 - e) Relocation expenses, such as application fees, move-in costs, security deposit, etc
 - Next Steps:
 - a) Local grantee Request for Applications open now through May 1
 - b) Performance period officially starts July 1, but will allow pre-award costs or an earlier start date for programs that can launch earlier
 - c) MSDE, DHCD, GOC will collaborate to inform Community School Coordinators of the program, outreach to families, and evaluate program outcomes
 - d) Current pilot to train community school staff and educators on housing instability and identify family-level supports that DHCD or future CSRAP grantees could provide
- C. Youth Homelessness Systems Improvement Grant (DHCD, Labor, DHS, DJS, DCSPS, MDH, DSCI, MSDE)
- YHSI grants are designed to make and improve connections, coordination, and information sharing within and between systems that serve at-risk youth, including education, child welfare, and juvenile justice. In 2024, the State of Maryland was awarded a \$2 million grant to partner with Youth Action Boards, CoCs, and other state agencies to create:
 - a) A roadmap to establishing a state interagency youth homeless prevention and response plan;
 - b) A statewide network of Youth Action Boards, raising the voice of youth with lived expertise in strengthening our service system for vulnerable youth;
 - c) Statewide standards and training for family and youth support workers;
 - d) Improvements to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and
 - e) Coordinated Entry to standardize youth assessments and coordinated access to housing;
 - f) And research to tailor and assess the impact of new housing and service interventions to support youth in achieving long-term housing stability.
 - YHSI supports youth participation in planning and services through Youth Action Board Development Grants to CoCs and partnering with DSCI to hire and support partners in hiring Service Year Option Fellows
 - While housed in DHCD, YHSI initiatives are closely coordinated with other state agencies including: DHS, Labor, MDH, DSCI, DPSCS, DJS, GoC and MSDE
- D. Maryland Statewide Homelessness Data Warehouse (DHCD, CoCs)
- DHCD is relaunching the Statewide HMIS Data Warehouse with all homelessness data (not limited to state-funded programs), and with the objective of setting up statewide dashboards and data-matching partnerships with other agencies for research and care coordination.
- E. Community Solutions/CoC System Performance Improvement Initiative (DHCD, CoCs)
- In January 2025, DHCD launched a partnership with Community Solutions, the organization responsible for Built for Zero, to support CoCs to improve their data collection, data quality and homeless service system with a structured and supportive Technical Assistance.

V. Permanent Supportive Housing LIHTC Strategy

- A. PSH Investments require three types of funding and investment: Physical units, operating costs for rent and administration, and supportive services
- B. Permanent Supportive Needs in Maryland:
- Income – 68% of chronically homeless households have zero cash income. 95% are under 15% Area Median Income.
 - Accessibility – 67% of chronically homeless households have permanent physical disability and 25% are age 55+

- Housing First & Service Needs - 48% have at least one criminal case, 27% eligible for expungement of all cases, 69% chronically homeless households have mental health diagnosis and 40% have a substance use disorder
- Geographic Diversity – Every CoC has a minimum of 50 chronically homeless individuals in need of PSH, with greater needs in urban/metro areas

C. 2025 QAP Strategy

- 9% Competitive Round Projects -Set-aside for 2+ permanent supportive housing projects (higher density of PSH), All other projects have a required homeless preference for 15% of units
- Both 9% Competitive Round and 4% Projects - If state has rental subsidy and supportive services funds available for PSH, projects must accept them. Places burden on state to secure rental subsidies to cover affordability gap - critical for volume of units state needs to create
- State matches projects to local supportive services provider participating in Medicaid 1115 waiver pilot for housing-based case management/tenancy support services, and/or contracts with supportive services provider directly

D. Funding and Partner Roles:

- State: Administer state project-based rental assistance (PBRA), secure vouchers from PHAs, match PBRA, vouchers, and other subsidies to properties, match supportive services providers participating in Medicaid 1115 waiver to properties (annual expansion of services), review/enforce property compliance with tenant selection, CoC referrals, troubleshoot slow referrals and vacancies, and track housing outcomes through homeless services data warehouse
- Property manager: Develop quality and accessible units, accept referrals exclusively from CoC, Low-barrier tenant selection plan, completion of state-provided training and learning collaborative, proactive tenancy problem-solving (avoid eviction as a solution), and provide office or meeting space on- site, if possible, for case management.
- Continuum of Care: Ensure accessible Coordinated Entry assessment and prioritization process that can screen for eligibility for PSH requirements and/or general homeless preference, manage timely referral of prioritized households for vacancies at lease-up and turnover, and collaborative move-on support or program transfers with service provider.
- Service Provider: Leveraging/match of other funds to fill gaps in activities not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement (with DHCD support), and provide comprehensive, proactive supportive service with voluntary participation.

E. Next Steps:

- Formation of Program Design Advisory Workgroup with diverse stakeholders
 - a) Determine household eligibility and prioritization
 - b) Establish guidelines for referral processes and participant requirements
 - c) Finalize training and technical assistance plan for CoCs, housing owners, and property managers
- Plan for participant move-on opportunities
 - a) Establish program performance metrics & evaluation
- 2025 LIHTC Project Allocations & Pipeline
- Expansion of Medicaid 1115 ACIS program statewide (MDH will update at July ICH meeting)

F. Q&A

- Clarified State Fiscal Year for data: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024
- What decreased Veteran Homelessness? A. Increase in HUD VASH and SSVF programs, increase in housing inventory resulting in a decrease in Veteran Homelessness.

- Are PHA vouchers targeted to population experiencing homelessness? A. Prioritization was set by General Assembly, but some changes were made this year. Homelessness is written in as a priority, but not the only priority. Helps to create the turnover in our housing programs when households are stable enough to transition, needing rental assistance, but not supportive services. Key takeaway - bill removed the requirement that PHAs equally prioritize vouchers for families that include veterans, disabled individuals, increasing flexibility to prioritize households experiencing homelessness.

VI. Office of Tenant and Landlord Affairs Update

- A. Right of First Refusal
 - Launched October 1
 - Requires certain housing owners to offer tenant first opportunity to purchase property before selling
- B. Tenant Bill of Rights
 - First draft complete, consulting with stakeholders on language
 - Statutory requirement to publish by June 1
 - Currently building out resources for OTLA website and infrastructure to coincide with launch
- C. Staff
 - Office includes 3 positions: Director, Partnership & Community Engagement Coordinator, Tenant Liaison
 - Two of three positions have been onboarded; currently interviewing for Director position

VII. Federal - Key Executive Orders, Program Changes, Legislation

- A. DHCD is working closely with NAEH, COSCDA, NASCSP and other national advocacy partners to monitor changes and respond when necessary
- B. Reporting/Programmatic
 - HUD - Removal of gender category from all historic and current reports, takedown of resources from website
 - The AG's office pulled information for businesses about ADA requirements and how to create accessible spaces for people with disabilities.
 - Community Action - Change to binary gender categories
 - HUD Continuum of Care Program - Awards announced in January have taken longer than normal to be issued by HUD grant agreement. New HUD grant agreements include significant new terms and conditions:
 - a) Incorporates language from Executive Orders on gender ideology
 - b) Prohibits using grant funds for elective abortions/reinforces existing Hyde Amendment
 - c) Prohibits government recipients from using funds to "by design or effect facilitate the subsidization or promotion of illegal immigration or abet policies that seek to shield illegal aliens from deportation."
 - d) Subject to the exceptions provided by PRWORA, the grant recipient must use SAVE or an equivalent verification system approved by the Federal government
 - e) HUD will no longer enforce Housing First requirements (does NOT prohibit recipients or CoCs from requiring or practicing Housing First)

VIII. State Budget and Legislative Session

- A. FY26 budget (tentatively) retains funding for DHCD programs addressing housing instability and homelessness, with exception of \$5 million in unrestricted emergency rental assistance allocated in FY25
- B. Key legislation approved by MGA and on the Governor's desk:
 - Statewide rental voucher program (technical fixes)
 - Sensitive locations & privacy of information
 - Access to Counsel in Evictions extension
 - Foreclosure filing fee increase (supports Maryland Housing Counseling Program)
 - Funding for Maryland Community Action Agencies
- C. Key legislation that did not proceed:
 - Housing for Jobs Act
 - Shelter certification
 - Good cause eviction
 - Anti-criminalization of unsheltered homelessness
 - Overdose prevention sites and harm reduction/decriminalization
- D. Additional updates:
 - HIV Decriminalization passed
 - Child custody determination law passed
 - Barber's and hairdressers law passed requiring training on domestic violence

IX. Member Updates and Initiatives

- A. Beyond the Bridge screening at the Senator Theater on April 9th, over 750 people registered to attend. Panel afterwards with Danielle Meister, Kevin Lindamood and Director Ernestina Simmons debriefing the film and learnings to accelerate progress addressing homelessness.

X. Public Comment

- A. Shannon Snow, Episcopal Housing - applauding DHCD and collaborating agencies for the PSH work and the tax credit.
- B. Acknowledgements to Greg Hare and the CDA team who worked just as hard if not harder than we did at integrating the public comment, and moving this forward.

XI. Next ICH Meeting:

- A. July 24, 2025 - 2-4 PM, rescheduled to August 28th, 10 AM - 12 PM
- B. October 21, 2025 - 10 AM -12 PM, in-person, location TBD

XII. Adjournment