

# Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

## Coordinated Entry Meeting, February 24, 2021, 8:30 AM Online meeting

### ATTENDEES:

- Chris Brzovic, **CVOEO**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**
- Louise Masterson, **ICA**
- Linda Amante, **CVOEO**
- Thomas Moore, **UVMCMC**
- Madeline, **COTS**
- Steve Lunna, **UVM @ SSVF**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Will Towne, **Spectrum**
- Christina Brown, **Spectrum**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard Center**
- Elizabeth Kannard, **CHCB, Safe Harbor**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard**
- Marcella Gange, **CEDO**

**DRAFT**

Send corrections to  
[edacosta@vhfa.org](mailto:edacosta@vhfa.org)

### UPDATES

- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: We're rolling out a comprehensive CE training. We're holding that at CHRC meetings.
- There were 22 new CARES vouchers allocated to Chittenden County, exclusively for families. We've already identified those referrals and made those assignments.

### HMIS TRAINING & PIT COUNT

- Louise Masterson/ ICA: On Monday March 1, we're holding a required Coordinated Entry data elements training (via webinar). These are the new data elements that HUD is now requiring. We hope everyone signs up for the webinar. It will also be recorded and available on the ICA site.
- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: Do you know if there will be an ability to report on people in the CE process who are not HMIS (like DV clients)?
  - Meghan Morrow Raftery/ ICA: I'm not sure. You can put an AAQ to HUD about this.
- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: Regarding the PIT Count, Louise and I had a call with the COTS team about who was in the motel system on the night of the PIT Count. We have a list

from ESD. These people have to be tagged manually in HMIS. I wonder if anyone else has been working with ESD lists on this?

- Will Towne/ Spectrum: First I've heard of it.
- Elizabeth Kannard/ Safe Harbor: I have not heard from ESD about this.
- Chris Brzovic: I was told that each individual agency would be tagging their own clients in HMIS.
- Linda Amante/ CVOEO: I believe Adam and Kelt at the Holiday Inn were tagging our CVOEO clients. And I believe they're done.
  - Chris Brzovic: So the COTS & the CVOEO clients are done which doesn't leave a large number remaining. We just need to figure out who wasn't working with either of those agencies. I'll try to figure out who constitutes this group.
  - Marcella Gange/ CEDO: If you need any support around this, let me know.

## Re-definitions and reconsideration of prioritization

- Chris Brzovic: Regarding Category 4 Households — this discussion will be postponed until we have a STEPS representative here. Do we want to include Category 4 households in Coordinated Entry? And if we do, how do we prioritize them? The HUD definition of Category 4 households is households that are fleeing domestic violence that do not have anywhere else to go and have no other resources.
- Another question that has come up is around the definition of families. Currently we know that if there are children in the household with adults, that's considered a family but the complication arises when there are custody issues, children not living presently in a household but who may arrive, partial custody, sometimes the children are not homeless but want to be housed with the currently homeless parent, and also pregnant, expectant mothers. How these households are counted in the PIT count will differ from how we handle them. In BoS in the case of partial custody, for C.E., they decided to consider them a family. The challenge I see is entering children into HMIS as homeless when the child is not with the homeless parent. It's an open question.
  - Stephen Marshall: It sounds like we need a category of "child not present."
  - Chris Brzovic: We need more clarity about ESD rules and housing provider rules.

## PREVENTION

- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: Two projects:
  - We want to develop a process for screening and prioritizing for prevention assistance.
  - We also have a longer term project of learning the causes or determinants of homelessness. I know there's a survey developed by the Strategic Planning committee to help determine causes.
    - What would you like to focus on right now?
- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: Kevin Pounds did have an intern do some testing of the draft survey **(the survey is included in these minutes below)** and it seemed to work fairly

well. An important point: the data collected is specifically to formulate strategies and seek funding for retention of housing.

- Chris Brzovic: Margaret, do you feel the survey was complete and finished or does it need more refining?
  - Margaret Bozik: I believe it was ready to be used.
  - Chris Brzovic: My main concern is adding to an already very lengthy intake process.
  - Margaret Bozik: Maybe this comes later in the process, it's not asked of everyone but randomized sample and maybe they get an incentive for participating.
  - Chris Brzovic: Great ideas. So we need to figure out how to develop a randomized sample.
    - Meghan Morrow Raftery/ ICA: We could develop a report for you around this.
  - Chris Brzovic: Let's start offering this survey to some consumers and then eventually build it into our standard assessment.
  - Margaret Brzovic: Let's add the question Marcella suggestion: **did the pandemic contribute to your loss of housing?**
  - Margaret Bozik: Let's leave the final framing of the questions to Chris so we can get something finalized, does everyone agree?
    - General: Yes.
  - Chris Brzovic: We also need to figure out where the incentive monies would come from.
    - Margaret Bozik: It can come out of the CCHA budget.

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## **CONSUMER SURVEY** (answers are mostly yes/no)

We know that \_\_\_\_ people have lost their housing in this community in the last \_\_\_\_.  
We want to ask you some questions to try to help the community come up with better ways to help people keep their housing. There are all sorts of reasons why people may lose their housing and we'd like to hear what it was like for you.

(Estimated time to complete: \_\_\_\_ minutes)

Why did you leave the place you were staying most recently?

I left because of a court-ordered eviction

I left because I got a formal written notice to vacate from landlord

I left because I lost my subsidy

a. How would you describe the reason why you lost your subsidy?

I left because I was told I had to by family, friend or host that I was doubling-up with

I left an institution or system of care (i.e., hospital, jail, treatment facility, etc.) and didn't have housing to go to

I left because I didn't have enough money to continue to pay for a hotel or motel

I left because I didn't feel safe staying where I was

I left because I didn't feel comfortable staying where I was

Other, please describe:

**We'd like to know a little more about the reasons why you left your most recent housing situation. I'm going to read a list of possible reasons to see if any of them feel true to you.**

1. I couldn't pay rent because I just didn't have enough money to cover it.

a. Was lack of money to pay rent a temporary situation (for example, because you lost a job or had a sudden increase in expenses) or was it an ongoing situation (for example, because housing is just too expensive)?

2. I couldn't pay rent because I had too many demands on my money and wasn't able to make payment of rent and utilities the most important thing.

a. What were some of the other things you needed to pay for?

3. I lost my housing for reasons other than not paying rent.

a. How would you describe those reasons?

4. I didn't go through a court eviction, but I lost my housing because my landlord refused to renew my lease.

a. Did your landlord give you a reason for not renewing your lease?

If so, what was the reason:

5. I think I was treated differently because of my race or color or age or sex or religion or disability or because I have children or because I have a voucher:

6. It was too stressful to try to deal with the situation I was in so I walked away:

7. I had a relationship that broke down:

8. I was having trouble getting along with the people I was staying with or with neighbors:

9. I lost my housing for other reasons - please describe:

**We'd like to know if you think anything might have helped you to keep your housing. I'm going to read a list of things to see if you think they might have helped.**

1. It would have helped to have a lawyer or someone else available to help me talk with my landlord or the person/people I was staying with:

2. It would have helped to have someone I trust available to talk with about the situation:
3. It would have helped to have money to pay back rent or utilities:
  - a. Did you ask for help with paying back rent or utilities in the last year?
  - b. Were you refused help with back rent or utility payments in the last year?
4. It would have helped to have budgeting or financial counseling available:
  - a. Have you sat down with someone in the past to talk about budgeting or financial counseling?
5. Is there anything I haven't mentioned that you think might have helped you keep your housing?
6. In the past, were there things that helped you to keep your housing? If so, what were they?

Would you be willing to sit down with someone to talk more about the process of losing your housing?

**Beta testing questions:**

- How did it feel to answer these questions?
- Was there language that was offensive to you or that made you feel bad?
- If I wanted to understand your experience, would it have been better to let you tell your story without questions?

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**Next meeting: 4/28**