



Maryland Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) February 2024 Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 28 · 1:00pm
Virtual

I. Welcome and Introductions

Secretary Jake Day, DHCD

- Provided overview of 2023 State Index on Youth Homelessness, which ranked Maryland as 5th in the nation in making progress towards addressing youth homelessness, a sign that Maryland's approach is working, and we are tantalizingly close to ending youth and veteran homelessness, but need to continue to build partnerships and make the case for the resources needed.

II. Vote to Approve November 2023 Meeting Minutes

Secretary Jake Day, DHCD

- Motion to approve by Amy Kleine, seconded by Shannon Snow. Minutes were approved unanimously with 23 votes.

III. DHCD's New Division of Homeless Solutions

Secretary Jake Day, DHCD

- Division was created to elevate efforts to end homelessness within our State, and to ensure the structure within the agency reflected the priorities.
- *Danielle Meister, Assistant Secretary, DHCD* - I've worked with you for many years on this issue. We have a lot of shared passion and energy around ending homelessness. I believe we have the ability to get to functional zero, meaning homelessness, rare, brief, and non-recurring. Our target is reachable. This new division presents an opportunity for us to really hone in on homelessness, and to work better with our partners at the local level and the continuums of care, and take an even more aggressive inter-agency and intersectional approach. Homelessness touches every single type of household, every single sector of our work at the State - child welfare, reentry populations. Our interagency intersectoral relationships really have to be intentional and thoughtful, and look at the full range of services and resources that we have. I'm thankful to be doing this work with all of you, and what this change means for us.

IV. HUD FFY2023 Continuum of Care Program Awards

Assistant Secretary Danielle Meister, DHCD

- HUD just released the 2023 Continuum of Care awards, the primary funding source for Permanent Supportive Housing in our State in addition to funding for Rapid-Rehousing, HMIS, Coordinated Entry, Transitional-Rapid Rehousing and Street Outreach. Maryland did extremely well. Overall, across the entire State. We had an increase of 7.1 million dollars in CoC funding from HUD spread across 10 CoCs. Maryland used to have 16 CoCs, but we created a new Balance of State Coc back in 2020 where we merged several smaller suburban and rural CoCs to build capacity.
- Increase breakdown:

- HUD increased planning grants to support staffing and administrative costs for CoCs from 3 to 5%. Every CoC now additional staffing support which is critically needed to be able to do the work effectively.
- HUD increased rates for fair market rents. One of the challenges for us the last couple of years has been that the HUD Coc program is always a year or 2 behind and awarding project funding that aligns with the current.
- Maryland CoCs also scored very well overall. The Maryland Balance of State had an 18% increase in funding this year, which is one of the largest in the State, and we found out this week that we're one of the highest scoring CoCs in the nation.
- HUD Scoring Priorities:
 - CoCs are scored on whether their local housing authority establishes homeless preferences for vouchers in public housing. We only get points if at least 20% of the PHAs admissions for the year were homeless.
 - Establishing formal partnerships with early childhood care and local school districts, and health care, e.g., leveraging Medicaid or healthcare system funding.
 - System strategies on addressing the needs of people, experiencing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking.
 - Training and policy on key policy issues that HUD has reinforced over the years which includes family separation. Having anti-discrimination practices and LGBTQ2+ affirming practices within our homeless system.
 - how we rank and review projects. How we review performance
 - Key system performance measures: reducing first time homelessness, reducing average length of stay at shelters and transitional housing, exits to permanent housing, changes in income and benefits enrollment.

V. Housing and Services Partnership Accelerator Briefing

Claire Gregory, MDH

- Overview:
 - Maryland is one of nine states selected by HUD and HHS to receive 12 months of TA. The TA goal is to leverage new opportunities and flexibilities available under Medicaid, new federal housing resources, and expanded opportunities under the Older Americans Act to cover a range of services and supports that help people find, obtain, and maintain their housing. Services must benefit older adults and individuals with disabilities who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. MDH applied in coordination with DHCD and the Department of Disabilities.
- TA Medicaid Service Topics
 - Home Accessibility Modifications – Temporary or permanent changes to a home’s interior or exterior structure to improve individuals’ ability to remain in their homes and communities.
 - One-Time Community Transition Costs – Non-recurring set-up expenses for individuals transitioning from an institutional or another provider-operated congregate living arrangement (such as a group home or homeless shelter) to a community-based living arrangement in a private residence where the person is directly responsible for his or her own living expenses.
 - Housing and Tenancy Supports – Includes both pre-tenancy services, which assist individuals to prepare for and transition to housing, and tenancy sustaining supports, which are provided once an individual is housed to help the person achieve and maintain housing stability.

- Current Medicaid initiatives and priorities for accelerator:
 - We have a small pilot running right now, but we want to expand statewide and see what other services we can cover as a state. For example, one time transition costs, housing and tenancy supports, and home accessibility modifications. We are specifically focused on older adults and individuals with disabilities who are at risk for homelessness or currently experiencing homelessness. We are trying to set up a system that makes sense to bill for non-clinical providers.
 - There are a couple different waiver levers that we can use, specifically 1115 and 1915 for home and community-based services. Maryland currently has an 1115 waiver which are assistance and community integration services. It's active in Baltimore City, Montgomery, and Prince George's County
- Renee Pope, Prince George's - Considerations:
 - When you actually get at the local level, and you're a user of the bundled rate and access, and particularly in homeless systems that are using PSH as a permanent stabilization. Once someone becomes eligible for Medicare and not Medicaid, they're no longer eligible for the waiver and there's a fiduciary drop in support services. There's a need to fund the gap - when PSH's lose the bundled rate for one resident. We need to think about the complexity of population mix and population need. Looking at communities nationally to identify particularly strong and robust 1115 Waiver Programs.

VI. HUD Youth Homelessness System Improvement Grant Briefing

Suzanne Korff, DHCD

- DHCD submitted an application in mid-February for the Youth Homelessness System Improvement grant on behalf of the State of Maryland, in partnership with many of the State partners within the ICH, incubator/pilot partnerships with Prince George's County, Baltimore City and the Balance of State CoC and a large number of advocacy, foundation, and youth-serving nonprofit organizations in Baltimore City, Prince George's County and Anne Arundel County. In total, the application included 40 letters of support from partners on the grant.
- **Goal of Funding Opportunity:** To increase state and local capacity to better serve youth and create projects that are responsive to the needs of youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness in their community.
- **Maryland plan:** DHCD applied for \$2 million to develop and implement a statewide interagency plan to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness in Maryland, to:
 - Increase supportive housing and income opportunities for youth exiting state systems of care
 - Scale up family strengthening and kinship interventions
 - Broaden access to educational opportunities for youth
 - Improve Coordinated Entry and Integrate Other Systems of Care
 - Build the Capacity of Youth and Youth-Serving Organizations to Influence Systems and Provide Quality Programming

The Maryland proposal combines strategic planning between key youth-serving state agencies: MSDE, DHS, DJS, and MDH-BHS with plans to pilot a youth-centered assessment tool and coordinated entry system, and to research and scale innovative pilot projects in Baltimore City, Prince George's and the Maryland Balance of State CoCs.

VII. Maryland General Assembly 2024 Session – Key Legislation on ICH Priorities

- DHCD – Chuck Cook & Danielle Meister
 - Housing and Community Development Financing Act of 2024 (SB 483/HB 599) - Bill to build
 - Allows for “density bonuses” for qualified projects. A qualified project must have 25% affordable units within 1 mile of a rail station, or 50% affordable units and be located on former state-owned campuses or land owned by a nonprofit. The density bonus allows for middle housing in areas zoned for single-family zoning, and allows for 30% greater density in other zoning districts.
 - Comments:
 - *Renee Pope, Prince George’s County* - What definition of affordable is being used? Because there's a drastic difference between affordable and deeply affordable and affordable will not be accessible to the folks that have the highest need.
 - *Secretary Day*: DHCD also allows for income averaging so we anticipate some deeply affordable units integrated into these projects. We will continue to lean on the QAP, and our rules for financing, which has already taken into account the fact that it's difficult to produce these 30% AMI and below units, these deeply affordable units. With this bill, our expectation is that incentive plus requirement plus subsidy equals the actual production units.
 - Housing and Community Development Financing Act of 2024 (SB 483/HB 599)
 - Creates a state-sponsored Community Development Entity, the Maryland Community Investment Corporation, to receive and invest federal New Market Tax Credits. Allows use of Strategic Demolition Fund for credit enhancement and debt service on government bonds, enabling a ten-fold expansion of state investment in vacancy reduction.
 - Renters’ Rights and Housing Stabilization Act of 2024 (SB 481/HB 693)
 - Establishes an Office of Tenants’ Rights and requires a Tenants Bill of Rights summarizing existing tenant rights and remedies as an attachment to all residential leases, and increases filing surcharge from \$8 to \$93 in summary ejection cases; prohibits pass-through of surcharge to tenants. Directs revenue from surcharge increase to Maryland Legal Services Corporation (50%) and state rental voucher program (50%)
 - Prohibits evictions during defined severe weather conditions or public emergencies and extends the time between judgment and issuance of a warrant of restitution from 4 to 7 days
 - Limits lease-up costs to two-months rent by closing the “first and last month” rent loophole and limiting security deposits to a maximum of one month's rent
 - Creates statewide right of first refusal for tenants of properties with 1-4 units to purchase their home if the owner offers to sell it to a third party
 - Prioritizes half of Statewide Rental Assistance Vouchers for families with young children and pregnant individuals
 - Enhances the collection of data on eviction filings in District Court by requiring the tracking of additional information

- Just Community Designation (SB 308/HB 241)
 - Authorizes Governor, on recommendation by DHCD Secretary, to designate areas as Just Communities based on criteria including history of redlining, exclusionary zoning, high imprisonment rates, and unequal exposure to environmental or health hazards; provides for prioritization of state funding for those areas
- Appraisal Gap Funding for Homeowners (SB 704/HB 873)
 - Sponsors: Sen. Antonio Hayes (40), Del. Kym Taylor (23). Allows the direct provision of financial assistance to qualified homebuyers in historically redlined neighborhoods
- Property Tax - Tax Sales - Revisions (HB 243)
 - Requires local jurisdictions to withhold from tax sale properties where the tax owed is less than \$250 for any one year or, for owner-occupied properties, \$1,000 total, along with properties where the tax owed consists only of unpaid water or sewer charges Caps interest rates of redemption at 10% per year generally, and 6% per year for owner-occupied residential property. Prohibits an owner-occupied property from going to tax sale based on unpaid water and/or sewer bills. Prohibits taxes, interest and penalties after date of tax sale from being included in payment required to redeem property. Extends period of time during which a holder of a certificate of sale is prohibited from filing a complaint to foreclose the right of redemption. Requires written notice of actions to foreclose right of redemption to be sent to State Tax Sale Ombudsman
- Temporary Shelter Certification (SB 1107/HB 577) *Sponsors: Sen. Mary Washington (43), Del. Brooke Grossman (2B)*
 - Enables DHCD to establish a regulatory certification system with biennial renewal for all temporary shelters (emergency shelter, safe haven, transitional housing, and cold weather shelter, not including emergency management plan-related shelters) in the state to protect vulnerable residents from predatory or unsafe conditions. Focus initially on setting minimum standards for admission practices and for shelter operations that connect to life, health, safety issues. *Additional amendments being considered.*
 - Comments:
 - *Tony Koral-Evans*, consider an exemption for DV Shelters given the oversight required under other laws and funders. DV Shelters that meet the comprehensive designation have their own oversight and certification processes.
 - *Danielle Meister, DHCD*: This is under consideration in the next round of Amendments. Also looking at how all shelters can become more competent at serving households impacted by DV.
 - *Secretary Day, DHCD* - Do we have any data on examples of discrimination at DV shelters throughout the state?
 - *Tony Koral-Evans, MNDAV* - In the 4 years that I've been at the Network, there has not been a discrimination claim made at any one of our shelters. We train on discrimination and oppression at every one of our comprehensive training sessions.
 - *Dayna Mayo, DHCD*. DHCD has policies and procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of DV shelters receiving state funding. We do not share DV shelter's address even when going before the Board of Public Works. Usually the

projects that receive our funding, we put a sign up - DHCD is supporting, we don't do that for DV shelters. We require that all of our partners sign a discrimination clause.

- *Amy Kliene, Weinberg Foundation* - Will Shelter providers need/receive additional investment to meet requirements?
- *Danielle Meister, DHCD*: Shelters may need additional investment. We're aware that many shelters we fund need additional funding for capital improvements to make shelters accessible to people with disabilities. Shelters are already struggling to meet the requirements under ADA. This is also an opportunity to identify operating needs for shelters.

- Renters United Maryland - Matt Hill

- [Stout Risius Ross study results on Eviction Prevention Funds \(EPF\) in MD](#) - *The Stout Study was funded by the Abell and Casey Foundations and United Way.*
Eviction prevention funds pay 1-3 months of past due rent for families facing a short-term crisis – ensuring a missed month's rent doesn't cause homelessness.
 - Stout Risius Ross conducted a study of the need for EPF statewide -- released in December 2023.
 - Maryland has an estimated need for \$40 million in EPF to stop the eviction of 15,000 families at highest risk of homelessness in evictions
 - 15-25% of families who are evicted become homeless, and evictions now reaching pre-pandemic levels
 - Maryland is investing \$3.8 billion in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, but wrap-around services in community schools does not include housing stability support.
- Rental Assistance for Community Schools Families Program and Fund (SB 370/HB 428)
 - Creates an eviction prevention funds program for families with children in Maryland's community schools. Administered by Md. State Dept. of Education & State Dept. of Housing and Community Dev. (Sponsor working w/ advocates and agencies to refine) Mandatory allocation of \$10 million FY 26. Seeking to jumpstart in FY 25.
 - [Action Alert for Community Schools and Eviction Prevention Funds Bill](#)
- Local Enabling Legislation for Just Cause Eviction (HB 477/SB644)
 - Landlords often refused to renew leases when tenants organize for their rights or demand repairs. This bill would allow counties to adopt Just Cause laws that meet local needs, and help to protect tenants from this kind of retaliation.
 - Comment:
 - *Renee Pope, Prince George's County*: Some landlords are terminating leases due to rent caps, non-renewing to rent units at much higher rates. If a jurisdiction is doing some kind of rent stabilization, they need to do just cause for lease termination at the same time.
- The Tenant Safety Act (SB 946/SB1117)
 - Makes the rent escrow process more accessible for renters and groups of renters to hold their landlords accountable for severe conditions of disrepair that threaten life, health and safety.
- The Tenant Possessions Recovery Act (SB992/HB1114)

- Allows renting families a limited window of opportunity to collect their possessions prior to eviction. Families need notice of eviction date and 10 day reclaim period.
- [Johnson vs. Grants](#) (Federal - Supreme Court) - This case will decide whether cities are allowed to punish people for things like sleeping outside with a pillow or blanket, even when there are no safe shelter options. Narrowly focused on the 8th amendment, whether not allowing folks who sleep on the street because they have nowhere else to go constitutes cruel and unusual punishment.
 - Comments:
 - *Secretary Jake Day, DHCD*: This is a very relevant issue in Maryland. Legislation was just proposed in the Wicomico County Council to ban panhandling, stopping and standing on sidewalks and sleeping or resting in parks.
 - *Tony Koral-Evans, MNADV*: This has come up frequently amongst us with national and national conversations with other domestic violence coalitions across the country. Some States have come up with what they think is the workaround to this which is they are making homelessness illegal. and then rounding the people up and putting them in camps, and by doing that and keeping them in one government sanctioned place.
 - *Danielle Meister, DHCD*: CoCs are scored by HUD on whether their jurisdictions criminalize homelessness. All of our communities should be advocating for these laws not to exist.
- CASH Campaign – Allie Serrine
 - Creating Assets Savings and Hope- non-profit offering financial services including tax preparation and training. On the policy team we advocate for a wide range of policies that help to improve the economic security of Marylanders.
 - Earned Income Tax Credit - Individuals Without Qualifying Children - Eligibility (HB 608)
 - Increase maximum income to \$27,000 from \$17,000 with COLA adjustments each year. This would add 100,00 additional Marylanders.
 - [Fair Share for Maryland Act of 2024](#) (HB 1007/SB 766)
 - Lower taxes for more than 1.3 million Marylanders by expanding the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. Close corporate tax loopholes to ensure wealthy multinational corporations can't avoid paying state taxes. Balance our upside-down tax system and ensure millionaires pay their fair share by adding upper income tax brackets and adding a surtax on capital gains income. This bill is anticipated to raise an estimated \$1.6 billion per year in new revenue when fully phased in.
 - Unemployment Modernization Act of 2024 (HB 205/SB 104).
 - Restructures the way that Unemployment Insurance is calculated to more adequately support temporarily unemployed workers. Set the maximum weekly benefit of Unemployment Insurance to 2/3 (66%) of Maryland's Average Weekly Wage (AWW) and the minimum weekly benefit to 15% of the AWW. Adjusts the tax structure and increases the taxable wage base
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (HB 666 / SB 35)
 - State Supplement. Increases minimum monthly state SNAP benefit from \$40 to \$95. Removes minimum age requirement to be eligible for state SNAP benefit. Important for

ensuring the benefit reaches more Marylanders and provide households with enough funds to adequately pay for food

- Human Services – Food Supplement Program (Summer SNAP for Children Act) (HB 183 / SB 213).
 - Will increase the allocation in the state's Summer SNAP for Children Act amount from \$200,000 to \$500,000 to provide adequate benefits for more children and households in Maryland.
- Comptroller Bills
 - Tax Assistance for Low-Income Marylanders - Funding (HB 451/SB676)
 - Individual Tax Preparers - Code of Ethics, Notification of Actions, Enforcement, and Penalties (Stop Scam Tax Preparers Act) (HB 452/SB 675)
 - Income Tax - Individual Income Tax Credit Eligibility Awareness Campaign (HB 845/SB 1105)
- CASH co-leads the [Tax Credits for Maryland Families coalition](#)
- ICH member contributions
 - *Shawn Eum - MDVA* - HB 161 proposed to eliminate the fee associated with homeless IDs, effective date of October 1, 2024. Update on next meeting if passed.

VIII. Open Discussion – ICH Workgroup Needs and Priorities

- Members received a [draft list of workgroup options and priorities](#) to consider ahead of the meeting. The list was reviewed, and members were invited to share their perspectives on which workgroup priorities are the most urgent, and where there is already momentum and interest.
- Feedback:
 - *Amy Kleine, Weinberg Foundation*: I think supportive housing should be a focus. There is a lot of momentum and opportunity right now on this topic, and we should take advantage of that. There is also a need to focus on the service provider workforce. We can increase funding for programs, but if we don't have staff to implement the programs, they do us no good. Changing the system to increase the money going into family's pockets is going to go further than asking for more money for programs that have to be administered by people who are difficult to find and who are burning out..
 - *Brian Wainwright, Harford County*: The income and employment workgroup is doing well, and I just want to establish and acknowledge that we're building momentum and capacity. I just wanted to go on record with that. At least from my perspective here in Harper County, I wanted to make sure that we increase awareness of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access in all programming, in all aspects of life, because this is one of the things that has been falling to the wayside coming out of the pandemic.
 - *Casey Tiefenwert, MD Labor*: There a number of workforce subcommittee members on the call right now, and we certainly would like to continue our work while being more expansive, and looking at to include income more broadly. And we, you know, certainly like to see some additional agencies such as DHS represented in our group. On the piece about inclusion, diversity, equity and access, we've discussed looking for ways to weave that into all of the work groups, so that we're all within our respective topics and areas of expertise, thinking about diversity, equity, access, and inclusion.

- *Kate Farinholt, NAMI*: Whether or not there's a separate committee, every committee should be addressing certain common universal issues, and have a requirement that they consider how this impacts diversity, inclusion, etc.
- *Stephanie Brown, So Others Might Eat*: Since it is proven that when diversity, equity, and inclusion is a part of the core product, work groups, teams on policies, procedures that it improves it. If we don't have a separate committee, we need to find a way to intertwine it into the foundation for all of the other committees, and I'm willing to help out with that if I can.
- *Shannon Snow, Episcopal Housing Corporation*: We're a developer of supportive housing. I think there's an area of opportunity for really understanding from a statewide perspective all of the different programs are out there. How can we become better educated about all of the different statewide resources.
- *Renee Pope, Prince Georges County*: Are you asking for us to identify the work groups that we feel like we are most aligned with, or are you looking for us to weigh in on the prioritization for the work of the ICH for the next 12 months?
 - *Danielle Meister, DHCD*: The original request was where should we center ICH efforts, but our work groups are only as strong as our membership. If we see that members are driving towards one or two content areas, we can focus on those and maybe we work on other initiatives on the side or next year. If there's equal support for all of them, we can do our best to figure out how to make that happen, too.
- *Renee Pope, Prince Georges County*: Building on Amy's workforce comment, I've had some conversations about going upstream to the universities, particularly in youth work and looking at within the social work degree certifications that are specifically targeting the development of young people so that young people are coming out of universities with this in certain disciplines and with degrees, but also have a certification, particular line of work really targeting their internships so we're building our own pipeline of workforce. The equity, access, and inclusion are certainly a piece of it, but that has to be the lens that you look at the work through as opposed to it, and of itself being a separate body of work.

From a provider community level, the biggest lift is health and special needs. How do we make connections between the needs and the capacity of the individuals that we are so intending to serve, and the linkages that allow them to have their healthiest, best community-based outcome. We have a big gap between what is hospitalization and what is appropriate somatic and behavioral health care at the community level, and not a lot in between in terms of bandwidth and capacity - particularly for very income, strapped or no income residents in our communities. If they need assisted living, nursing homes, it requires too much money, and nobody wants to take Medicaid as the only payer. What assets do we have as a state to address this? Where do we have policies that are maybe interfering with that seamless transition? Our youth in child welfare systems are coming with much, much more complex co-occurring disorders and challenges and families are not feeling like they can sustain and support those young people in their own homes. If it can't be solved at the community level, then homeless systems are our response, and that's not trauma informed.

IX. Next ICH Meeting: June 6 - 1pm to 3pm

University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center
Outpatient Care Center Building
The Courtney Conference Center / 4th floor
255 Hospital Drive
Glen Burnie, MD 21061
Free parking is available in the lot