

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

MS Teams Virtual Meeting and Teleconference

Monday, June 21, 2021

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Council Attendees:

Mr. Scott Morishige	Chair
Mr. Harold Brackeen III	Administrator of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Homeless Programs Office
Ms. Allicyn Tasaka for	Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)
Ms. Yara Sutton for	Director of the Department of Health (DOH)
Mr. Tommy Johnson for	Director of the Department of Public Safety (PSD)
Mr. Francis Keeno for	Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
Ms. Cynthia Rezendes for	Chair of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)
Ms. Nina Ki for	Chair of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Ms. Toby Portner for	Director of the Department of Education (DOE)
Ms. Melissa Lewis for	Department of the Attorney General (AG)
Rep. Ryan Yamane for	Hawaii State House of Representatives
Sen. Joy San Buenaventura for	Hawaii State Senate
Ms. Lori Tshako for	Mayor of the County of Maui
Mr. Anton Krucky for	Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu
Ms. Ashton Varner for	Mayor of the County of Kauai
Mr. Mark Chandler	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning & Development Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Mr. Hakim Ouansafi	Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Ms. Brandee Menino	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu
Ms. Laura Thielen	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Ms. Melody Lopez	Continuum of Care for the County of Maui
Ms. Maude Cumming	Continuum of Care for the County of Maui
Mr. Dave Rolf	Business Community Representative
Pastor David Kaneshiro	Faith-Based Community Representative

Absent:

Department of Human Services (DHS); Department of Defense (DOD); Mayor of the County of Hawaii; Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Staff:

Mr. Justin Limasa, Homelessness Assistant; Mr. Jason Kasamoto, Homelessness Special Assistant and Public Affairs; Ms. Emma Grochowsky, Homelessness Community Development Specialist; Ms. Cheryl Bellisario, Administrative Assistant; Mr. Daniel Quinn, MSW Practicum Student; Ms. Lili Young, Deputy Attorney General

Special Guests:

Ms. Heather Henderson, Focalize Change (Collaborative Quality Consulting).

- I. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll.** Roll was taken and there was a quorum established with 22 out of 27 members. The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by the Chair.

Chair Morishige welcomed everyone and reviewed several general housekeeping items related to the virtual teleconference platform. Attendees were asked to keep their device on 'mute' unless speaking, and members were asked to notify staff when leaving the meeting. The Chair explained that voting will be conducted via a general voice vote unless otherwise specified, and members should vote verbally or using the chat feature. The Chair reminded attendees that the meeting will be recorded and will be available at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov>.

Ms. Sutton entered the meeting at 10:05 a.m. and quorum was revised to reflect 23 out of 27 members.

- II. **Overview and Approval of Agenda.** The Chair presented the agenda for review and requested a motion to move items VIII.a. and VIII.b. to follow public testimony. Ms. Tshako moved and Ms. Menino seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Approval of Minutes.** The Chair reminded members that the March 15, 2020, meeting minutes were available electronically. The Chair provided time for members to review the minutes and asked if there were any additions or corrections.

Mr. Ouansafi moved and Sen. San Buenaventura seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Seeing no additions or corrections at this time, the Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

- IV. **Public Testimony.** Chair Morishige opened the floor to public testimony. There was none.

- V. **General Announcements.**

A. Chairperson and Staff Reports: April / May / June 2021

The Chair noted that, since the last Council meeting, HUD has made Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) available through the American Rescue Plan Act to Public Housing Authorities. PHAs must work with their respective Continua of Care to establish a referral process through the Coordinated Entry System (CES). All local PHAs have communicated that they will accept their allocations, and the Hawaii Public Housing Authority and the County of Hawaii have requested additional vouchers.

The Chair explained that the EHVs provide an unprecedented influx of permanent housing resources for people who are experiencing homelessness and will keep the Council informed of developments in this process.

In addition, the Hawaii State Legislature passed HB1376 CD1, Relating to Landlord-Tenant Code, which is intended to mitigate some of the impacts of the ending of the eviction moratorium. The period of notice of termination of a rental agreement has been extended from five days to fifteen days and requires landlords to engage in mediation and delay filing until after mediation. The bill also provides specific parameters for the time frame within which landlords can file eviction cases based on how much rent is owed. State funds will also be appropriated to the counties to support enhanced mediation needs.

The Chair highlighted several examples of continued outreach coordination to address unsheltered homelessness, including joint outreach meetings with providers on Oahu and Kauai, regional outreach focus groups, ongoing enhancement of State law enforcement outreach coordination, development of the City & County of Honolulu's Crisis Outreach Response & Engagement (CORE) program, and ongoing partnerships between homeless outreach and Crisis Mobile Outreach providers. During the pandemic, many community members have noticed a rise in visible homelessness, and many people who accessed "daytime" shelters that were temporarily closed during the pandemic (such as public libraries, public spaces, etc.) also contributed to perception of increased homelessness.

Director Krucky added that the Mayor's Office of Housing and Homelessness will be giving a presentation at the September 2021 regular meeting on the development of CORE.

The Chair summarized the four performance benchmarks used to evaluate the implementation of the Hawaii State Framework to Address Homelessness:

- **Count:** 6,458 people (2020 PIT Count), 1,398 people (2021 PIT Count – Sheltered Only)
 - No unsheltered PIT Count in 2021 due to COVID-19, but Continua of Care are looking at other ways to count people experiencing homelessness and accessing homeless programs.
 - The CoCs are tasked by HUD to conduct the annual PIT Counts.
 - The 2021 sheltered count shows an overall decrease of 318 fewer people in shelter compared to the prior year, which the number of people in emergency shelters remained flat. The decrease in persons in transitional shelters can be partially attributed to the shifting of transitional shelter beds to emergency shelter beds.
 - The PIT Count also does not reflect homeless individuals in isolation/quarantine, hospitals, jails, or programs that do not report to the CoC.
- **Bed Capacity:** 3,964 beds (2021 HIC inventory)
 - Emergency shelter bed inventory has increased 33% (580 beds) between 2019-2021.
 - Transitional shelter beds have steadily decreased, reflecting a change in federal, state, and county funding and policy.
- **Housing Placements:** 55% statewide (May 2021)
 - Housing placements continued at a high rate even during the pandemic.
 - Rate of housing placement remained level between 2019 and 2021.
 - The implementation of new programs like Oahu Housing Now have had a positive impact on housing placement rates on Oahu.
- **Length of Stay:** 210 days
 - Length of stay in emergency shelters fluctuates by island but tends to be longer on Oahu and Hawaii island. Maui data for 2021 may reflect the conversion of transitional beds to emergency shelter beds
 - The Chair noted that the 24-day length of stay in Kauai emergency shelters may be considered an outlier.
 - Length of state may be impacted by limited housing inventory and housing resources.

The complete packet has been provided to members and will be available online at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov>.

B. Written Reports from Council Members.

The following written updates were provided for the Council's consideration and review:

- *Department of Human Services, Homeless Programs Office*
- *Department of Health*
- *Department of Labor & Industrial Relations*
- *Department of Public Safety*
- *Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism*
- *Department of Hawaiian Home Lands*
- *Department of Defense*
- *Office of Hawaiian Affairs*

- *Department of the Attorney General*
- *Department of Education*
- *Hawaii State House of Representatives*
- *Hawaii State Senate*
- *Hawaii Public Housing Authority*
- *County of Hawaii*
- *County of Kauai*
- *County of Maui*
- *City & County of Honolulu*
- *Continuum of Care for Oahu, Partners in Care*
- *Continuum of Care for Hawaii Island*
- *Continuum of Care for Maui*
- *Continuum of Care for Kauai*
- *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*
- *U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs*
- *Faith-based community*
- *Business community*

VI. **New Business.**

- a. **Discussion regarding the Year Two and Year Three evaluations of the Ohana Zone initiative, including updates on efforts related to permanent housing and expanding emergency shelter capacity during the pandemic.**

Presentation by Ms. Heather Henderson, Focalize Change (formerly Collaborative Quality Consulting).

Ms. Henderson described the Active Implementation Framework, a model of implementation science, to organize the goal of ending homelessness into measurable stages. The State's Ohana Zone evaluation is currently in the second full year and is in the "full implementation" stage. Ms. Henderson noted that the measurements of number of people experiencing homelessness, exits to permanent housing and time to placement, and housing inventory contribute to a wholesome understanding of the impacts of the Ohana Zone initiative and the State's efforts to restructure homeless service contracts. Ms. Henderson also noted that each metric alone is fallible and may not provide a comprehensive picture of the progress that has been made.

Ms. Henderson recapped some of the highlights of the Year One evaluation, including the

housing-focused solutions and the reinvestment in the Housing First model. The findings from Year One have been used to inform HICH priorities going into 2020, and much of the statewide response to the pandemic was based on the tenets of the Active Implementation Framework. In some respects, the COVID-19 pandemic created the opportunity for providers and stakeholders to act quickly and find creative solutions for those in need.

Ms. Henderson noted other developments that have taken place, including the process of creating a fiscal map that can identify the amount of State and local investment in homeless services. Ms. Henderson praised the providers and practitioners who engage in this work and remarked that people experiencing homelessness have often fallen through the cracks of other systems that were intended to support them.

Ms. Henderson highlighted many of the Ohana Zone programs that were able to pivot and expand during the COVID-19 pandemic, often with the support of volunteer efforts and other stakeholders going above and beyond their normal duties. All of these efforts contributed to Hawaii maintaining the lowest rate of COVID-19 in the United States.

Finally, Ms. Henderson previewed some of the focus areas for the Year Three evaluation, including: competencies, infrastructure, performance, sustainability, and success stories.

Mr. Krucky left the meeting at 11:20 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 22 out of 27 members present.

VII. **Continuing Business.**

a. **Discussion regarding the use of federal funding to address homelessness through Emergency Solutions Grant and other federal programs related to the pandemic.**

Presentation by Ms. Laura Thielen.

Ms. Thielen provided a brief update on the reallocation of one Oahu CoC program with HUD. The process is ongoing.

Ms. Thielen highlighted some of the key partnerships that have led to the success of the Oahu Housing Now program, one of the City & County of Honolulu's ESG-CV programs. In addition to the partnerships with providers, volunteer groups, businesses, and the military have contributed in-kind donations to OHN households.

Ms. Thielen explained that the OHN program has developed relationships with over 60 new landlords, which has helped the project to identify units in the community. Recent media efforts have also led directly to interest in the project, with a story in the Star-Advertiser leading to over 25 direct calls to the program and two new housing placements within the same week. Rental assistance is only one component of the program. Case management and other wraparound services will help households find ways to sustain their housing or potentially move on to other programs.

The OHN program has housed 83 households (over 200 individuals) so far, which include people experiencing homelessness and people fleeing domestic violence. The average number of days from program referral to enrollment is six days, and the average number of days from enrollment to being housed is sixteen days.

Ms. Thielen shared some of the OHN participant demographics, which largely reflect the makeup of the community. PIC will continue to monitor these demographics and use the information to support fair housing and anti-discrimination initiatives. OHN is still seeking to identify another

250+ units for new participants, as well as transition options for those who need ongoing interventions.

The Chair recognized Ms. Thielen's leadership of the OHN program and highlighted the importance of the partnerships with providers that have made the program so successful. In particular, the separation of case management from property management has been one of highlights of the OHN program and is a model that has been incorporated into the State's homeless housing contracts. The Chair also shared that the online dashboard with updates regarding the OHN program can be found on the PIC website at: <https://www.partnersincareoahu.org/dashboards-ohn>.

Presentation by Ms. Maude Cumming.

Ms. Cumming provided a walk-through of Bridging the Gap's online dashboards, which can be broken down by county and program type. The funding and expenses data for ESG-CV programs is current through May 2021. The online dashboard is found on the BTG website at: <https://www.btghawaii.org/esg-cv/>.

The CoC has taken significant steps to maximize permanent housing placements, given that the ESG-CV funds are time-limited and are a one-time opportunity. Each island has made significant progress toward achieving this goal.

- b. **Update from Community Development Specialist Emma Grochowsky on fiscal mapping efforts, including an overview of federal, state, and local funding streams to address homelessness.**

Presentation by Ms. Emma Grochowsky.

Ms. Grochowsky presented an updated breakdown of government-funded homeless programs and services by geographic region (county). Programs included "core" homeless services funded by HUD, State, and County funds, excluding COVID-specific programs.

Overall, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing make up the largest percentage of homeless programs funded by government entities, reaffirming government funders' commitment to providing both long-term housing solutions and immediate access points and low-barrier places for people to receive immediate shelter. Funding allocations are impacted by a number of indicators, including funding priorities, local geographic needs, and availability of complementary mainstream resources or private funding.

GCH will continue to track changes in government funding allocations, as several programs are currently in the process of beginning new contracts and funding amounts may shift slightly. Future additions to the map will attempt to include philanthropic funding and one-time COVID-19 funding through the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan Act. More information regarding the homelessness fiscal map is available online at: <https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/hich-reports/>.

Question and Answer

Ms. Cumming asked for clarification on the definition of "permanent supportive housing" and the target population used in this compilation.

- Ms. Grochowsky explained that each CoC's CES may prioritize chronically homeless households for permanent supportive housing, but programs funded with State or non-HUD funds may provide some flexibility to offer the resource to households who do not meet the HUD definition of chronically homeless, but have a documented need. GCH

included any programs that provide long-term leases and supportive services to participants in this category, with the understanding that HUD categories sometimes do not capture the specific details of each program.

VIII. **Permitted Interaction Group.**

- a. **Report and discussion of the permitted interaction group established pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (H.R.S.) §92-2.5 to review and recommend potential revisions to the ten-year strategic plan to end homelessness, and the Hawaii State Framework to Address Homelessness.**

Chair Morishige provided additional updates from the permitted interaction group, which is continuing its process of soliciting feedback and refining development of the draft ten-year plan. Initial feedback received over the past six months underscores the need to:

- Create additional spaces for collaboration and sector innovations, such as that demonstrated through the Ohana Zone initiatives;
- Expedite identification of land and development of facilities – not just for housing, but also for treatment and to maintain current shelter capacity; and
- Address the intersection between the criminal justice system and homelessness, particularly related to re-entry.

The Chair added that the draft ten-year plan will also emphasize the need to strengthen in the capacity of our housing-focused system, including the integration of a clear housing focus into different aspects of the homelessness system.

IX. **Executive Session**

Pursuant to H.R.S. §92-7(a), the Council may, when deemed necessary, hold an Executive Session on any agenda item without the written public notice if the Executive Session was not anticipated in advance. Any such Executive Session shall be held pursuant to H.R.S. §92-4 and shall be limited to those items described in H.R.S. §92-5(a). Discussions held in Executive Session are closed to the public.

The Chair stated that an Executive Session is not necessary at this time.

X. **Topics for Upcoming Meetings**

The Chair asked members to contact his office with additional suggestions for upcoming meetings. The office can be reached at 586-0193 or by e-mail at gov.homelessness@hawaii.gov.

XI. **Meeting Schedule**

The following Council meetings are proposed for the 2021 calendar year:

- Monday, September 20, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 20, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The Chair noted that future meetings may be held in person, in accordance with the end of the Emergency Proclamation.

XII. **Adjourn**

Chair Morishige entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Ms. Tsuhako and seconded by Mr. Ouansafi. The Chair called for the question. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Minutes prepared by:

Emma Grochowsky
Homelessness Community Development Specialist

Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at their Regular Meeting on September 20, 2021.

As Presented As Amended

Scott S. Morishige, MSW
Chair

Date

DRAFT