Interagency Council on Homelessness

Housing Solutions Committee

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17 July, 2023

DON'T FORGET TO HIT RECORD

Convention for Recording ICH Committee Meetings:

❖ Recording for purposes of complying with the open meeting act requirements

❖ Available for anyone who requests a copy at ich.info@dc.gov.

Meeting Agenda

I. **Welcome & Agenda Review (5 mins)**
   a) Intros & Call for Announcements
   b) Adopting Prior Meeting Notes & Managing the Listserv

II. **Discussion Items (60 mins)**
   a) Expediting Housing Placement –The Lab @ DC (30 mins)
   b) Understanding Our Housing Inventory – DHCD Pipeline Report Review (30 mins)

III. **System Check-In (20 mins)**
   a) DCHA Updates: Rent Reasonableness, Federal Voucher Initiative, & Public Housing Waitlist Updates (5 mins)
   b) ICH Updates: Staffing Transitions (5 mins)
   c) DHCD Updates: Greener Government Act Implications & Action Plan (5 mins)
   d) Other Partner/Community Concerns (5 mins)

IV. **Announcements & Reminders (as needed)**

V. **Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)**
   a) Next Mtg: Monday 08/21 from 2 – 3:30 pm

Intro & Call for Announcements

❖ **Intros:**

➢ Chat intros for attendees: name, pronouns, org, title/role

➢ Quick round of hellos from Co-Chairs and ICH staff with formal roles leading or supporting meeting

❖ **Call for Partner Announcements/Reminders:**

➢ Please "chat" any significant partner announcements, especially those changes/updates that impact the system

➢ We will make time on the agenda, as appropriate, or include in the notes

Adopting Notes & Managing the Listserv

- ❖ **Adopting Prior Meeting Notes:**
  - ➢ Automatically adopted unless meeting attendees flag issues
  - ➢ Generally, ICH team sends out meeting notes within a week

  * Flag following NTS are outstanding 03/20, 05/15, & 06/12
  - ➢ Please review as soon as possible and flag any errors/issues
  - ➢ If we don't hear back within a week, assuming good to adopt

- ❖ **Managing the Listserv:**
  - ➢ Meeting materials are only distributed to listserv members
  - ➢ If you are **not** on the listserv, you will **not** receive materials
  - ➢ To join the listserv, email ich.info@dc.gov

Feedback on Agenda & Housekeeping

Q&A:

❖ **Q: …**

❖ **A: …**

❖ **Q: …**

❖ **A: …**

❖ **Q: …**

❖ **A: …**

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How might we improve residents' experience of the housing voucher process?

Sweta Maturu & Nellie Moore
The Lab @ DC

What is The Lab?

We meet DC's most
critical problems
with scientific methods,
civic design,
and authentic
partnership with
District agencies and
residents.
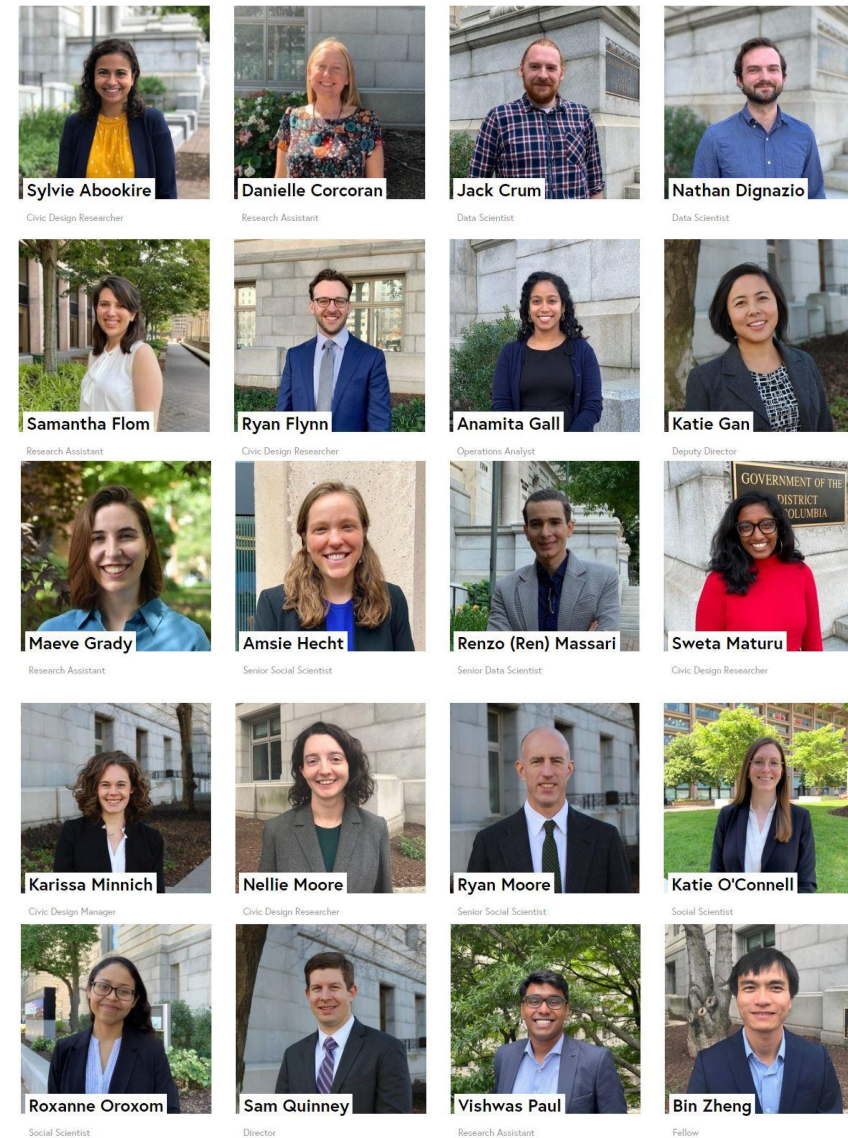
What is Civic Design?

- Identifying and centering the resident's needs and perspective in the services and products DC government provides

- Minimizing and/or eliminating the pain points residents may face when interacting with services

- Making government services and products more accessible

Voucher Application Form Redesign

Create a packet that is transparent and easier-to-complete for residents and that reduces the effort required from frontline staff to fill out, process, and quality assure

Voucher Application Form Redesign

Create a packet that is transparent and easier-to-complete for residents and that reduces the effort required from frontline staff to fill out, process, and quality assure

Right now, we're user-testing. What does this look like?

Residents and case managers
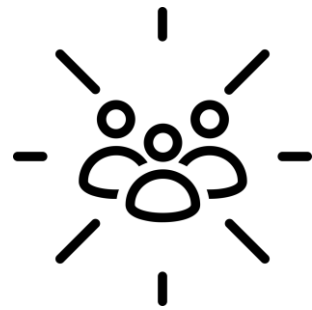

Really fill it out

Take notes

Iterate

If you'd be interested in testing the new forms with us, reach out to Nellie at nellie.moore@dc.gov.

Discovery Research

Understand the barriers that residents face throughout the housing voucher process and identify the perspectives of stakeholders involved in the housing voucher program.

What we've done...

7 focus groups with over **20 individuals**, representing voucher holders, case managers, landlords/Property Managers

7 interviews
With staff across DHS and DCHA involved in administering the PSH/TAH voucher program

7 observations of key events in the voucher process

Resident Researchers

- Hired 5 residents who have lived experience with the housing voucher program to join our team

- Co-lead our research activities & make key decisions on the direction of our work
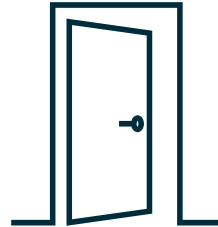
Co-Design

Designing *with* (and, where possible *by)* residents rather than *for* them, so that their needs, expertise, and experiences are centered in the development of programs that aim to serve them.

This looks like...

Learning from residents

Asking thoughtful, open ended questions, and **listening** deeply.

Facilitating idea generation

Inviting residents to participate in our project activities and decisions.

Implementation

Following through with commitments and earning trust with the community.

Capacity building

Supporting residents & community orgs to adopt new ways of doing

Discussion

- What else are you working on that we should know about as we begin co-design?

- Potential barriers to participation or engagement?

Co-Design Sessions

We are hosting 4 in-person sessions at the **Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Library**:
- Tuesday July 25th, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM
- Thursday July 27th, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
- Tuesday July 31st, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM
- Thursday August 2nd, 2:00 – 4:00 PM

User Testing is ongoing

If you'd be interested in testing the new forms with us, reach out to Nellie at nellie.moore@dc.gov.

Feedback on Lab Presentation

Q&A:

❖ **FDBK from Rachelle:** Just got an email about this! Shared with other PFFC members who have experience with the voucher process.

➢ **A from Lab@DC:** Yes, ideally individuals with experience going through the voucher process so there is compare.

❖ **Q: Is this only for the LRSP voucher application?**

➢ **A from Lab@DC:** Redesigning the forms for all voucher types, not just LRSP.

❖ **Qxn & FDBK from Robert:** These conversations are important, but people continue to be on waitlists for long durations. When are we going to start recommending policies to the Mayor and City Council on actual changes? Should be implementing tax-based voucher system.

❖ **Q: Will these forms be used by all agencies?**

➢ **A from Lab@DC:** the new forms will be used by DCHA and DHS.

❖ **Q: Can you tell us in a nutshell and specifically what you do as it relates to homelessness?**

➢ **A from Lab@DC:** we're conducting research with residents who have vouchers and facilitating design sessions with residents and frontline staff to make recommendation to improve the voucher process.

❖ **Q: Can Lab @DC estimate amount of time the application and process take?**

➢ **A from Lab@DC:** Working with DHS to understand kickback time. This is one of the goals to reduce the length of time that it takes and the number of applications that need to be corrected.

➢ **Q: Is initial data available so we can establish milestones and goals?**

Feedback on Lab Presentation

Q&A:

❖ **FDBK from Erin Byrne:** I just want to say thanks for doing this - I've worked with case managers and survivors on these forms, and it's been a really challenging process, so really grateful you all are working to improve the forms. We had a ton of delays caused by errors, both on the survivor's side and on DCHA's because the forms were so long, they made errors in reading them.

❖ **FDBK from Jakia:** The design of these processes create barriers and hinder the housing process. Personal experience with being matched 7/2022, voucher approved 3/2023, and long waiting periods in this process. There should be a process for review and communication within 48 hours of voucher application. Need to minimize the number of systems across all the agencies and need to collaborate. Client access to system is critical for transparency and accountability.

❖ **FDBK from Kate:** Excited about this process! One tension – difference between information needed for local and federal laws/vouchers may impact client experience.

  ➢ **A from Lab@DC**: Yes, very aware of this issue. This is where co-design process comes in!
  ➢ **A from DCHA**: This is part of what brought us to the Lab to harmonize and test options to streamline this.

Feedback on Lab Presentation

Q&A:

❖ **FDBK from Hammere (DCHA)**: Working on additional options for client access. It is view-only right now but will continue to share updates as available!

❖ **Q from Ms. Naomi: Why is it legal for Landlords to charge excessive fees with no return if denied unit?**

❖ **Next Steps:**

➢ Link to sign-up forms for our co-design sessions on improving the PSH/TAH voucher program can be found here: https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/dc-housing-vouchers-community-design-sessions-2410949

➢ To test the new forms with us, email me at nellie.moore@dc.gov

Meeting Agenda

I. **Welcome & Agenda Review (5 mins)**

II. Discussion Items (60 mins)

    a) Expediting Housing Placement –The Lab @ DC (30 mins)

    b) **Understanding Our Housing Inventory – DHCD Pipeline Report Review (30 mins)**

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Understanding Our Housing Inventory

Purpose –why review our housing inventory?

- ➢ Component of the effort to meet legislated requirements related to the Annual Update
  - ✓ Legislation (at DC Code § 4–752.02) requires a community-wide assessment to detail resources (available and needed) leveraging existing data.
- ➢ Request to address vacant units & demand for universal housing in our Annual Update and Priorities/Projects for FY23/24
  - ✓ Need to ascertain if we have the data we need or if we need to update the tools in place for reviewing our housing inventory

Understanding Our Housing Inventory

Readily Available Tools

- ❖ **Housing Inventory Count (HIC)**
  - ➢ Submitted by TCP to HUD annually
  - ➢ DC Reports available [online] from 2005 – 2022
- ❖ **Weekly Occupancy Reports (WOR)**
  - ➢ Managed by TCP
  - ➢ Reviewed at Shelter Capacity WG monthly
- ❖ **DHCD Pipeline Report**
  - ➢ [Housing Solutions Committee Report on PSH Units –All Years]

Feedback on DHCD Pipeline Report

Q&A:

- ❖ **FDBK from Francwa:** the problem is that not there is no housing. the problem is *who* has the housing and *where* the housing is located. landlords with certain address do not voucher holders on their properties.
- ❖ **Q: Is there a breakdown of how many of the "PSH 0–1-bedroom units" are studios and how many are 1 bedrooms? I ask because our experience over the last two years is that is increasingly hard to rent studios, as folks understandably prefer 1-bedrooms. So understanding that breakdown is important.**
  - ➢ **A:** DHCD can follow up to provide.
- ❖ **Q: Can DHCD share a link to this report?**
  - ➢ **A:** Yes, https://octo.quickbase.com/db/bit4krbdh?a=q&qid=228
- ❖ **Q: Does DHCD track different programs under the different agencies? Recommendation to look at turnover and utilization across programs.**
  - ➢ **A from ICH:** DHS likely tracks some of these details internally and would be helpful to understand what is readily available for the Annual Update or prioritized for next year.
  - ➢ **A from DHS:** utilization and turnover is available, but thinking through correct target populations/reaching intended audience may take more qualitative.
  - ➢ **FDBK from ICH:** May make sense to leverage CAHP data and participation to understand success rate of CAHP matching. i.e. if it takes multiple referrals to fill a unit, etc.

Feedback on DHCD Pipeline Report

Q&A:

- ❖ **FDBK from Reggie: This is why vacant units is so important. Whatever the final PSH #, multiple it by four to allow for consideration for TAH and RRH needs. Of the Class A vacant units, how many belong to Consolidated RFP and how do we increase utilization of those projects? Of the projects, want to understand status and final "product", e.g. Capital Gateway. Ultimately need to understand how many units we need vs how many we have to inform HWDC2.0 needs.**
  - ➢ **A from DHCD:** If have list of projects, can follow up. Capital Gateway did not move forward, nothing was spent. They are moving to the next project that can be funded. Need to understand universe of what is vacant to inform what we are funding.
- ❖ **Q from Reggie: How many units could have been filled by TAH, RRH, etc.? How many of those units are occupied by level of income such as 30% AMI or below?**
  - ➢ **A from DHCD:** May not have this level of detail. Do have monitoring division: how are properties performing? Are they serving the income HHs they committed to? Are they filling vacancies in timely way, breaking even, etc.?
  - ➢ **Next Step:** DHCD share case study for 2022 project and what information is collected in monitoring process.

Feedback on DHCD Pipeline Report

Q&A:

- ❖ **Q from Dr. Mayaalla: How are you to know for sure what the voucher is going to cover? For example, utilities, etc. There are not a lot of properties that include the utilities. It is not an issue with identifying a unit, more so what is covered by the voucher.**
    - ➢ **Next Step:** Will follow up to see what information we can gather to answer this question by next month's meeting!

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DCHA Updates

Rent Reasonableness Updates

- ❖ Started 07/01, for new voucher participants or moves into a new unit.
- ❖ Moved to system of unit-by-unit review of rent reasonableness. Still have payment standard by bedroom size.
- ❖ Using affordablehousing.com to inform calculation – checks against other databases, landlords also use the system directly.
- ❖ Will bring initial data in coming weeks.
- ❖ Applying this process to any rent redeterminations. Landlord has to submit to DCHA, tenant would also be notified 60 days in advance of any change. Once LL receives results from DCHA, there is opportunity to provide addtl info to reconsider.
- ❖ Goal: more real time and as close to the market as possible!

DCHA Updates

Federal Voucher Initiative Updates

❖ Federal Vouchers are available. The only preference is original date/time of application.
❖ Have begun reaching out to residents, working with vendor, Nan McKay, to do this. Reminder that return address is not DC.
❖ Anybody on the waiting list or not sure if on the waiting list, visit website or call to update contact information! Have had historic non-response rates because contact information is outdated.
❖ For anyone who has received an invitation to apply for federal voucher: DCHA - Nan McKay Eligibility Customer Service Line - 202-539-8277

Public Housing Waitlist Updates

❖ Events held at MLK to process applications, working through eligibility determinations, connecting to housing as appropriate.
❖ Late Summer/Fall 2023 reopening of public housing waitlist:
➢ Site-based – individual waitlist for each property.
➢ Individuals can add interest for as many or as few sites.

Feedback on DCHA Updates

Q&A:

- ❖ **Q: Have the units listed on affordablehousing.com already gone through the rent reasonableness process with DCHA? Or does the rent reasonableness process initiate during the lease up process?**
  - ➢ **A from DCHA:** What is listed by LLs is just unit advertising. Rent reasonableness is determined by DCHA.
- ❖ **Q: Why do the affordablehousing.com site only show available units in SE area? How does this allow equality?**
  - ➢ **A from DCHA:** There is a public facing informed by LLs posting. On the backend, affordablehousing.com is using other data from Zillow, etc. to see what is rented in the market to see what is reasonable.
- ❖ **Q: …**
- ❖ **A: …**

- ❖ **Q: …**
- ❖ **A: …**

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ICH Staffing Transitions

❖ Last day for Jorge Membreno (Advisor, Family & Youth) with the ICH was 07/14 as he is delving back into clinical and non-profit work.

Staffing:

❖ Eileen will be the Special Advisor for all Subpopulations (Family, Singles, Veterans, and Youth)
  ➢ Goal: Consistency in approach across all subsystems

❖ New Special Advisor role for System Level Care Coordination,
  ➢ Goal: point person for all the services and supports needed for homeless services, including behavioral and physical healthcare, developmental, and employment

Feedback on ICH Updates

Q&A:

❖ **Q: …**
  ➢ **A: …**

❖ **Q: …**
  ➢ **A: …**

❖ **Q: …**
  ➢ **A: …**

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DHCD Updates

Greener Government Act Implications
- ❖ Any project not selected by end of this CY23 would need to be net zero (building generates as much energy as it puts out).
- ❖ Affordable Housing DHCD would need to be greener, faster than market rate. Working with DMPED, Council, etc. on possible solutions to address this.
- ❖ Impact on number of projects/units able to move forward.

FY24 Annual Action Plan (Public Hearing Announcement)
- ❖ …

Other
- ❖ …

Help us build and protect affordable housing in D.C.

NOTICE

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) invites public comment on its:

- 2024 Annual Action Plan draft
- 2024 National Housing Trust Fund Allocation Plan draft
- Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area selection

REVIEW THE DOCUMENTS
Visit dhcd.dc.gov. For a hard copy, email opm.questions@dc.gov or call (202) 442-7239. Include your name and mailing address.

COMMENT STARTING JULY 10
Submit comments
- At the public hearing
- By email to opm.questions@dc.gov
- By mail to Colleen Green, Director, DHCD 1800 Martin Luther King Jr., Avenue SE Washington, DC 20020
- Leave a voicemail at (202) 442-7239

COMMENT DEADLINE
Thursday, August 10, 2023 – 5 pm

ATTEND THE PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday, July 18, 2023, – 6:30 pm
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Public Library
901 G St NW, Washington, DC 20001

Translation services at the hearing:
- Spanish interpreter
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (800) 201-7165

For Amharic, Chinese-Mandarin/Cantonese, French or Vietnamese interpreters, email opm.questions@dc.gov or call Tilla Hall at (202) 442-7239 by 5 pm, Tuesday, July 11, 2023. You must be pre-registered.

WE ARE WASHINGTON DC

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Feedback on DHCD Updates

Q&A:

❖ **Q from Jakia: When you are speaking about being Greener, what about the poor housing conditions of many of the poor? There are very severe and unhealthy living units for PSH through the different Voucher programs and shelters? Please take note of this even if you can not explain it to me now.**

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Partner /Community Concerns

Feedback, including Comments, Concerns, and any Q&A

❖ **FDBK from Rachelle:** just applied at an apt building they charged me.500 admin fee I have a voucher got denied for not making 3x the rent that is a barrier.

❖ **Q from Dr. Mayaalla:** How are you to know for sure what the voucher is going to cover? For example, utilities, etc. There are not a lot of properties that include the utilities. It is not an issue with identifying a unit, more so what is covered by the voucher.

❖ **FDBK from Jakia:** Being denied healthcare is really not an accident with DC medical system. It is very difficult, and it is very sad to not be able to get medical treatment. The issues behind medical need to be discussed and really changed.

❖ **Next Step:** Will follow up to see what information we can gather to answer this question by next month's meetings.

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    a) DMV-issued Non-Drivers Identification Card

    b) DHCF: Medicaid Renewals

V. Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)

DMV-Issued Non-Drivers Identification Card *NEW*

In order to acquire an ID voucher an applicant must be experiencing homelessness and prove their identity with a birth certificate or social security card.

- ❖ **Providers**: Continue requesting ID Voucher/Proof of Residency Forms via DHS. Email Kanesha.Brown2@dc.gov to coordinate pickup.
- ❖ **Clients**: For a list of providers who can assist, visit the DHS website [here](#).

Medicaid Renewals

❖ **Medicaid Renewal!**
  ➢ Led by DHCF
  ➢ Beneficiaries must update contact data to re-enroll. Visit districtdirect.dc.gov
  ➢ Starting on Saturday, April 1, 2023, Medicaid beneficiaries will have to renew their health coverage within the next 14 months -by before June 30, 2024
  ➢ CoC stakeholders are asked to be advised, help advertise

❖ **How You Can Help:**
  ➢ Visit DHCF Medicaid Renewal Information Webpage
  ➢ View the DHCF Communications Toolkit to help message
  ➢ Join biweekly DHCF meetings – Email Medicaid.renewal@dc.gov.
  ➢ Questions? Email Medicaid.restart@dc.gov.

Feedback re Announcements/Reminders

Feedback, including Comments, Concerns, and any Q&A

❖ **Q: …**

❖ **A: …**

❖ **Q: …**

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