



STAFF REPORT FROM THE CONTRA COSTA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

Contra Costa County Homeless System of Care Quarterly Report for Quarter 1 of 2022 (January - March)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

The first quarter of 2022 has been bubbling with loads of new work for the homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and Council on Homelessness (CoH) members. Many say the system is slow-moving, but given all the work that's happening, it's moving quite fast actually. It seems like just yesterday we were starting our racial equity plan, and now we're moving forward with momentum. We've been reviewing our by-laws as well as encouraging the voice of lived-experience advisors around homelessness.

As you'll see in the report, much of the work our system of care is doing is to help move us towards the Regional Action Plan goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024. We're going after new funding, shifting more people from the COVID-related Project Roomkey hotels to our shelters and housing, and strengthening partnerships.

Juno Hedrick, New Chair

The journey I took to arrive here at this point has been both fraught with difficulty and filled with joy. When I was first coming up through Contra Costa Youth Continuum of Services (CCYCS), starting at the Calli House youth shelter, it felt nearly impossible to exercise agency upon and steer my own life. I never could have imagined at the time that 2 years later, following my re-entry to program, I would be offered the opportunity to exercise that agency through my position on the Council on Homelessness as the Youth Representative seat.

I felt overjoyed for receiving that position and brought that energy forward into my work as best as I could and I quickly realized that even though I had the lived experience to contribute to improve our system of care for youth, I didn't know how to share or say it. At the time I couldn't parse the layers of coded language and systemic elements of the CoC, even whilst embedded within the body of the system itself. What I saw when I finally was able to comprehend the system of care more was that there was very little room in those bureaucratic channels or within the coded language to say what I wanted and needed to say.



Now in 2022, I'm the Youth Representative seat as well as the Chair of the Council on Homelessness and I have learned enough to feel much more capable of contributing. As we all continue to work to improve our system of care and to uplift the voices of lived experience experts and advisors throughout our system, my hope is that we are creating easier and more supportive paths for people with lived experience of homelessness to contribute their voices than the one I took.

Jo Bruno, New Vice Chair

As vice chair, I must express my gratitude and appreciation for the systematic work, even if it does seem to be slow-moving. Without the perspective of people with a lived experience of homelessness, we can't really create a stronger, more accountable system that actually meets the needs of people experiencing homelessness. I came into my position with the CoH as a lived-experience expert with homelessness, trauma-informed care, and crisis prevention. Homelessness is a crisis. But I felt like an outsider at first because the content I brought seemed foreign to some. I didn't realize I was teaching my colleagues. It wasn't until I recognized the people that I was working with also had lived experience with homelessness that I felt welcomed and safe to share my voice. This peer-to-peer recognition is essential to building trust within the system to create better practices to serve those who are unhoused within our communities. I have to say thank you for hearing our stories. Thank you for allowing us to share our voice. Nothing about us without us! The work that the CoH members and H3 staff have been doing is mighty, mighty work. We may not be living in complete post-COVID and many of us are still tired of the isolation and solitude, but we're building stronger partnerships with our network of care and the resources in our county. We may still have what seems like millions of projects to oversee and expand, but we are busy with discussions and policy change. It is true that we can only do so much, but we are collaborating with our partners with courage and compassion. We thank them for their hard work. We thank them for not giving up. We thank them for keeping the hope, building a new vision, and continuing the importance of making our system of care a better system for our unhoused community. There's plenty of work to do still, and we're all here doing it.

Juno Hedrick, Chair of the Council on Homelessness

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 DATA

We will be pausing providing data updates here as the system of care works on developing more user-friendly public facing dashboards.

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 CoC NOFO- On March 14, 2022, HUD announced the awards for the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)



- Total request the Contra Costa CoC made to HUD: \$17,858,395.
- FY 2021 Annual Renewal Demand (ARD): \$15,852,548
 - amount guaranteed to be renewed
- New award: \$ 716,332 through a Domestic Violence bonus allocation for new project called “Project Home SAFE”.
- Total award was \$16,848,402
- Difference: -\$1,009,993
 - Note: all rental assistance projects received reduced funding because Fair Market Rents (FMRs) went down

STATE

Encampment Resolution: The City of Richmond was among 19 communities in California to receive funding from the state to address encampments. The City will receive \$4.8 million in Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF), the second largest award in the state, over a two-year period and will focus specifically on the 100+ person Castro Street vehicle encampment, using evidence-based clinical case management and intensive social service and housing navigation support. H3 provided technical support to the city to submit the application and an H3 CORE team was written into the grant.

Family Challenge Grant: In March, the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) released a Request for Applications (RFA) for a Family Homelessness Challenge Grant (FHC-1) to provide one-time grants and technical assistance to local jurisdictions and continuums of care to address and end family homelessness. Thirty million (\$30 m) will be distributed across a minimum of two rounds of funding. The RFA for Round 1 is for funds totaling \$15 million and awards will be determined through this competitive RFA process. Contra Costa will be applying for these funds next quarter.

Homeless, Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP3): HHAP Round 3 is a \$1 billion grant through the California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council that provides local jurisdictions, including federally recognized tribal governments, with flexible funding to continue efforts to end and prevent homelessness in their communities. Next quarter, H3 apply for the funds and will be gathering community input on the possible priorities for the \$3,434,907.05 the County expects to receive after applying.

HOME-ARP: Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development received a one-time augmentation to the County Federal HOME funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, called HOME-ARP. \$5 billion was appropriated to provide housing, services, and shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable populations. The HOME-ARP amount allocated to the County is just over \$12 million based on the qualifying amount of regular HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds allocated to the County in FY 2021. On 2/14, 50 people attended a CoC hosted Stakeholder Meeting that included 1) a presentation 2) focused conversation and 3) a question-and-answer session about the HOME-



ARP eligible activities to help in the implementation of the HOME-ARP funds and to focus on one of the above eligible activities.

Homekey 3: H3 will be applying for a Homekey 3 allocation in September.

Pet Assistance and Support (PAS): Next quarter, H3 will be applying for a portion of the \$10m PAS grant offered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The grant allows qualified homeless shelters to provide shelter, pet food and supplies, and basic veterinary services for pets owned by individuals experiencing homelessness, along with staffing and liability insurance related to providing those services. These services and accommodations reduce barriers, making shelter and services accessible to people who otherwise would not access these resources.

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: C4 Innovations presented the results of their Equity Assessment of the Contra Costa homeless system of care, including findings of qualitative, quantitative, and assessment activities, at a community presentation on 1/14. Feedback about the Equity Report was solicited at this meeting, the 2/3 Council on Homelessness meeting, the 2/10 CoC Executive Director meeting and the 2/14 Stakeholder meeting. At the 2/3 COH meeting, the Council voted to create a time-limited Equity Working Group to develop a work plan, timeline and recommendations for the Council on Homelessness to operationalize findings from the Equity Assessment. The Working Group will have its first meeting in Q2.

Consumer Engagement: People with lived experience were engaged a number of activities and meetings including in the Point in Time Count and Council on Homelessness and other CoC meetings. We began doing a short Zoom poll at the beginning of a number of our Council on Homelessness CoC meetings to identify how many people with a lived experience of homelessness were present and have been pleasantly surprised to find the numbers to be higher than assumed. We also created a section on the H3/CoC website to highlight the input of people with lived experience of homelessness here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/#Voices>.

Monitoring: In February, the CoC launched a HUD Compliance Monitoring Process for 19 CoC-funded providers. The purpose of monitoring is to ensure grant activities are following the Department of Housing and Urban Development rules and regulations; improve individual program performance; and increase provider capacity regarding Continuum of Care compliance and financial management.

Performance Based Contracting: Continuums of Care are systems of interrelated programs delivered by providers that are contracted to deliver consistent services to prevent and end homelessness. This quarter we began the process of building a collective definition of each



program type for the CoC Written Standards that will form the basis of provider contracts and the performance benchmarks expected. A series of community meetings and input opportunities took place this quarter. The finalized program models will be incorporated into the CoC Written Standards as well as in the Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures in the Spring with final incorporations into CoC contracts by July 2022.

Point in Time Count: The Point in Time Count, a comprehensive point-in-time count of families and individuals experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa, tallies information about people sleeping in emergency shelters and transitional housing as well as people sleeping in cars, in abandoned properties, or in other places not meant for human habitation. It provides a one-day snapshot of homelessness and includes data about families, youth, chronically homeless, veterans, as well as gender, ethnicity, and race. Contra Costa typically conducts this count annually but, along with many other communities across the country, paused conducting the count in 2021 due to COVID-19. This year, the sheltered count took place on the night of February 23rd and the unsheltered count, supported by over 140 volunteers and staff, took place in the early morning hours on February 24th. The results are expected to be released to the public next quarter.

COLLABORATIONS

Holistic Intervention Partnership (HIP): HIP relies on a public-private partnership between the Contra Costa Office of the Public Defender, multiple county agencies, and community-based partners to provide interdisciplinary case management and navigation services to indigent individuals to ensure timely and coordinated access to a client-centered array of housing, behavioral health, transportation, and legal services at the critical time of initial law enforcement contact. The goal of HIP is to reduce system burden and improve criminal justice outcomes in misdemeanor cases throughout the county. Of the 8 clients experiencing homelessness referred to this program in Quarter 1, 1 was placed into permanent housing and 2 were diverted from entering homelessness. The other 5 are still working on housing plans.

Homeless Services-Workforce Development Integration (H-WIN)- This new meeting series is the product of a collaboration with Workforce Development funded by the Workforce Accelerator Fund 8.0. These bi-monthly meetings provide an opportunity for people working in Homeless Services and Workforce Development in Contra Costa to connect with and understand each other's resources and services. Two meetings were held this quarter, with over 30 partners in attendance at each one.

REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

Contra Costa is committed to the Regional Action plan which aims to reduce unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024. The Regional Action Plan proposes a 1-2-4 framework which posits that to accomplish this reduction, for every 1 additional interim housing unit funded, 2 permanent housing solutions, and 4 prevention interventions are needed.



CES Evaluation: This quarter, an evaluation of our Coordinated Entry System was conducted to identify opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in connecting consumers with permanent housing, a key driver in reducing unsheltered homelessness. The results of this report will be publicly released quarter 2.

PATH Innovations Committee: The Plan for Accelerating Transformative Housing (PATH) Innovations Committee of the Council on Homelessness decided to focus on the implementation of findings from the CES Evaluation to reduce unsheltered homelessness.

Funding Opportunities: All of the funding opportunities mentioned earlier in the report would support Contra Costa’s efforts to achieve the Regional Action Plan goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024.

GOVERNANCE/REPORTING

- Conducted COH Orientation for new member (1/6)
- Juno Hedrick, Youth Representative appointed as Chair and Jo Bruno, Consumer Representative appointed as Vice Chair.
- Identified and approved members of the HMIS Policy Committee, Oversight Committee, PATH Innovation Committee, CoC/ESG Committee, and Governance Committee.
- Developed 2022 Workplan: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Workplan-2022.pdf>
- Keva Dean approved for Community Member seat by BOS on 2/22/22 Consent Calendar
- Presented Q3 and Q4 report to 2/28/22 FHS Committee.

MEETINGS, TRAININGS AND EVENTS

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

Committee	Purpose
ESG/CoC Committee	Supports the application process for funds administered by HUD, including the CoC program
Governance Committee	Review and revise the Governance Charter & Bylaws to increase CoH efficiency and impact
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
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Note: Council decided to pause Policy Committee meetings until the second half of the year.

Trainings

- Problem Solving Conversations (1/24/22)
- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Compliance & Strategies for Serving Survivors of Domestic Violence (3/28/22)

Events

- CoC Provider Meetings (3)
- CoC Executive Director meeting (1)
- CoC Equity Assessment: Presentation of Findings and Next Steps (1/14)
- CoC Stakeholder Meeting HOME-ARP & Equity (2/14)

The recordings, minutes and materials for trainings and meetings can be found on the H3 website¹ and on the County agenda center², and a calendar of upcoming meetings and events can be found on the H3 website.

COVID-19 UPDATE

As COVID response and funding is winding down and shelters have reopened, the remaining COVID-19 hotel for people experiencing homelessness will close next quarter. In this quarter, our team has done a tremendous job both responding to the Omicron variant spike as well as working to move people in hotel programs into housing or other shelters in preparation for the closing of the remaining Project Roomkey hotels.

Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)

Last year Contra Costa received 201 Emergency Housing Vouchers (Tenant Based Rental Assistance). Our community made a decision to prioritize two populations: 1) long term shelter stayers, particularly those at our Delta Landing and COVID hotel site and 2) people in Permanent Supportive Housing who no longer need the supportive services (“Move On”). To date, 160 referrals have been sent to the Housing Authority, (101 of long-term shelter stayers

¹ <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/partners.php#Training>

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



and 59 permanent supportive housing “Move On”), Of those, 90 have received their voucher and are searching for housing and 33 have been housed.

As COVID moves out of the pandemic phase, we will only include updates this section if there are new developments that have a systemic impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recognize that accomplishing the Regional Action Plan goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024 will be achieved through partnerships between H3 and other partners including CCHS Behavioral Health, Contra Costa Department of Conservation and Development, Employment and Human Services Department, cities and other community partners. As such, our recommendation for this quarter is that the Board of Supervisors:

- Encourage interdepartmental collaboration and community partnerships to facilitate accomplishment of Regional Action Plan goal of reducing unsheltered homelessness by 75% by 2024.



APPENDIX A

Commonly Used Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Definition
APR	Annual Performance Report (for HUD homeless programs)
BOS	Board of Supervisors (Contra Costa County)
BCSH	California Business Consumer, Services and Housing Agency
CARE	Coordinated Assessment and Resource
CCACS/CCYCS	Contra Costa Adult Continuum of Service/ Contra Costa Youth Continuum of Services (H3 programs)
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)
COH	Council on Homelessness
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.
CES/CE	Coordinated Entry
CNWS	Concord Naval Weapons Station
CORE	Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement program
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DCD	Contra Costa Department of Conservation and Development
DOC	Department Operations Center
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
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.
FMR	Fair Market Rent (maximum rent for Section 8 rental assistance/CoC grants)
HCD	Housing and Community Development (State office)
HCFC	Housing Coordinating and Financing Council (state governing board under BCSH)
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 (state funding);
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HOME	Home Investment Partnerships (CPD program)
Homekey	California funding to support development of interim and permanent housing
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)
MHSA	Mental Health Services Act



NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
PHA	Public Housing Authority
Project Roomkey	COVID-related State funding program to support decongregating homeless shelters using hotels/motels.
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
PUI	Persons Under Investigation
RFA/RFP/RFQ/LOI	Request for Applications/Request for Proposal/Request for Qualifications/Letter of Intent related to funding opportunities
RRH	Rapid Rehousing
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
SRO	Single-Room Occupancy housing units
SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TA	Technical Assistance
TAY	Transition Age Youth (usually ages 16-24)
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-dashboard>

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-homeless>