



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

EMERGENCY RESPONSE &
SHELTER OPERATIONS (ERSO) COMMITTEE

Meeting Details	Date: 01 December 2021	Time: 10:30 am to 12 noon	Location: Webex
------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------

Agenda

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Reginald Black and ICH Director Theresa Silla called the meeting to order. Ms. Silla reviewed the agenda and goals for the meeting. See PPT for details.

II. DISCUSSION

A. ICH STAFFING & IMPACT ON ERSO COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUPS

Ms. Silla congratulated Ms. Kimberly Waller, who will transition to the Biden Administration, and explained that she is now the sole staff at the ICH. As a result, the ICH cannot support the usual workload of workgroups, CAHP, and Special Project Team meetings. Still, Ms. Silla recommended that the ERSO Committee meet in December to address several priorities: reviewing hypothermia operations, supporting housing exits, and health care support/services for the most vulnerable clients. The ICH administered a poll to determine the preferences of the group. See poll results below. See PPT for additional details.

- Concerns/Questions/Recommendations flagged during the discussion:
- Recommendation that that Shelter Capacity WG continues to meet monthly. Ms. Silla confirmed that Mr. Michael Ferrell would continue to lead the monthly workgroup with the support of TCP.
 - Question about

Poll Results:

Poll Options	Poll Results
A. Cancel December Meeting	3/38 (8%)
B. Meet in December for 1 hour max to focus on hypothermia operations	8/38 (21%)
C. Meet in December for 1.5 hours to focus on hypothermia operations, expediting housing & health care for the most vulnerable	15/38 (39%)
No Answer	12/38 (32%)

B. PROCESS FOR CALLING HYPO ALERTS

Ms. Silla identified that members of the community have flagged an issue with the process for calling alerts. The goal of the discussion was to identify how alerts impact access to or delivery of services, given that the services delivered this hypothermia season are not alert dependent. The discussion centered around legal concerns summarized below. Request from Co-Chair Black to move the conversation offline as the discussion time exceeded the time allotted to the topic on the agenda. See PPT for details.

Concerns/Questions/Recommendations flagged during the discussion:

- Concern that the District has an entitlement (right to shelter during inclement weather) where the entity that is administering the benefit is also establishing and communicating whether conditions meet the criteria for the legal right to shelter. Including the NWS published forecasts as part of the process of calling alerts allows transparency on how alerts are established and allows other parties, including clients, to review and verify alert status.
- Concern that while provisions may have been made to adequately serve families and individuals regardless of the alert status if there is a sudden influx in demand, the legal obligation is limited to alert nights.
- Concern that legal concerns have dominated the discussion and that lived experience has not been adequately reflected in the conversation.
- Question about changes to the Winter Plan that require a vote by the ERSO and Executive Committees.

C. REVIEW OF HYPOTHERMIA OPERATIONS

Ms. Silla asked the Committee for feedback on the information that the Committee needs to track as part of the review of hypothermia operations as well as the experience of day centers, outreach teams, and shelter providers thus far.

Concerns/Questions/Recommendations flagged during the discussion:

- Recommendation to track the distribution and availability of comfort items.
- Question re appropriate point of contact for is requesting comfort items. Melvyn Smith clarified that providers should email him (Melvyn.Smith2@dc.gov) to request supplies.
- Question re ability of clients to leave belongings at shelters, given that they are open 24/7, regardless of alert status. Confirmation from DHS and shelter providers that yes, clients can leave belongings at shelters, but not at the seasonal sites which are rec centers.
- Recommendation to celebrate the opening of Bridge Housing at Girard and Valley Place.
- Concern re referral process for Bridge Housing. Cheryl Irving has identified ten individuals, who meet the definition of chronic homelessness but are not being prioritized for the first round of CAHP matches (which focuses on individuals with 3+ years of uninterrupted stay in our system).
- Concern re Omicron variant and the need to think through the appropriate response as we learn more about the variant and its prevalence in the US.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS

The following announcements were shared during the meeting:

- Vaccination Resistance & Policies in DC homeless service orgs by AU Public Health Capstone team: Friday noon 1/2 hr virtual Brown Bag presentation at <https://american.zoom.us/my/melissahawkins>.
- Cultural competency and Vaccine Resistance: TCP working with DHS to promote culturally competent messaging/talking points for clients. Contact Candyce Coates (CCoates@community-partnership.org) for talking points developed by Unity Clinic.
- Advocacy call to oppose encampment closure at New Jersey/O. Template letter to send to Council Members available at <https://bit.ly/3vRV1pS>.

IV. SUMMARY AND ADJOURNMENT

Per the poll, the next ERSO meeting is set for Dec 22 from 1 – 2:30 pm

Next Meeting	Date: 22 December 2021	Time: 1 – 2:30 pm	Location: Webex
---------------------	-------------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------

Meeting Participants

Maydeen Merino (Street Sense)
Theresa Silla (ICH)
Kimberly Waller (ICH)
Michael Ferrell (DCCFH)
Japer Bowles (LGBTQ+ Affairs)
Ronnie L Stanley, Jr. (Mission)
Sari Frankel (DBH)
Wes Heppler (Legal Clinic)
Reggie Black (PFFC)
Abby Sypek (Everyone Home DC)
Kalifia Thomas (COH)
Kim Glover (DHS)
Lois Achu (SOME)
Marcy Bernaum
Nechama Masliansky (SOME)
Synina Pugh (DHS)
ROBERT WARREN (PFFC)
Juanita Driver (Miriam's Kitchen)
Kelly Paton (TCP)
Ted Joseph (DHS)
Debra Byrd (Downtown Day Center)
Liza Poris (Friendship Place)
Blair Copeland (Catholic Charities)
Kate Coventry (DCFPI)
Jesse Rabinowitz (Miriam's Kitchen)
Bill Kuennen (DHS)
Melvyn Smith (DHS)
Candyce Coates (TCP)
Jean Badalamenti (DCPL)
Aaron White (DC -SHY, DBH)
Larry Gooch (Catholic Charities, NYA Shelter)
Carla Branham
Tyrell McQueen (TCP)
Erin Byrne (DCCADV)
Ana Elias (Community Connections)
Cheryl Irving (Catholic Charities)
Amber Harding (Legal Clinic)
Sakina Thompson (DMHHS)
Jill Carmichael (National Community Church)
Lynn Amano (Friendship Place)
Belinda J. Fadlelmola (HUD)
Alicia Horton (Thrive DC)
Qaadir (PFFC)
Veronica Fabani (Catholic Charities)
Russell McDowell (Catholic Charities)
Catherine Crosland (Unity)
Samuel Koroma (Community Connections)