

Oahu Outreach-Emergency Shelter Provider Meeting
June 24th, 2021

Call to Order/Client Success Stories

- The Honolulu Star-Advertiser ran a story last week on the importance of having landlords who are willing to work with our homeless housing programs. The story featured one recently housed tenant who had been assessed by I.H.S. outreach last year, and had eventually come to the HONU, where he was identified off of the OHN pre-referral list for unsheltered clients. This older adult was transitioned to Next Step Shelter on the same day his name came up on the OHN pre-referral list, and within a couple weeks, he was stably housed through OHN!

Government Agency/CoC Updates

- City & County of Honolulu – Mayor’s Office of Housing
 - Welcome to Jasmin (Jay) Rodriguez and Ray L’Heureux, who have just joined the HOU team! We look forward to meeting and working with you.
- VA
 - Still waiting from guidance from national level regarding HUD/VASH changes to eligibility. Will keep everyone posted.
- DOE
 - YES Outreach is continuing to go out across Oahu. Please connect with Toby or your local liaison if you are interested in partnering.
 - Link to list of DOE liaisons: <http://bit.ly/HILiaisons>
- PIC
 - OHN Housing Fairs are ongoing, but as a reminder, they are set up to accommodate those who have been pre-qualified for OHN. Some people have attended the fairs but are not on the BNL.
 - PIC/OHN staff have limited capacity to assist those without an appointment due to the volume of pre-referrals, but will make every effort to connect walk-ins to the appropriate outreach provider.

Presentations and Discussion

- Project Vision Hawaii Vaccination and Testing Updates – Darrah Kauhane
 - COVID-19 delta variant has made its way to Hawaii and is much more dangerous and contagious.
 - PVH is suggesting each shelter strongly encourage vaccination OR monthly testing for guests.
 - Each shelter should keep track of staff and client COVID-19 vaccination status and offer COVID-19 education consistently to ensure monthly testing, safe practices, and eventually vaccinations.
 - PVH has a location each day that you can bring clients to test or vaccinate – please sign up to use your shelter as a pod with Darrah or Laura.
 - Call PVH at (808) 201-3937 and dial extension 1 for Oahu.
 - Shelters may also reach Darrah directly at (808) 306-4406 or Laura at (808) 859-3610.
 - **HPO-funded emergency and transitional shelters will receive a notification with this information from HPO staff.*

- Even if your facility is not funded by HPO or if you already have an established partnership with another medical program, please review this information provided by PVH and discuss next steps with your respective partners and funders.
- I.H.S. Sumner shelter is offering weekly vaccinations at 8 a.m., and they are open to all clients.
- Tax Filing and Child Tax Credit + Economic Impact Payments – Leanne Adams
 - There have been some changes to the Child Tax Credit for tax year 2021, which allow households to receive the credit in advance.
 - There have been several other changes to eligibility and the amount households can receive per child.
 - If you have filed your 2020 taxes, monthly payments of the advance CTC for 2021 will begin in July.
 - Unlike the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit is fully refundable, meaning that even those who have no taxable income can receive the refund.
 - People who have not filed their 2020 tax returns should be encouraged to do so!
 - Encourage clients to set up a bank account or other method to receive their refunds.
 - People who will not owe taxes can file late without having to pay a penalty.
 - Additional training and informational resources will be available in July, thanks to the help of Leanne and other local volunteers.
- Fidelity Bonding Program – Maricar Pilotin-Freitas, DLIR
 - The Fidelity Bonding Program is designed to incentivize employers to hire applicants who have criminal records, with the assurance that there will be a temporary insurance bond that can reimburse the employer if the employee commits a work-related crime (e.g. theft, embezzlement, fraud, etc.).
 - DLIR has received some additional funds to support this program, and wants to help get the word out to providers who work with clients who could benefit.
 - There is no cost to the employer to participate in this program.
 - Homeless service providers who hire ex-offenders can use this benefit. There is no requirement for the number of hours worked. The American Job Centers can assist with walking you through this process.
 - The program is available regardless of the types of offenses an individual has been convicted of in the past, as long as an employer wants to hire them.
 - The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is also available to employers who hire convicted felons and disabled veterans.
 - More information about the WOTC: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdd/home-old/employers/wotc/>

Provider Updates

- HONU
 - Between both sites, there are around 60+ people. Staff are working hard to match guests with shelters but sometimes there are challenges with waiting for shelters to give clearance for the referral and the person loses their spot on the shelter's wait list.
 - HONU can follow up with individual shelters and hopes to develop a streamlined process as spaces open up in the existing emergency shelter programs.

- HHHRC
 - Mobile Medical Unit is starting to get on a regular schedule, and will be in Chinatown on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
 - Outreach is ramping up engagement in regions 1 and 6.
- I.H.S.
 - Emphasize the importance of coordination when multiple providers are working in an area, in order to reduce duplication of services.
 - I.H.S. is in region 1 for AMHD mental health outreach, so can assist with coordinating in that area.
 - New RRH contracts for HPO just started and I.H.S. is one of the providers on Oahu. They will be receiving some of the RRH referrals that aren't going to OHN and will also have a prevention component that could potentially assist those who are behind in rent but haven't been officially served with eviction notices yet.
 - Additional State ID appointments will be available in the next several weeks on Saturdays.
- MHK/Punawai Rest Stop
 - Have been working hard to coordinate with OHN and host Housing Fairs for those in the Honolulu area.
- Radical Hale
 - Continuing to operate as a volunteer organization in three regions.
 - Primary focus is on medical need and compassion care, but staff always ask people if they are connected with another outreach worker and have an established relationship with other contracted outreach providers.
- U.S. VETS Waianae
 - Waianae Civic Center will be reopening to 100% capacity and staffing on July 6th.