



***District of Columbia***  
***Interagency Council on Homelessness***



***ERSO Committee***  
***December 2, 2020***

# Meeting Agenda



- I. Welcome & Call to Order
- II. Updates
  - I. COVID Peer Educators
  - II. Quiet Hours
- III. Discussion
  - I. Singles Streamlining Intake
  - II. Hypothermia Check-in
- IV. Updates & Announcements
  - I. Call for Co-Chairs
  - II. Next Meeting
- v. Adjournment

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# NEW: COVID-19 Peer Educator Program

# COVID-19 Peer Educator Program: Goals

1

Generate new energy around continuing protective measures in shelters and create a safe way to share information and resources.

2

Establish a group of shelter residents who can share feedback on COVID-19 shelter operations and make recommendations on how to continue protective measures (e.g. wearing masks, social distancing, screening, etc. ).

3

Provide a short-term employment opportunity to shelter residents.

# COVID-19 Peer Educator Program: Overview

- ❑ Partnership between DHS, TCP, ICH, and DC Health. Funded through a grant from Kaiser Permanente.
- ❑ 8-10 candidates from each DHS-managed low barrier shelter will be selected to become COVID-19 Peer Educators.
- ❑ Paid \$17 an hour, up to \$850 total over the course of the 3 month program
- ❑ COVID-19 Peer Educator Program Components:
  - ❑ **Training** – At least 20 hours of training on COVID-19, modified operations in shelter, the District's Response, and peer engagement strategies
  - ❑ **Peer to Peer Engagement** – At least 20 hours of peer engagement (listening sessions, peer training, presentations)
  - ❑ **Follow-up Sessions** – To share resident feedback & ideas on how to continue protective measures in shelter with DHS, TCP, ICH and DOH.

# COVID-19 Peer Educator Program: Position Description

## Requirements:

- Must currently stay in a low barrier shelter or have stayed in a low barrier shelter within the past year.
- Must be willing to make a 3 month commitment to the program
- Must be able to attend in-person socially distanced trainings

## Qualifications:

Seeking highly motivated individuals who have the following qualities:

- Interest in the program and commitment to its mission
- Ability to explain training content to others
- Leadership skills and good reputation with peers
- Interpersonal skills
- Ability to communicate effectively and build rapport with peers

## Duties:

- Attend a series of in-person trainings at 645 H Street NE
- Organize listening sessions with peers to gain feedback on modified shelter operations
- Educate and train at least 15 peers
- Advise DHS, TCP, ICH, and DOH on ways to continue modified operations in the shelter
- Participate in three follow-up meetings after training
- Submit a time sheet to the Program Manager to track hours

# COVID-19 Peer Educator Timeline

## **Phase 1:** Program Development (in progress)

- 11/19 – Shelter Conditions
- 11/20 – Consumer Engagement Working Group
  - CEWG is currently reviewing draft position description and outreach materials
- 11/20 – 12/3 – Working with DC Health to finalize training materials
- Submit all program materials for review & clearance

## **Phase 2:** Outreach to Shelters

- Schedule interview slots at each shelter
- Publicize opportunity



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# UPDATE: Quiet Hours Summary

## ICH Feedback

## DHS Response

Need to make sure the proposed policy is informed by resident feedback

DHS issued a shelter resident survey to get feedback at all DHS-managed low barrier shelters on resident attitudes towards the proposed policy – 65% are in favor of the policy.

The policy might be too restrictive and would be difficult for many clients to abide by.

DHS revised the policy to include exemptions for designated smoke break/fresh air times, exemptions for leaving for work or special circumstances, and clarified that clients can ask for a reasonable accommodation. The survey results show only 11% of clients regularly leave during those hours.

The policy might be a deterrent for unsheltered clients coming in during hypothermia season.

DHS pushed back the implementation timeline to not overlap with the start of hypothermia season. We will closely monitor our outreach teams to see if any clients are reporting quiet hours as a deterrent.

The policy will need to be implemented consistently and fairly within shelters.

DHS and TCP are asking shelter providers to submit an implementation plan by 12/14 for our review.

## UPDATE: Quiet Hours Next Steps

- DHS & TCP are asking Shelter Providers to develop an implementation plan to submit for review by 12/14.
- The implementation plan will specify the resources, support, and protocols needed to implement the policy.

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# STREAMLINING INTAKE INITIATIVE



1. Initiative Scope, Process & Assumptions
2. Summary of:
  - a) Feedback from community &
  - b) National survey of intake models
3. Vision for Success & Orienting Principles
4. Recommendations
5. Timelines and Next Steps

# Review: Scope, Process & Assumption



## ❖ **Scope:**

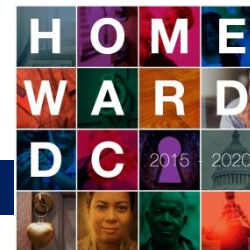
Develop a standardized process for intake and referrals for adult singles entering homeless services system.

## ❖ **Process:**

- Stakeholder Interview
- Review of previous efforts and initiatives currently underway
- TA Support: national scan of intake systems

## ❖ **Assumption:**

- Budget Neutral Initiative – leverages existing programs, technological initiatives, & contracts
- Timeline



# Revisiting Timeline

## Target for implementation: end of eviction moratoriums

Timeframe	Steps	Notes
Early Sept	1. Initial engagement	Establishing scopes of work for TA and identifying appropriate ICH forum for engaging systemwide partners
Month of Sept	2. Identifying range of options for improvements	Surveying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National landscape and identify best practices, models, tools (including protocols)</li> <li>Key staff and partners and establish the range of options</li> </ul>
Month of Oct	3. Evaluating options against the reality of our system	Review of identified recommendations and options by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key implementing agency staff and cabinet leaders and</li> <li>Community stakeholders (i.e. ICH committees/workgroups)</li> </ul>
Month of Nov & Dec	4. Operationalizing transformations	Drafting, reviewing, and maybe even piloting protocols, procedures, and tools
January	5. Implementation	Implementing the appropriate options for streamlining intake





# Summary of Community Feedback

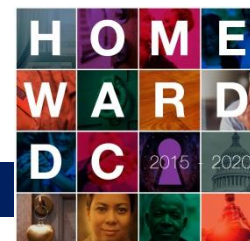
See Handout titled *Summary of Community Feedback*

## ❖ **Communication Challenges**

1. *Communicating about Homeless Services*
2. *Communicating/coordinating within Homeless Services*
3. *Communication w/ Clients in Homeless Services*
4. *Infrastructure Challenges that exacerbate communication challenges*

## ❖ **Process Challenges**

1. *Diversion orientation and off-market housing navigation supports, particularly for clients that are not likely to match to housing*
2. *Info collected at first encounter*
3. *Navigating the other systems that deliver essential services*



# Summary of National Survey

Location	Components	Processes	Notes, particularly to lessons learned in System
<b>Cleveland, OH</b>	Centralized Assessment Center Call-In Number	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safety Concerns</li> <li>2. Diversion/ Problem solving convos</li> <li>3. Housing Barrier Guide</li> <li>4. Shelter Placement</li> <li>5. VI-SPDAT</li> </ol>	Previously attempted assigning staff at the main shelters, but quickly moved to centralized approach to maximize efficiency and ensure systemwide access to diversion/problem solving services.
<b>Philadelphia, PA</b>	Access Points After Hours Access Site After Hours Emergency Services Hotline Mobile Assessors Housing Navigator Services Culture Transformation Initiative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safety, prevention needs and diversion possibilities</li> <li>2. Initiating referral for appropriate service/ intervention (e.g. shelter placement)</li> </ol>	<p>Culture Transformation Initiative is focused on to transforming shelter mission from a "we help people" to a "we assist people in finding housing" using:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Case Management Toolkit &amp; Curriculum</li> <li>2. Peer Support Groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review policies and data</li> <li>Conduct role-play exercises</li> <li>Share strategies and solutions</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>1. Provider Newsletter that highlights model providers and successful transitions.</p>
<b>Seattle, WA</b>	Regional Access Points Community Based Assessors Quality Assurance/Control Measures Emergency Shelter Access Hotline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diversion through an in-depth problem-solving conversation</li> <li>2. Housing Triage Tool to assess Housing Needs and Available Interventions.</li> </ol>	<p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for assessment staff on diversion practices and interview techniques as part of initial training</li> <li>• QAQC measures (see below)</li> </ul>
<b>Southern Nevada, AZ</b>	Access Sites Mobile Outreach Team Assessment Hotline (under consideration)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pre-Screen &amp; problem-solving conversation</li> <li>2. Sub-Popn specific CHAT assessment</li> <li>3. Referrals based on assessment and needs</li> </ol>	<p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Screen: short triage tool that collects basic info, immediate safety needs and identifies appropriate assessment tool.</li> <li>• CHAT is the customized Community Housing Assessment Tool (CHAT). More detailed in the sections re medical needs, pets, threat of victimization, and others.</li> </ul>



# Summary of National Survey Continued



Location	Components	Processes	Notes, particularly to lessons learned in System
<b>Houston, TX Current</b>	Assessment Hubs Housing Documentation Navigators Outreach Teams Telephonic Assessments	Process for housing matches: 1. Matches from priority list 2. Navigator has 7 days to locate 3. If not located, navigator closes referral and moves to the next person on priority list	Systemwide Goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match to Housing: 30 days.</li> <li>Current average: 90 days.</li> </ul> Tools: Public Alerts in HMIS Monthly Housing Navigation WG meetings for all matches
<b>Houston, TX Planned</b>	Re-Housing (Diversion) Initiative	Process for diversion: 1. Problem solving engagement and 2. Referral to appropriate intervention (shelter or targeted prevention services managed by 211).	2 Pronged approach to roll out as follows: Embed diversion staff at assessments sites targeting new entries and Target all shelter residents with low assessment scores that are not likely to match to housing in the foreseeable future  Tools: 1. Provider training on diversion and prevention practices
<b>New York, NY</b>	Central Intake Centers Diversion Pathway Placements Coordinated Assessment Placements Shelter Program Placements: Specialized and General	1. Central Intake 2. Problem solving conversation w/ Diversion CM 3. Referral to appropriate Diversion pathway 4. Assessment for Coordinated Assessment and Placement System (CAPS), if diversion pathways fail	Diversion Pathway Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted Prevention: for rental arrears</li> <li>Substance Abuse Treatment: for active disorders requiring treatment</li> <li>Diversion Services: for individuals w/ support networks nearby</li> <li>Project Reconnect: for individuals w/ support networks in other areas</li> </ul> Shelter Placement Programs are outfitted with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case Management,</li> <li>Housing Placement Assistance, and</li> <li>Specialized supports, based on programming</li> </ul> Note that there are 3 specialized programming tracks: 1) employment, 2) substance use and 3) mental health –for high mental health needs.



# Vision for Success & Orienting Principles

## Vision:

A system where users have clarity about homeless services, available housing resources, & support needed to create a realistic plan for exit.

### ❖ **System Re-Orientation to Diversion & Rapid-Exit**

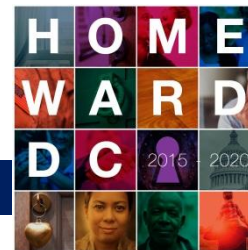
- Stagnant, sense that everyone (clients & staff) are waiting for PSH
- Need for sparking creative problem-solving

### ❖ **Building out Realistic Housing Options**

- Without formal system for exploring other viable options, PSH will always appear to be best option for & worth waiting for.

### ❖ **Systems/Services Navigation Support**

- Empower and support clients & staff w/ tools and info to move from entry to exit.



# Recommendations

## System Re-Orientation to Diversion & Rapid-Exit

1. Retrain/Reorient Continuum
2. Increase Transparency of Process and Resources - Data Boards
3. Culture Change Agents – Peer Ambassadors

## Building out Realistic Housing Options

4. Standard Intake Tool & Housing Plan
5. Expand Financial & Service Offerings
6. Off-Market Housing Broker

## Systems/Services Navigation Support

7. Homeless Services Navigation Center and Hotline
8. Provider & Client Portals

## Other important considerations:

9. Infrastructure Needs
0. COVID-Related Changes

### Notes:

- Not listed in order of importance or implementation
- We will lay out an implementation plan later in this deck



# Retrain/Reorient Continuum Staff

## ❖ Definition:

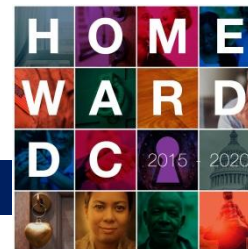
- Through training & facilitated group meetings, develop a diversion mindset and approach focused on rapid exit. Especially for shelter and outreach staff but ultimately, feedback that it is critical to reorient entire continuum (including advocates & Mayor's Office).

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- TA underway (CAHP, RRH & Project Reconnect)
- ICH work group & DHS provider meetings
- TCP contract in last option year. New contract FY22.

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- Contract requirements for new contract
- Support to identify appropriate training providers (as needed)



# Increase Transparency of Process & Resources

## ❖ Definition:

- Use data boards, storyboards, & townhalls to support clients & staff develop a realistic understanding of housing resources & process.
- Use exit data (which requires improving collection) to support intake tool and create a feedback loop (by appropriately reward staff for timely exits that do not require system housing resources)

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- DHS's effort to clarify/track housing vouchers
- CAHP data for recommended housing opportunities
- CAHP BFZ dashboards for Singles, Chronic & Vets

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- Defining data points to reflect to community
- Process/procedures for hosting/posting data
- Process/procedures for incentivizing shelter & outreach staff





# Culture Change Agents: Peer Ambassadors

## ❖ Definition:

- Utilize current (informal) communication leaders to facilitate convos re resource availability & realistic housing options with goal to normalize shared housing, single rooms, etc.

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- DBH Peer Program
- DHS COVID Peer Program
- ICH CEWG Work Group

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- Formal and informal program description





# Standard Intake Tool & Housing Plan

## ❖ Description:

- ❑ Intake tool designed to collect info needed to support diversion & exploration of realistic housing options, including options like pooling resources for shared housing or single room rentals.
- ❑ Formal housing plan that outlines concrete, actionable steps to reach goal of exiting system that clients & providers can access.

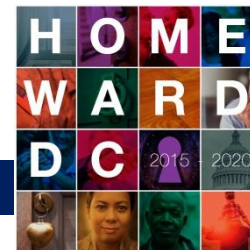
## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- ❑ HMIS
- ❑ VI-SPDAT tool and timeline for introducing v3

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- ❑ Intake tool & housing plan worksheet, including protocols
- ❑ Options for auto-populating forms to minimize duplication of entry b/n VI-SPDAT & intake tool

# Expanding Financial & Service Offerings



## ❖ Definition:

- Develop formal services and financial supports that increase the viability and appeal of housing alternatives to PSH.
- Provide ongoing (post-placement) housing tenancy supports and services, including conflict mediation/resolution for clients in shared housing

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- RRH
- Project Reconnect

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- Research (including stakeholder engagement) to identify type and level of supports that would be most appropriate
- Develop protocols & procedures to administer expanded programs

# Off-Market Housing Navigation



## ❖ Definition:

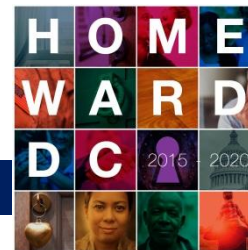
- ❑ Create a formal resource to access and navigate non-traditional housing market with a focus on shared housing & room rental opportunities
- ❑ Consider expanding landlord supports and engagement strategies to include landlords of clients that are not receiving PSH or RRH

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- ❑ DHS/TCP Landlord initiative
- ❑ Existing housing navigation staff across DHS & providers
- ❑ Project Reconnect

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- ❑ Funding an Off-Market Housing Broker position
- ❑ Job description & resources for Off-Market Housing Broker



# Homeless Services Navigation Center & Hotline

## ❖ Definition:

- Hub for clients and staff as they navigate homeless resources, housing resources and other essential services/systems.
- Envisioned components:
  - ✓ Diversion-focused call center
  - ✓ Navigation support (both off-market housing & other systems/services)
  - ✓ Electronic platforms for up-to-date information and shelter availability
  - ✓ Physical space to access resources and information

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- COVID Hotline & RFP for Professional Call Center Services
- Existing Day Centers: DDSC & Adams

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- Funding or staffing for Systems/Services Navigation & Diversion positions
- Job descriptions and framework
- Feedback to explore citing future locations in the West End & Ward 7



## ❖ Definition:

- ❑ **Provider Portal – 1)**Real time communication re. capacity and opportunities for referrals and a repository of policies, and **2)** current procedures and training resources.
- ❑ **Client Portal:** Place to store documents and offer clients access to their own information (excluding case notes) and housing plan.

## ❖ Current Elements to Consider:

- ❑ HMIS
- ❑ CAHP website
- ❑ SIMS (Shelter Intake Management System)

## ❖ Elements to Develop:

- ❑ Research/inventory of existing infrastructure & capabilities



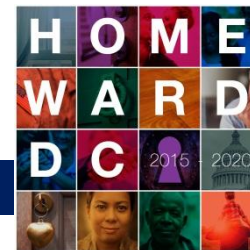
# Infrastructure Needs & COVID Changes

## ❖ Infrastructure Needs

- High speed internet at shelters
- HMIS Visibility

## ❖ COVID-Related Changes in Place

- Shelters open 24 hrs
- Assigned beds & ability to leave personal belongings
- Targeted beds for medically vulnerable clients



# Revisiting Timeline

## Target for implementation: end of eviction moratoriums

Timeframe	Steps	Notes
<b>Early Sept</b>	1. Initial engagement	Establishing scopes of work for TA and identifying appropriate ICH forum for engaging systemwide partners
<b>Month of Sept</b>	2. Identifying range of options for improvements	Surveying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National landscape and identify best practices, models, tools (including protocols)</li> <li>Key staff and partners and establish the range of options</li> </ul>
<b>Month of Oct</b>	3. Evaluating options against the reality of our system	Review of identified recommendations and options by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key implementing agency staff and cabinet leaders and</li> <li>Community stakeholders (i.e. ICH committees/workgroups)</li> </ul>
<b>Month of Nov &amp; Dec</b>	4. Operationalizing transformations	Drafting, reviewing, and maybe even piloting protocols, procedures, and tools
<b>January</b>	5. Implementation	Implementing the appropriate options for streamlining intake



# Approach to Implementation

## ❖ **Plan Now, Pilot Now: Implementation by March**

1. Homeless Services Navigation Center and Hotline
2. Increase Transparency of Process and Resources - Data Boards
3. Culture Change Agents – Peer Ambassadors
4. Infrastructure: High speed internet at shelters & HMIS Visibility

## ❖ **Plan Now, Do Later: Implementation by FY22**

5. Retrain/Reorient Continuum
6. Provider & Client Portals
7. Expand Financial & Service Offerings
8. Standard Intake Tool & Housing Plan
9. Off-Market Housing Broker





# Questions & Feedback?

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# Hypothermia Check-in



- ❖ Feedback on Hypothermia Season operations

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# Announcements



- ❖ Call for community co-chair.
- ❖ If you would like to submit your name, please do so here: <https://forms.gle/nwK1xb8LRff6iEva7>

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- ❖ Agenda
  - Capital Improvement Updates
  - Resume Program Rules Discussion

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