



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

COMMENTS RECEIVED BEFORE THE BUDGET RELEASE

Issue Date: 24 April 2024

PURPOSE

To summarize comments and concerns captured at different ICH Forums before the budget release.

BACKGROUND

[DC Code § 4-752.02\(c\)](#) legislatively mandates that the ICH comment on the Mayor's proposed budget for services within the Continuum of Care each year.

"The Mayor shall, upon release of the proposed annual budget each year, make available to all Interagency Council members the District's proposed budget breakdown of each agency's appropriations for services within the Continuum of Care. The Interagency Council shall give comments to the Mayor regarding the proposed budget."

To comply with this requirement for the proposed FY25 budget, the ICH Team scheduled six ICH Budget Engagement Sessions in April 2024. The goal was to create an opportunity for each District agency member to present the details of the Mayor's Proposed Budget and for members representing the community to comment on the details presented.

The ICH Team accepted public comments in real-time at the virtual meetings or in writing via email until the Close of Business (5 pm) on Friday, 04/19.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

Since December 2023, the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) budget has been top of mind for ICH constituents across several forums. This section highlights key takeaways and summarizes comments received by ICH Forum.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The key takeaways from comments received before the release of the Mayor's Proposed Budget include:

- Need to understand better budget pressures and efforts to raise revenues, including
 - the factors contributing to the fiscal constraints

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- the proportion of the cuts shouldered by homeless services
- options for raising revenues
- Importance of transparency related to the following
 - Cuts to the FY24 budget and implications for FY25 budget
 - Impact of cuts on services provided and staffing providing the services
- Concern that homeless services will be shouldering a disproportionately more significant share of the cuts, which will ultimately:
 - Undermine racial equity and inclusion goals by cuts to homeless services
 - Exacerbate the existing inequity between the single and family subsystems
 - Harm the most vulnerable District residents

BY ICH FORUM

The table below summarizes comments and concerns related to the budget captured at different ICH Forums starting in December 2023.

ICH Forum	Comments and Concern
CY 2023	
12/14 Shelter Solutions WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appreciation and anxiety regarding DHS request for feedback on potential FY24 cuts. ● Concerns about likely loss of 24/7 operations at low-barrier shelters and ● Need to plan/prepare for reverting to pre-pandemic hours: 5 pm to 9 am at shelters
12/19 Executive CMTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued appreciation and anxiety regarding DHS request for feedback on potential FY24 cuts. ● Concerns about the efficacy and efficiency of District expenditures and programs. ● Impact of cuts on clients in programs. ● Desire to understand which programs will take the deepest cuts
CY 2024	
01/03 ERSO CMTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to understand the context for constraints -- what is fueling the cuts? ● Provider and stakeholder difficulty to make recommendations without context on extent of the budget constraints.
01/17 Family System WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concerns about client-to-case manager ratios as a strategy for cutting staffing costs.
02/20 Executive CMTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued need to understand the context for the constraints – what is causing the budget constraints? ● Request to understand the overall budget for the City and cuts to other agency budgets. ● Request for transparency around FY24 cuts that go into effect as of April and whether those cuts carry forward into FY25. ● Concern about programs that serve the most people and have the highest demand (e.g., ERAP).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about pandemic-related protection measures that cannot be supported/continued under the local budget. • Feedback highlighting the disparities between programs and services for single adults, including young adults, and the disproportionate impact of budget cuts on Single and Young adults.
02/23 Consumer Engagement WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constituents with lived experience concerned about and galvanizing to participate in the Mayor’s Budget Engagement Town Halls. • Concern that the Mayor and Council have already decided on the budget and that engagements are fake. • Request to focus the Full Council meeting on the Budget.
03/07 Single Adult System WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that the FY24 cuts will impact the process for matching to housing • Request to follow up once the budget is released to determine the extent of the impact
03/12 ICH Full Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Options for generating revenue -- Have all options been considered? ○ Understanding how different and new initiatives are funded – Why can the District fund Downtown or Arena-related efforts or new crime reduction-related initiatives if homeless services have to take cuts? ○ Focus ICH Budget engagement sessions on the FY24 cuts and how that carries forward into FY25 ○ Specify how cuts will impact programs/services -- How many residents will be impacted? How many staff will be impacted? • Areas that people would like to focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources for Single Adults to address the significant disparities in outcomes ○ Impact on lease-up process and timeline, especially for single adults ○ Lack of medical respite ○ Importance of diversion and scaling Project Reconnect ○ Impact of OMS and funding for migrant services
03/13 Family System WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flag that priorities and projects should be finalized after the budget for FY25 is set.
03/22 Consumer Engagement WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of cuts that homeless services will sustain • Budget reserves and whether they can be used to minimize cuts to homeless services • Clarity on the ICH Budget Engagement Sessions and process for the ICH to provide feedback to the Mayor’s Budget through these sessions.
03/26 Strategic Planning CMTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flag that cuts to homeless services undermine District goals for racial equity and inclusion
03/27 Shelter Capacity WG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder to review the OMS budget as part of the ICH Budget Engagement Session