

Meeting of the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)

February 6th, 2020 10:00AM – 12:00PM

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

7800 Harkins Rd, Lanham, Maryland 20706, USA

I. Welcome – Secretary Carol Beatty, Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)

a. **Welcome** – Meeting began at 10AM

b. **Member introductions**

- Stuart introduced Danielle Meister, Senior Policy Officer DHCD, as the new staff to the ICH.
- Carol Beatty offered commendations to Suzanne Korff for support to the ICH.

c. **Approval of November 2019 meeting minutes:** approved.

II. New Business

a. **Legislative Update** – Danielle Meister, DHCD

- Key bills highlighted: HB0231, HB0206, HB0746, HB0754, HB0815, focused on issues including equal housing opportunity, support for unaccompanied homeless minors, mobile laundry, adjustments to high-school graduation requirements impacting homeless youth, Workgroup on funding a low or no interest mortgage program.
- Also of note: HB544 and HB797, which relate to eviction laws and eviction prevention.
- Discussion: *Is the ICH allowed to take a position on legislation?* State agency staff are expected to take a neutral stance on legislation, although DHCD does provide policy recommendations to the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness and policy comment to the legislature to help lawmakers consider and assess the impact of proposed legislation.

III. Department and Member Updates

a. **Move Up Initiative** – Suzanne Korff, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

- The Move Up Initiative provides an opportunity for eligible PSH residents who no longer need intensive supports, but still require a voucher to remain housed, to ‘graduate’ from service intensive housing to Section 8 vouchers set aside by the public housing authority. *See slides for more details.*
- Discussion: *How is partner jurisdiction determined?* Montgomery County developed the model used for the state Move Up Initiative. Initial participating CoCs are in jurisdictions where the state administers the vouchers, but the initiative is envisioned as a pilot and the state will work with housing authorities in entitlement jurisdictions to encourage them to adopt their own Move Up initiatives.
- *Are there similar initiatives to graduate households from Section 8 vouchers?* The Poverty Solutions Team at DHCD is working on family self-sufficiency incentive programs. Shannon Snow is also working on programs to provide affordable housing options to help people ready to move on from project-based Section 8 vouchers.
- *Next steps:* DHCD is planning to facilitate a peer-to-peer workgroup similar to the Rapid-Rehousing Workgroup to capture best practices and provide TA to interested and participating Move Up Initiatives. The state housing authority/Community

Development Administration (CDA) also provides TA to local housing authorities interested in participating in the initiative.

b. Balance of State – Steve Holt, DHCD

- MD514 Maryland Balance of State Continuum of Care has been created merging, Cecil, Allegany, Southern Maryland, Garret, and Washington County.
- *Next steps:* Acting Board, including local and state representatives, is being established. HMIS, Coordinated Entry, and other CoC-level functions will be standardized by the new CoC Board and administered by Maryland DHCD.
- Discussion: *How will local “flavor” be preserved in service delivery?* Local providers and CoC leads will continue to guide local service design. The Balance of State will reduce the administrative burden for local service providers and increase availability and bandwidth for direct service planning and delivery.
- *How will HMIS data be standardized?* Most providers are already using same software. Communities are generally already collecting same data in order to meet HUD requirements.

c. BWI Homeless Outreach Program – Stuart Campbell, DHCD

- DHCD and BWI partnered to provide outreach to people experiencing homelessness at airport 2018-2019. Prologue, Inc. is current service provider. BWI will continue providing outreach services via new contract awarded through RFP. See presentation for more details.
- Discussion: *How is the Job Opportunity program working to assist homeless individuals at the airport?* Airlines are collaborating and there are 100s of jobs available. One employee found to be homeless has received assistance from the program. *What transition assistance services will be available?* There are two outreach officials with office at airport and plans are to add a dedicated case manager to connect people to resources with funding under new RFP.

d. Race Equity Analysis Overview – Jalen Lee, DHCD

- DHCD Race Equity fellow, Jalen Lee, provided an overview of his research analyzing race equity within the homeless services system in Maryland. For more details see presentation.
- Discussion: *Has there been analysis of racial equity within service provider agencies?* Research shows that diverse staffing has an impact on client experience. Planning to look at the issue at the service provider level in the next phase of research as data is not publically available. *Specific vulnerabilities identified by VI-SPDAT that create race equity concerns?* Person’s might not have access to obtain an MH diagnosis to report as minority populations may have reduced access to MH services to receive treatment or diagnosis. Minority populations may be less forthcoming in answering questions about medical issues or substance use due to distrust and concern about further discrimination. *We know there is disproportionate representation and have for years. How do we ensure we are prioritizing the individuals who have the greatest need in spite of bias?* Representation and inclusion of people of color who have lived experience are important to service planning and assessment of solutions for racial disparity.

- e.** Next steps: Requested update and placement of expanded presentation and discussion of racial equity issues on next ICH meeting to allow for more robust discussion due to extent of board member interest in the issue.

IV. Work Group Updates - See written updates for more details.

- a. **Health and Homelessness** – Dr. Olubukola Olange, Maryland Department of Health
- b. **Youth** – Christina Drushel-Williams, Governor’s Office for Children
 - Upcoming meetings: March 24, 2020, May 12, 2020
- c. **Workforce** – Erin Roth, Maryland Department of Labor
 - **Upcoming meeting:** February 21st, Lithicum Job Center
- d. **Lived Experience** – Shawn Jones, Baltimore City CoC, Chelsea Hayman, Maryland Department of Disabilities
 - Discussion: *Have we offered an alternative methodology to increase inclusiveness to reduce barriers for participation of ICH representatives with lived experience to ICH?*
DHCD is working with Governor’s office on reducing barriers where possible. Encouraged work group participation which has lower barriers. DHCD HSP team will also provide support to candidates in overcoming barriers to participation.

V. Vision for 2020

- a. **Discussion** – Danielle Meister, DHCD
 - Next steps: Due to limited time, the ICH visioning exercise was postponed to the May meeting. Danielle will send out a survey in the interim.

VI. Administrative Updates & Announcements

- a. **Member announcements and updates**
 - **DHCD** has partnered with Behavioral Health Services Baltimore to offer free training opportunities: Harm Reduction 101 for Service Providers - [Southern Maryland](#): Tuesday, March 3rd, 1-4PM, Calvert Library Prince Frederick. [Central Maryland](#): Thursday, April 16th, 9:30-12:30PM, Behavioral Health System Baltimore
 - **NAMI** to send legislative priorities. Hosting a Voices of Experience event on March 10th in Annapolis to share stories related to mental health and homelessness with a ticketed VIP reception prior to the event: <https://tinyurl.com/VoicesAnnapolis>.
Department of Labor is in the public comment period for their five-year strategic plan, which includes homeless individuals as part of the priority populations. They have applied for Opioid Crisis response funding to continue and expand current programs.
 - **Department of Aging** expressed interest in filling gaps in services for seniors, and forecasting the risk of homelessness for vulnerable seniors. Seeking to expand assisted living capacity through partnerships to address shortage of affordable housing for seniors.
 - **Harford County Community Action Agency** held big events in January including Project Homeless event resource day hosted by United Way at Harford Community College, and a successful PIT count, which showed lowered numbers and identified

individuals who can be offered assistance. Gearing up to participate in Youth REACH.

- **Episcopal Housing Corporation** is working to increase PSH, and opening a new 70 unit building in Baltimore.
- **Department of Transportation** is working on assisting individuals with meeting Real ID requirements including persons transitioning from correctional facilities.
- **Governor's Office for Children** is focusing on childhood trauma, hunger, and youth homelessness. Will be starting Children's Cabinet. NOFA to be released.
- **United Way** is prioritizing support to working poor / "ALICE" population, households who are too low income to make bills but don't qualify for assistance. Expanding focus on this population with targeted program in Baltimore.
- **Catholic Charities** is restructuring the way they do workforce development to offer shorter more frequent and lower barrier workshops which are more accessible on a drop in basis. Offer job placement and workforce development. New structure allows for increased access to services.
- **Maryland Legal Aid** is offering community lawyering events such as "Lawyer in a library" and "Lawyer in a school event." Lawyers often offer expungement services to help reduce barriers to housing and other services.
- **Prince Georges DSS** is working on preparing the coordinating community plan for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP), and requests participation from members to advise on initiatives. Also prioritizing aging in place and needs of senior homeless population which has been identified as a growing at-risk population in the county. Seeing significant gaps in services impacting seniors.
- **Baltimore Mayor's Office of Homeless Services** is also working on preparing the YHDP coordinated community plan for April of 2020 and preparing for upcoming RFP release. Will soon post draft plan to share for comment.
- **Department of Budget Management** expressed interest in recommendations to guide funding on issues such as Race Equity.

b. Next Meeting Date:

- May 21st, 2020, 1PM-3PM, Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, MD 21076, USA

Adjourned 12:05pm