



## STAFF REPORT FROM THE CONTRA COSTA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

### *Contra Costa County Homeless System of Care Quarterly Report for Quarter 4, 2023 (October - December)*

#### LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

The highlight to the fourth quarter of 2023 for us was all of the Homelessness Awareness Month events, activities and resources that were shared with the community. We also saw our system of care receive \$16m from the state through the Homekey program and an application go in for the fifth round of the state's Homeless, Housing and Assistance Program funding. Our committees finalized workplans for 2024 and for 2024 are pleased to welcome six new Council members and four returning members for the ten seats that opened at the end of this quarter.

Sincerely,

Juno Hedrick, Chair of the Council on  
Homelessness

and

Jo Bruno, Vice Chair of the Council on  
Homelessness



### INTRODUCTION

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness (CoH) is the governing and oversight body for the County homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Council provides advice and input to the Board of Supervisors on the operations of homeless services, program operations, and program development efforts in Contra Costa County. The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness is the governing body for the Contra Costa County Continuum of Care (CoC).

The Contra Costa CoC is comprised of multiple partners, including service providers, members of faith communities, local businesses, private and public funders, community members, education systems and law enforcement, and others who are working collaboratively to end homelessness. The COH and CoC are supported by Contra Costa Health Services Health, Housing & Homeless Services (H3) Division. H3 functions as the CoC administrative entity and collaborative applicant, CoC Lead Agency and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS database) Lead Agency.

The purpose of this report is to share information about the CoC and COH activities with the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and to provide recommendations from the COH to the County Board of Supervisors on long range planning and policy formulation that would support the county homeless CoC. This report includes information on system data, funding and policy activities, and CoC initiatives. All information will reflect activities and data for the prior quarter.

This report was produced on behalf of the CoH by H3 in collaboration with the CoH and CoC partners.

### SYSTEM FUNDING

This quarter the CoC continued to evaluate the system of care and pursued funding opportunities to address the gaps in Contra Costa's homeless system, including our largest source of funding, the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

#### **FEDERAL**

**HUD NOFO:** In this quarter, HUD began contract execution for awards announced in the Continuum of Care Supplemental Notice of Funding to Address Unsheltered homelessness and providers worked collaboratively with the CoC to ensure an on-time submission of grant documents. The Supplemental NOFO provides three-year awards and will support enhancement of the CoC's HMIS database, as well as 28 units of permanent supportive housing provided by SHELTER, Inc.



### STATE

**Homeless, Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP):** HHAP grant through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) that provides local jurisdictions, including federally recognized tribal governments, with flexible funding to continue efforts to end and prevent homelessness in their communities. In this quarter, H3, on behalf of the County and CoC, began to review and complete the application for the fifth round of HHAP funding (HHAP-5). H3 received data from the State's HDIS system to support with goal setting.

**Homekey 3:** In this quarter, the Department of Housing and Community development awarded the County \$16 million the Homekey Program. H3 submitted an application in Q2 for the Homekey Program that is aimed to rehab physical facilities. The project will be a 54-unit building in San Pablo to house chronically homeless households to provide rental assistance and support services with an expected date of occupancy in Spring 2024. H3 received feedback from state on application and supplied updates to execute the grant agreement.

### LOCAL

**Measure X:** The Council heard updates from Health, Housing and Homeless Services about the RFP process for Measure X funding allocated for housing/homeless services.

## SYSTEM INITIATIVES

The CoC regularly engages in multiple activities, partnerships, evaluations, and improvement that are designed to improve services to clients and achieve various system goals.

### **Equity:**

While progress on workplan goals for Q3 and Q 4 (test newly revised materials with PWLE, providers and amplifiers and for Q4, refine and launch revised materials, and assess success of engaging new amplifiers) moved more slowly than planned, the committee did determine the priorities for 2024 and created a new work plan with the goal: *"By Dec 31, 2024, Equity Committee will have provided equity focused input to all COH committees and Working Groups, partnered on equity focused projects and strengthened relationships with partners essential to increasing equity."* The Committee will continue to move the materials development forward and in future reports, will report out on Equity Committee work progress using this framework: 1) providing equity focused input to all COH committees and Working Groups, 2) partnerships on equity focused projects and 3) strengthening relationships with partners essential to increasing equity.

**Engagement of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness:** The CoC continued to recruit people with lived experience to participate in a variety of activities, including the work of the Equity Committee and Homelessness Awareness Month planning and activities. Additionally,



H3 began implementation of a Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Community Needs Assessment. YYA with lived experience of homelessness were invited to participate in the Community Needs Assessment planning as advisory group members and as participants in key informant interviews and focus groups.

**Homelessness Awareness Month:** Community members, including people with a lived experience of homelessness were deeply involved in planning and creating materials and events for Homelessness Awareness Month (HAM) in November. To mark Homelessness Awareness Month (November), the Council on Homelessness supported the following activities:

- Development of a [100+ page toolkit](#) showcasing opportunities to engage and learn.
- Creation of a short video amplifying the voices of people with lived experience of homelessness called: [Challenging Myths About Homelessness: A Message For Your Neighbors \(2023 HAM\)](#)
- Recognition of nearly 40 outstanding individuals and agencies impacting homelessness via formal recognitions in 4 categories at the November Council on Homelessness meeting.
- A presentation to the Board of Supervisors about Homelessness Awareness Month on 11/7, which included the Board adopting resolutions declaring November Homelessness Awareness Month and declaring 12/21 Homeless Person's Memorial Day.
- Hosted a Homeless Person's Memorial Event on 12/21: <https://youtu.be/YFmZJ5zZRps>.

**Performance Based Contracting:** Providers continued quarterly meetings with H3 to discuss progress and identify goals for the next quarter. Results from the CoC Participant Satisfaction Survey were discussed in the October Oversight and PATH Committee meetings. 450 were collected and 97% of participants surveyed said they would recommend CoC services to others.

**Point in Time Count (PIT):** The Council on Homelessness approved the 2024 Point-In-Time Count Methodology (almost identical methodology as last year) as recommended by the Point-In Time Count Committee. The count will take place January 24, 2024.

### GOVERNANCE/REPORTING

- COH recommended 10 candidates to the Board of Supervisors in December for open seats.
- The Council will select a new Chair and Vice Chair in January 2024.
- The Council approved a workplan for 2024 (See Appendix B for the Work Plan)
- Polls conducted at the beginning of each Council on Homelessness regular meetings capture data on # of Council meetings previously attended, lived experience of homelessness and race/ethnicity of attendees. (See Appendix C for Q4 averages.)



### MEETINGS, TRAININGS AND EVENTS

**Council on Homelessness (COH) Meetings:** The Council on Homelessness held three (3) regular business meetings in addition to an Orientation this quarter. In addition to the regular Council on Homelessness meetings, the following committees met:

Committee	Purpose
Equity Committee	Create accessible information, outreach, and educational materials to engage hard to reach or previously unreached communities in Contra Costa County.
Funding Committee	Direct the community input process for several time-sensitive federal and state funding streams. NOFO prep work that previously happened at the CoC/ESG Committee will now happen at the Funding Committee.
HMIS Policy Committee	Develops and shares updates on HMIS policies and practices, compliance, and troubleshooting; Plans technical assistance and training; Informs standards of practice and monitoring
Oversight Committee	Reviewing and assessing the development, implementation, and improvement of the CoC, Coordinated Entry System, HMIS database, and system outcomes
PATH Innovation Committee	Work towards the goal of reducing unsheltered homeless in Contra Costa County by 75% by 2024
Point in Time Count Committee	Plan and implement the annual Point-in-Time Count, an annual HUD-required count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness

#### Trainings

- Case Management (12/11/23)
- Equal Access Rule (11/13/23)
- Trauma Informed Care (10/16/23)

#### Events

- CoC Provider Meetings (3)
- Homeless Persons' Memorial Day event



The recordings, minutes and materials for trainings and meetings can be found on the H3 website<sup>1</sup> and on the County agenda center<sup>2</sup>, and a calendar of upcoming meetings and events can be found on the H3 website.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to expand on training opportunities presented to Advisory Boards.

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<sup>1</sup> [Trainings | Contra Costa Health \(cchealth.org\)](https://cchealth.org)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/agendacenter>



APPENDIX A

Commonly Used Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Definition
APR	Annual Performance Report (for HUD homeless programs)
BIPOC	Black and Indigenous People of Color
CARE	Coordinated Assessment and Resource
CCYCS	Contra Costa Youth Continuum of Services
CDBG, CDBG-CV	Community Development Block Grant (federal and state programs) and the federal Community Development Block Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
CESH	California Emergency Solutions and Housing program (state funding)
Continuum of Care (CoC)	Continuum of Care approach to assistance to the homeless. Federal grant program promoting and funding permanent solutions to homelessness.
Con Plan	Consolidated Plan, a locally developed plan for housing assistance and urban development under CDBG.
CORE	Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement program
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DCD	(Contra Costa County) Department of Conservation and Development
DOC	Department Operations Center
EHSD	(Contra Costa County) Employment and Human Services Division
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESG and ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant (federal and state program) and the federal Emergency Solutions Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant CARES
FMR	Fair Market Rent (maximum rent for Section 8 rental assistance/CoC grants)
HCD	Housing and Community Development (State office)
HEAP	Homeless Emergency Aid Program (State funding)
HEARTH	Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009
HHAP	Homeless Housing and Assistance Program
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HOME	Home Investment Partnerships (CPD program)
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)
MHSA	Mental Health Services Act
NOFA/NOFO	Notice of Funding Availability/ Notice of Funding Opportunity
PHA	Public Housing Authority
PUI	Persons Under Investigation
PWLE	People With Lived Experience of Homelessness
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
SRO	Single-Room Occupancy housing units



## COH QUARTERLY REPORT

SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TA	Technical Assistance
TAY	Transition Age Youth (usually ages 18-24)
VA	Veterans Affairs (U.S. Department of)
VASH	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing
VI-SPDAT	Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool

*Contra Costa County COVID-19 Resources:*

*Please see below for additional resources on COVID-19.*

- *Health Services COVID Data Dashboard-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/dashboard>
- *Health Services Homeless Specific Data Dashboard-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/homeless-dashbc>
- *Health Services COVID Updates-* <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/health-services-updates>
- *Health Services Homeless-Specific COVID Resources -*<https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/for-the-homeles>





## APPENDIX B

### 2024 Council on Homelessness Work Plan



# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS WORKPLAN

1. Work towards the countywide goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024 through the work of the PATH Innovations Committee.
2. Continue to provide advice and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors about issues relating to homelessness
3. Convene stakeholders, in partnership with H3, to create a regional action plan as part of the application to the State's HHAP program
4. Update and redesign the CoC's Coordinated Entry prioritization and assessment tools to create a more equitable process
5. Continue to seek opportunities for individuals with lived experience of homelessness to engage in policy-making and planning conversations, especially as relates to assessment and prioritization within the Coordinated Entry System
6. Implement changes to the CoC NOFO scoring tools to better prioritize resources during the annual funding competition

## APPENDIX C

### Poll Question Answers Q4

#### How many Council on Homelessness meetings have you attended?

#### Q4 avg

This is my first meeting	20%
I've attended some meetings	23%
I've attended a lot of meetings	57%
I prefer not to answer	0

#### Do you have lived experience of homelessness?

Yes, currently	1%
Yes, within the past 7 years	15%
Yes, more than 7 years ago	30%
No	62%
I prefer not to answer	0

#### What best describes your racial identity?\*

African American/Black	23%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	5%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	8%
Hispanic/Latinx	19%
White	30%
Multi-racial	7%
I prefer not to answer	1%
I describe myself in another way	5%

\*This category allows people to select multiple options