

**Plan to Serve Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness
with Severe Service Needs**

Draft as of 8/30/2022. This document is a work in progress and will be updated with additional information and narrative over the coming weeks.

[INTRODUCTION TO PLAN]

- CoC strategy is housing-focused, strategic, and data-informed, and person-centered and equitable
- Largest proportion of unsheltered homelessness in the CoC is in the City of Salinas

I. Leveraging Housing Resources (P-1).

[INTRODUCTION TO SECTION]

A. Landlord Recruitment (P-1.c.)

The Continuum of Care has built a multi-pronged strategy for recruiting landlords to participate in efforts to house individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The CoC's Rapid Rehousing Committee oversees efforts to develop and implement specific strategies and tasks to recruit landlords. Coordinating efforts at the CoC-level allows the CoC to better leverage resources and share best practices to ensure the CoC is recruiting landlords across the geographic region and with consideration for the variety of housing types and sizes needed to serve unhoused households in Monterey and San Benito Counties.

- CoC actively advertises for landlords through the website; provides an accessible "in" for landlords interested in participating in efforts
- Encouraging cross-agency collaboration on recruiting landlords by developing a landlord unit database (are in the process of establishing MOUs)
- City of Salinas Encampment Resolution grant provides incentives for landlords up to \$2,000 for 20 landlords as well as double security deposits
- Housing Authority of the County of Monterey is giving \$500 per unit incentives to landlords when they rent to someone moving out of homelessness
- Seeking state funding to establish a landlord mitigation fund
- Have increased housing location services, specifically for youth, through YHDP
- Providing outreach and education to landlords to inform of different programs/housing resources, inform of the benefits to working with CoC providers, and dispel myths related to homelessness; Educational materials would be useful to the recruitment and education of potential landlords and incentivize involvement by explaining how to access program funding and case manager support if tenant issues arise

The CoC relies on data to evaluate and update landlord recruitment strategies. The CoC regularly collects qualitative feedback from housing locators and rapid rehousing providers regarding the

effectiveness of messaging to recruit landlords, effectiveness of incentives, and remaining challenges in recruiting landlords. In addition, the CoC tracks outputs and outcomes for different recruitment strategies, including tracking the number of new and returning landlords engaged through incentive programs and the number of landlords proactively contacting the CoC for more information. Through education and outreach opportunities with landlords, the CoC collects additional data from landlords regarding remaining concerns and barriers impacting their ability or willingness to participate in CoC housing programs.

II. Current Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (P-3.)

[INTRODUCTION TO SECTION]

A. Current Street Outreach Strategy (P-3.a.)

The Continuum of Care has expanded outreach capacity throughout the region over the past three years. Outreach in Monterey and San Benito Counties occurs daily, during the hours of [FILL IN]. [ADD IN INFORMATION REGARDING SPECIFIC FOCI OF DIFFERENT OUTREACH PROGRAMS].

As new programs have launched, the CoC has led efforts to facilitate opportunities for outreach agencies to align and coordinate efforts. Beginning in 2022, the CoC began hosting a monthly Outreach Coordination meeting. These meetings provide the opportunity for outreach programs to learn about one another to understand specific services or expertise of each program; identify existing gaps or needs in the collective outreach system; and troubleshoot issues that have emerged.

The CoC is in the process of developing operational standards for outreach programs. These standards will provide a common set of expectations for outreach programs to adhere to while maintaining their individual niches in populations served or services offered. The operational standards for outreach programs will provide guidelines and expectations related to guiding principles for outreach programs, such as remaining trauma-informed and housing-oriented; the structure of engagement and service standards, including information regarding engaging with participants on private versus public property and the types of services and resources provided through outreach; participant rights, privacy, and safety; program- and agency-level standards, such as developing safety protocols, incorporating client feedback, and measuring program performance; and working with other systems agencies, including service providers, the coordinated entry system, law enforcement, or public works.

- Increased outreach capacity through various providers, with individual program niches; includes California State University Monterey Bay - Community Health Engagement; Dorothy's Place; Interim, Inc.; Community Homeless Solutions; Community Human Services; and Salinas Outreach & Response Team
- Housing Navigation Services have been incorporated into street outreach practices to better connect unsheltered households to the housing system

- Joint outreach sessions during PIT
- Coordinate resources and support through outreach for encampment areas targeted for clean-up
- Expectation to connect to Coordinated Assessment and Referral System (CARS)
- City of Salinas expanded the outreach team to include peer outreach by people with lived experience of homelessness
- CHSP, as the Collaborative Applicant, incorporated responsibilities for the CoC Manager surrounding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the Continuum of Care.

B. Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Shelter and Temporary Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (P-3.b.)

Outreach engagements can vary from household to household. Whenever possible, outreach teams aim to connect individuals and households they engage with temporary or permanent accommodations.

Over the past three years, spurred by the pandemic and the need to provide non-congregate shelter spaces for people experiencing homelessness, specifically to protect the health and well-being of people who were medically fragile.

- Project Roomkey moved people from referral to hotel/non-congregate room with wraparound services to permanent housing
- Project Roomkey was successful in part because of the partnerships involved in providing wraparound services such as crisis case management and housing navigation
- Project Roomkey was also successful because there was a path into permanent housing through Homekey projects
- Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) provided resources to move individuals from encampments into temporary housing (Project Roomkey, hotels, emergency shelters) and then into permanent housing
- ERF focused on providing access to temporary and permanent housing and services to households in an entire encampment, then bringing in resources to restore the area
- ERF brings in partners from both the homelessness and environmental systems to work collaboratively to resolve encampments through a common strategy
- Additional efforts are examining how to better serve individuals who are undocumented who are living in encampments
- CoC hosted a training on housing first and providing low barrier shelter access

The CoC continues to seek resources to expand non-congregate interim housing units in the community.

To support emergency shelters and interim housing programs to align with a housing first approach, the CoC led efforts to develop operational standards for shelters. **[ADD IN INFORMATION ABOUT GUIDELINES INCLUDED IN OPERATIONAL STANDARDS]**. The operational standards for emergency shelters were adopted by the CoC's Leadership Council in June 2022.

- Community Homeless Solutions received a Pet Assistance and Support (PAS) Program grant from the State to provide shelter services and support for people with pets (i.e., identifying specific barriers and finding remedies)
- Updated outreach materials, translating them into multiple languages
- Outreach to people in encampments led to referrals to Emergency Housing Vouchers

C. Current Strategy to Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Permanent Housing for Individuals and Families Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (P-3.c.)

All of the CoC's efforts work in pursuit of assisting all households experiencing homelessness to access permanent housing. In addition to ensuring households staying in interim and transitional housing programs have a clear path to permanent housing, the CoC is also working to develop pathways to permanent housing directly from unsheltered locations.

- CoC has increased rapid rehousing resources
- Integration of housing navigation with outreach, including outreach to encampments
- Using critical services, such as medical services, during outreach to establish rapport and assist in taking the next steps to enroll someone in CARS or otherwise assist them in accessing permanent housing
- CoC hosted a training on housing first and providing low barrier shelter access

III. Updating the CoC's Strategy to Identify, Shelter, and House Individuals Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness with Data and Performance (P-4.)

The Continuum of Care works continuously to enhance and expand data collection efforts for the purpose of improving program and system performance. To understand how to improve system efficacy and efficiency, the CoC, with the assistance of consultants at Focus Strategies, used a System-Wide Analytics and Projection (SWAP) tool to model options for transforming the system, using existing baseline data; enabled the CoC to better understand how investments in certain types of housing interventions can affect our ability to address homelessness, including unsheltered homelessness.

The CoC encourages providers to incorporate the expertise of people with lived experience of homelessness by collecting data from current and program participants and using these data to identify opportunities for program improvement. People with lived experience assisted with the design and implementation of the 2022 Point-in-Time Count.

The CoC engaged the Monterey Institute of International Studies to conduct a coordinated entry evaluation in June 2022.

The CoC developed HMIS reports to track and report on program and system outcomes, which launched publicly in Summer 2022.

For Street Outreach:

- Outreach is improving their ability to enter timely data into HMIS by using tablets in the field
- All outreach teams receive a monthly data report card for coordinated entry to enable them to correct any data errors

For Low-Barrier Shelter and Temporary Accommodations:

- Have integrated and started publishing performance targets for different types of housing; for transitional housing and emergency shelters, are tracking entries from literal homelessness, length of stay, and exits to permanent housing.

For Permanent Housing:

- Have integrated and started publishing performance targets for different types of housing; for permanent housing – rapid rehousing, are tracking entries from literal homelessness, length of stay, and exits to permanent housing.
- Are tracking across the system the number of households accessing permanent housing through rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing

IV. Identify and Prioritize Households Experiencing or with Histories of Unsheltered Homelessness (P-5.)

The Continuum of Care is dedicated to implementing strategies and processes that reduce unsheltered homelessness across the region.

Under this funding competition, project applications are scored, in part, on their alignment with this Plan and on their ability to reduce unsheltered homelessness effectively and equitably.

- Outreach providers are collaborating to align approaches, ensure coverage across the region
- Participation with CARS (Coordinated entry)
- CSUMB – Community Health Engagement provides comprehensive integrative wellness and supportive services to people experiencing homelessness
- Have incorporated housing navigation services into outreach

V. Involving Individuals with Lived Experience of Homelessness in Decision Making – Meaningful Outreach (P-6.)

- City of Salinas incorporated peer partners into their street outreach teams
- CHSP opened two positions for people with lived experience to join the CoC Board
- People with lived experience assisted with the design and implementation of the 2022 Point-in-Time Count

- People with lived experience were recruited to participate in the Review Panel for the 2022 CoC NOFO competitions

VI. Supporting Underserved Communities and Supporting Equitable Community Development (P-7.)

- Strategy for undocumented individuals and migrant workers
 - Remove barriers to temporary housing
 - Identify local and flexible sources of funding to provide housing subsidies
 - Expand the supply of farmworker housing available
 - Strengthen connections between the homelessness response system and programs providing legal and other services for immigrants
- Strategy for youth
 - Refine coordinated entry process to ensure young people have consistent points of contact through the process, revise the process to integrate problem solving and more strengths-based and equity-focused questions, update the prioritization process to improve rates of referral for young people
 - Expand inventory of housing options tailored to young people
 - Improve coordination between homelessness response system and systems of care serving youth
- Strategy for chronic homelessness
 - Expand permanent supportive housing supply
 - Build partnerships between the homelessness response system and behavioral health systems; leverage Medicaid funds
 - Invest in programs, such as SOAR, that connect people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to mainstream benefits
- Strategy for re-entry population
 - Housing-focused re-entry programs
 - Develop diversion strategies to prevent those experiencing homelessness from entering jail
 - Lowering barriers to shelter and ensuring adequate inventory of shelter beds that can accept people with felony convictions
 - Expand and enrich pre-release services, with a particular focus on housing planning
- CoC offered several trainings on Authentic Youth Engagement, Adultism, Understanding Power and Power Sharing, Empathy Mapping and Targeted Universalism: Embedding Equity Into System Design