

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)  
Steering Committee Meeting Agenda  
Thursday, November 6th, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am  
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

## MINUTES

1. **Open Forum** **5 Minutes**

Meghan Morrow-Rafferty is also helping with access to the HMIS for data. The goal is to complete a nationwide list of every veteran experiencing homelessness. There is a new VA initiative to have every VA Medical Center host a Veterans' list for their entire catchment area. They are partnering with CCHA and the BOS to compile their comprehensive list. Jason Brill and Will Vilardo are working to pull that list together.

VA BNL FAQ for CoC's:

[Veteran By-Name List Requirement - VA Homeless Programs](#)

VA BNL FAQ:

[Veteran By-Name List: Frequently Asked Questions - VA Homeless Programs](#)

2. **Approves Minutes and Agenda** **5 Minutes**

a. **Approval of the Fall Community Meeting Minutes**

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve the Fall Community Meeting minutes. Jason Brill seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 19 for, none opposed, and no abstentions.

b. **Approval of the September Community Meeting Minutes**

Jen Hunter motioned to approve the September Community Meeting Minutes. Taylor Thibault seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 17 for, none opposed, and no abstentions.

c. **Approval of the November Meeting Agenda**

Megan Bridges motioned to approve the November Meeting Agenda. Jason Brill seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 19 for, none opposed, and no abstentions.

3. **VOTE – Consideration of the proposed 2025 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Application** **5 Minutes**  
[Scoring Tool](#)

The proposed Scoring Tool has been adjusted to meet the priorities of the pending Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) application. The main shift is a transition of programming from permanent supportive housing to transitional housing to meet the requirements of the new HUD administration. The application period for this year is

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expected to drop from 90 days to 14 days, leaving little time to collaborate on a new application.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness is still advocating to change and increase the prioritization for permanent supportive housing in the CoC NOFO application.

It is still possible that the 2-year application from last year will be honored before changes are administered to the application priorities.

These proposed drafts can be re-drafted, and voted upon by the Steering Committee, if the NOFO application is released with different priorities than those that have been expected.

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve the 2025 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Application Scoring Tool. Stephanie Bixby seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 15 for, none opposed, and one abstention.

**4. VOTE – Consideration of the proposed [2025 CCHA Ranking Policy](#) 5 Minutes**

Most of the changes have been made regarding the reallocation policy for funds that have not been expended by previous grantees.

Stephanie Bixby motioned to approve the 2025 CCHA Ranking Policy. Jen Hunter seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 15 for, none opposed, and three abstentions.

Membership was encouraged to reach out with any questions about the approved drafts regarding the Ranking Policy and Scoring tool for this year's NOFO.

**5. Fall Community Meeting Feedback 10 Minutes**

The goal is to foster an atmosphere to encourage others to come and speak at our community meetings.

There was some feedback about increasing the dialogue during those meetings. It may help to organize a full circle for people to engage each other better throughout the meeting.

More listening, conversation, and responsiveness should be built into the meeting design. Perhaps we could set aside the required business for those meetings to be done in a separate meeting.

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It was mentioned that it would be helpful for us to learn more about how the speakers became unhoused to help identify causes of homelessness.

It would be helpful to format the Community Meeting as an open-house and less formal.

The Membership & Outreach Committee is in discussion about separating the business and the outreach pieces of future community meetings.

Perhaps we could theme the community meeting to address a major question or questions regarding solutions to homelessness in Chittenden County.

A member of the public spoke about his experience losing his home and asked for someone to talk to about his experience. He will connect with Taylor Thibault after the meeting.

**6. Data Review**

**15 Minutes**

**a. Coordinated Entry – Stephanie Smith**

See linked report above for the Coordinated Entry Data. The number of unhoused families has dropped over the past months as several of them have been able to secure housing. This report contains people who are literally homeless, not at imminent risk. The Chittenden County population has hovered between 650-850 since the COVID-19 pandemic.

**b. Unsheltered Data – Travis Poulin & Jonathan Farrell**

See linked report above from Travis Poulin for the Community Resource Center (CRC) Data and the data from Jonathan the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS).

This was the first month back at the new CRC location. CHC has started to provide medical outreach onsite again. The CRC will be featured in a “Brave Little State” podcast in December. Staff have addressed two overdoses on site over the past weeks and were able to save the lives of those involved.

The COTS Waystation is now open! COTS just finished their boot collection event and have boots to provide to people. The CRC also has supplies to provide for the people who use their services.

Shelter Capacity: Spectrum has two, Anew Place has one, COTS has three, CHT has one, Steps has one, CVOEO has Champlain Place (42 beds) and the Foundations Family Shelter in Williston is moving to 204 Pearl Street in Burlington. They are also establishing a recovery shelter for substance recovery at 184 Pearl Street. They are planning on operating the Miller Center for extreme

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cold-weather events, which is at a threshold of -10 degrees (with windchill). The Miller Center has a capacity of 90 people.

The Emergency Rental Assistance Motel Program (ERAP) will be open to a wider pool of people after December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ari Kisler mentioned that the Governor would be the right person to advocate to for changes to the threshold for emergency cold weather event.

7. [Vermont Human Services Board Legal Decision](#) – Vermont Legal Aid **10 Minutes**

The TLDR is that Vermont Human Services Board recently ruled that emergency housing nights before July 1, 2025, do not count towards the 80-day maximum. If someone has been denied emergency housing by Economic Services because they have used 80 days of emergency housing, **AND** they have not used 80 days since July 1, 2025, they should appeal. The link I included above has all the info about how to appeal. This HSB decision is on appeal to the Supreme Court, so it is possible that it could be overturned, but as of right now, it remains law and precedent. Oral argument for this case at the Supreme Court is November 18 at 9:45 AM.

8. **SNAP Benefits Update – CVOEO** **10 Minutes**

Ask Travis to send me his information. SNAP benefits will not be federally funded while the government is shut down. The State of Vermont has decided to fund the 3Squares program as a supplement in the meantime; state benefits were released on November 7th and more will be released after mid-November if the federal government shutdown persists.

The State of Vermont has also provided \$250,000 to support food shelves across the state while federal SNAP benefits are not available.

If the federal government decides to issue SNAP benefits in November, they will also be eligible for the state benefits. The state benefits are a one-time offering and will not limit the SNAP resources they can receive in the future.

Vermont 2-1-1 is working hard to update their resources to respond to the stop in SNAP benefits during the federal government shutdown. They are advocating with their 2-1-1 partners nationwide to resume SNAP benefits during the government shutdown. Vermont 2-1-1 is meant to cover questions outside of regular business hours; during regular business hours, people should be calling the State of Vermont Economic Services Division for resources.

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**9. Housing Choice Voucher Funding – Burlington Housing Authority 10 Minutes**

Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) is funded on a calendar year, so they have funding until December 31<sup>st</sup>; their vouchers are not affected by the government shutdown. They are no longer in shortfall, and they are starting to gain a reserve they will need moving into 2026 to account for raising rents and stagnating incomes of participants.

They are having difficulty leasing their units; however, their waitlists are dwindling. The Decker Towers waitlist is nearly exhausted. They are struggling to have people return their notice letters for housing units; the paperwork is not getting returned. They are open to those who are at risk of homelessness, not just those experiencing literal homelessness. 20 units at the BayRidge development are subsidized for people experiencing homelessness.

**10. [Gender Data Collection CCHA/ICA MOU](#) - VOTE WARNED 10 Minutes**

HMIS data standards retired the gender data field. The federal government now requires data collection on sex instead. This MOU is being proposed to allow ICA to continue collecting data on gender, not just sex. Since this gender data collection will be optional and no federal funds are allocated to those efforts.

CVOEO staff is concerned about recording gender and sex data about the populations they serve.

There is no federal reporting regarding gender data, so organizations can avoid federal repercussions for collecting the data. The data collection is optional but agreed upon through this MOU.

It was mentioned that it is best practice to collect gender data to allow participants in the system to feel seen and respected. It is also helpful to collect that data to inform the accurate reality through our reporting.

Law Enforcement would need to submit a subpoena to the ICA legal team before data could be shared; however, ICA's contract allows them to refuse to share data collected.

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve the Gender Data Collection CCHA/ICA MOU. Robert Harris seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 13 for, none opposed, and 4 abstentions.

**11. HUD Notice of Funding Opportunity – Request for Interest 10 Minutes**

The deadline for Requests for Information is tomorrow November 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm. This is for new projects, not renewals from the CCHA application from last year.

**12. Legislative Updates 10 Minutes**

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**a. Frank Knaack – Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont**

The relaxed rules to the Emergency Rental Assistance Housing program will resume on December 1<sup>st</sup>. 574 rooms are being used now, but there is an 1100-room cap, so there is capacity available.

HHAV is continuing to push for revenue generating policies in the 2026 legislative session. They are communicating a narrative about the role and permanently affordable housing plays in the spectrum of housing.

They are requesting an additional \$50 million for the Vermont Housing Conservation Board (VHCB) to build additional affordable housing.

Advocacy during this year's legislative session was effective in clawing back funding that was originally slated to go elsewhere.

Vermont ACLU is working on legislation to combat the criminalization of homelessness.

There is no clear idea when the federal government shutdown will end.

This is Frank's last CCHA meeting as he is transitioning out of his role at HHAV.

**13. Breakout Groups**

**10 Minutes**

**a. How can CCHA support advocacy efforts in Vermont?**

Due to time the breakout groups were tabled until the December meeting.

**b. What legislative efforts should we prioritize?**

**14. Standing Sub-Committee Updates**

**10 Minutes**

- a. Strategic Planning**
- b. Coordinated Entry**
- c. Housing Retention**
- d. Outreach and Membership**
- e. NOFO and Ranking**
- f. Veterans**
- g. Data, PIT, & HMIS**

*We encourage questions and participation in discussion and place great emphasis on hearing from people with lived experience of homelessness and/or housing insecurity. If you are a person who has lived experience, you will be provided with a stipend for attending; please let us*

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*know after the meeting concludes. Please reach out to us prior or let us know when you arrive at the meeting should you need any accommodation(s).*

*Thank you so much for joining us.*