

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, July 3, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am

Virtual Meeting

[Teams Link](#)

Minutes

1. Open Forum

10 Minutes

Kerri updated that flex funds are available for expenses under \$250.00, where another resource may not be able to assist.

Alison Lmagna introduced herself and is the new Executive Director of United Way of Northwest Vermont.

Anna Wageling -Burlington Police Department

Kathryn Blanchard – The Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

Cheryl Jackins – Pathways Vermont

Erin Cleere – Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

Daniel Blankenship – Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA)

Marissa Darling – Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

Deana Hartog – Vermont Legal Aid

Elaine Soto – Howard Center

Elizabeth Gilman – United Ways of Vermont

Emily Korkosz – Turning Point Center of Chittenden County

Frank Knaack – HHAV – HHAV has cancelled their July meeting and will resume in August.

Kristina James – Economic Services Division (ESD)

Jane Helmstetter – Community Volunteer

Jennifer Wright – Ascend Housing Allies

Jordan Jenson – Howard Center – Chittenden Clinic will be implementing new take-home policies on July 28th to help people start treatment.

Julia Hawley – Department of Children & Families (DCF)

Kelly C – PCVT

Kim Laroche – Lund

Maggie Pierce – Anew Place

Martha Marciel – University of Vermont (UVM) Health Network

Meghan Masterson – KidSafe Collaborative – Their child support team has openings in July and August.

Chelsea Phillips – Economic Services Division (ESD)

Representative Sarita Austin – State Legislature and Colchester Planning Commission

Sarah Russell – City of Burlington

Taylor Thibault – Champlain Housing Trust – Harbor Place has secured \$14,500 to help families stay housed longer after the motel exits on July 1st.

Stephanie Ainsworth – Pathways Vermont

Stephanie Smith – Champlain Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)

Tiffany Rich – Champlain Place – They are trying to fill their available units.

Travis Poulin – CVOEO – Farm to Family coupons are now available. The City of Burlington donated a pallet of water bottles for outreach teams to pick up from Community Action. Travis will arrange stipends for this meeting for anyone with lived experience.

Karen Vastine – UVM Health Network

Virginia Finn – United Way

Will Karod – Safe Harbor
Darren – Safe Harbor
Will Towne – Spectrum Youth & Family Services – Their new 8-bed shelter is now open in St. Albans.
Derek Brouwer – Seven Days
Bethany Whitlock – City of Burlington – She is operating as the Collaborative Applicant in the absence of Marcella Gange.
Anera Foco – Dismas of Vermont
Amy Carmola – United Way of Northwest Vermont
Jonathan Farrell – Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) – They have funds available for transporting folks to a housing option in-state or elsewhere.

2. Approves Minutes and Agenda

10 Minutes

a. Approval of the [June Meeting Minutes](#)

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve the June meeting minutes with the changes requested by Jason Brill. Meghan Masterson seconded. Motioned carried. 15 votes for approval.

Lund - Approve
Ascend - Approve
Agency of Human Services (AHS) - Approve
United Way Northwest Vermont - Approve
ANEW Place - Approve
Howard Center - Approve
United Ways of Vermont - Approve
Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO)
Champlain Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) - Approve
Veterans Affairs (VA) - Approve
Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) - Approve
Jane Helmstetter - Approve
Pathways Vermont - Approve
Spectrum Youth & Family Services - Approve
Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) - Approve

b. Approval of the July Meeting Agenda

Amy Carmola motioned to approve the July meeting agenda. Taylor Thibault seconded the motion. The motion carried. 15 votes for approval.

Spectrum Youth & Family Services - Approve
KidSafe Collaborative - Approve

Veterans Affairs (VA) - Approve
Jane Helmstetter – Approve
Agency of Human Services (AHS) - Approve
United Way of Northwest Vermont - Approve
ANEW Place - Approve
Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) - Approve
Howard Center - Approve
Champlain Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) - Approve
Ascend - Approve
Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) - Approve
Turning Point Center of Chittenden County - Approve
United Ways of Vermont - Approve
Pathways Vermont - Approve

3. Data Review

20 Minutes

a. Coordinated Entry – Stephanie Smith

Stephanie Smith presented her monthly data review for Coordinated Entry (CE). The 62+ population has increased significantly since June of 2024.

Meghan Masterson asked for clarification on Phases 1, 2, and 3. Stephanie said the phases were created to help classify what resources different clients would be eligible for. It helps reduce efforts that would end with a client finding they are ineligible for the resource they applied for. Phase 1 means the client is beginning to identify potential resources. Phase 2 would be folks who have identified or secured something like a Section 8 voucher, preparing them to pay for housing. Phase 3 means the clients are referral ready for some housing resources.

Sarah Russell mentioned the reason the phases were created was to align the way case management is conducted across multiple organizations in Chittenden County.

Sarah also asked if the 27 households that were housed last month went into any new developments. Stephanie mentioned that a lot of units turnover at this time of the year; however, Tenth Calvary, a Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) property, also opened and housed multiple folks in May.

Bay Ridge is a new development of studios and 1-bedroom apartments with CHT that is now starting to take referrals from CE. Stephanie also mentioned more 2-bedroom units have come online recently, which will help meet the need of larger families searching for housing.

b. Community Resource Center – Travis Poulin

Travis Poulin presented the monthly data review from the Community Resource Center (CRC). They secured funding from the State of Vermont for additional staff at the CRC, bringing them to a total of four employees onsite. They are especially busy on Wednesdays when they have a food truck onsite for

their lunch service. CVOEO has supplies for camping to provide for folks who are being forced to live outside.

Taylor Thibault asked if the Fletcher Library would have space for families to go during the daytime hours.

Sarah Russell said they have space at their North Avenue and College Street locations for families. When the heat index exceeds 90 or 95 degrees for two days or longer the City of Burlington is setting up heat relief areas. She also mentioned the One Community Center is also open during the heat emergency.

Elizabeth Gilman provided a resource for tracking hot weather day resources:
<https://www.healthvermont.gov/environment/climate-health/hot-weather>

Jonathan Farrell announced the day station will be open for adults to cool off during warm weather days. 65% of their folks are unhoused. They had 98 people during the day during the last heat emergency.

Martha Marciel asked if a wish list has been created for items needed in the community. CVOEO only accepts new donations for camping; they received too many unusable donations when they accepted used goods in past years.

4. [Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes Approval](#) – VOTE – Stephanie Smith

15 Minutes

Stephanie Smith walked through the suggested changes. A step was added to Phase 2 to require clients to “Complete the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) final application and submit”. This change was suggested due to difficulties realized when clients dropped out of the housing process and there were not enough backup potential tenants in place to fill an available unit.

The Unit Queue is now known as the Housing Search List.

Travis Poulin motioned to approve the Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes. Jane Helmstetter seconded the motion. The motion carried. 18 votes for approval. 2 abstentions.

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) - Approve

Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) - Approve

Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) - Approve

KidSafe Collaborative - Approve

ANew Place - Approve

Spectrum Youth & Family Services - Approve

United Ways of Vermont - Approve

United Way Northwest Vermont - Approve

Howard Center - Approve

Agency of Human Services (AHS) - Abstain

Turning Point Center of Chittenden County - Approve

Pride Center - Approve

Ascend - Approve

Jane Helmstetter - Approve

Veterans Affairs (VA) - Approve

5. [Coordinated Entry 2023 Evaluation Approval](#) – VOTE – Stephanie Smith

15 Minutes

Stephanie Smith walked through the 2023 Coordinated Entry Evaluation. The Coordinated Entry Committee will work on the 2024 Coordinated Entry Evaluation over the next six months. 42% of the new households in Coordinated Entry were previously housed in units and already registered in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The average experience in Coordinated Entry is getting longer and this is indicative of the lack of affordable housing units in Chittenden County. Sarah Russell mentioned it is critical to communicate to the legislature the amount of time people are spending in Coordinated Entry before finding housing, since the average stay is far longer than the 80-day cap provided by the General Assistance Emergency Housing motel program. Sarah also asked what portion of the folks reentering Coordinated Entry were part of the Permanent Supportive Housing programs? Stephanie mentioned the Permanent Supportive Housing programs in Chittenden County have a long-term success rate of 75-80 %. People who are unsuccessful often require a higher level of resource provision than the programs can offer. Jane Helmstetter asked if retention supports are included in the Coordinated Entry phasing process. Stephanie said the retention supports are provided in Phase 2.

Jonathan Farrell thanked Stephanie for highlighting the need to assess the appropriate fit for clients for specific housing options, since a mismatch of services can lead to unsuccessful outcomes.

Travis Poulin motioned to approve the Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes. Sarah Russell seconded the motion. The motion carried. 11 votes for approval. 1 abstention.

Champlain Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) - Approve

Howard Center - Approve

Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) - Approve

ANew Place - Approve

United Way of Northwest Vermont- Approve

Jane Helmstetter - Approve

Agency of Human Services (AHS) - Approve

Spectrum Youth & Family Services - Approve

Turning Point Center of Chittenden County - Approve

Veterans Affairs (VA) - Approve

United Ways of Vermont - Approve

Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) – Abstain (Not able to review ahead of time)

6. Responding to Recent Exits from the General Assistance Emergency Housing Program (Motel Program) 15 Minutes

a. Economic Services Division – Kristina James

Kristina James provided a statewide snapshot of the household housed under the recent Executive Order from the Governor.

They provided intensive case management over the 90 days of the Executive Order to ensure they can connect to permanent housing or other resources.

The new GA Emergency Housing motel program has new eligibility requirements (see linked presentation above).

30% of their gross income is provided by the participants to cover the cost of the motel room.

There are no exceptions to the 80-day cap on nights stayed.

Frank Knaack asked which pregnant women are eligible for the program, whether it was anyone who is pregnant, or just in the third trimester.

Jane Helmstetter asked how the 80-day cap was established by the legislature since it seems arbitrary. Frank mentioned it was a combination of the funds available and political will of the legislators.

Jonathan Farrell mentioned the cap used to be 28 days for individuals and 84 days for families.

Taylor Thibault asked if data is available showing what percentage of families exiting the General Assistance Emergency Housing motel program have found a source of housing. Kristina mentioned they have self-reported exit reports from the clients leaving the housing. Taylor highlighted that many folks are still able to stay in their motel housing for the next week or so since many government provided funding streams are distributed at the start of the month.

7. Legislative Updates

15 Minutes

a. Frank Knaack – Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont

Frank Knaack offered some updates. He provided the following links:

<https://helpingtohousevt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/FY-2026-Housing-Shelter-and-Services-Appropriations-1.pdf>

VHCB was fully funded with \$39.6 million, and 60% of that can be used for housing production. They also received a separate \$5 million in funding for housing production.

The Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) received \$33 million in funding.

\$2 million was set aside by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) for shelter provision.

The General Assistance Emergency Housing program was funded at the level it was for 2025.

Frank provided this General Assistance Emergency Housing program FAQ -

<https://helpingtohousevt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/FY-2026-General-Assistance-Emergency-Housing-FAQs.pdf>

Frank Reiterated the veto of H.91 does not influence the Budget Year 2026. Frank mentioned there is \$7 million that was supposed to be used to transition the H.91 program that may now be used for future federal funding matches, but more clarification on those available funds is needed.

Frank will be in touch regarding advocacy efforts to use those funds for specific purposes.

Representative Sarita Austin asked Frank to attend a Housing and Ways and Means Committees meeting to make sure all the legislators are receiving the same information.

8. [2025 PIT Count Report](#)

10 Minutes

Sarah Russell presented the report on behalf of Meghan Morrow-Rahtery who was absent. Additional questions can be directed to [Meghan](#). A narrative report will be shared with the public next week. The data for the 2025 PIT Count was skewed because of the cold weather emergency shelters that were provided the night of the PIT count due to low temperatures.

The drop in 2023 of the people chronically experiencing homelessness was due to a classification change in the General Assistance Emergency Housing motel program, which counted as “Transitional Housing” at that point. This forced people to restart their count of time spent chronically homeless.

Representative Sarita Austin asked for clarification about who is classified as “Chronic”. Sarah clarified they must have been unhoused for 12 consecutive months or 4 episodes that combine to 12 months or more. The chronic definition also requires that people also have a disability.

The length of time people are homeless is 10 times longer than it was in 2018. Chittenden County also did not have any chronically homeless “families” in 2018.

Stephanie mentioned that people can be classified as “Chronic” because there simply is no housing for them to afford.

9. Standing Sub-Committee Updates

10 Minutes

- a. Strategic Planning**
- b. Coordinated Entry**
- c. Housing Retention**
- d. Outreach and Membership**

Will Towne, from Spectrum Youth & Family Services, made an announcement that the Membership & Outreach Committee is specifically looking to recruit new members to the Committee who may be currently serving a case management or direct service role.

Will mentioned they had a residence in partnership with the Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) because they could only house people who were chronically homeless and that the population has increased significantly since then.

Will also all mentioned the Committee will be distributing a brief [Membership Survey](#) early next week. Please reach out to [Will Towne](#), [Meghan Masterson](#), or [Bryce Bierman](#) if you have any questions.

- e. NOFO and Ranking**

- f. Veterans**
- g. Data, PIT, & HMIS**

The Data, PIT, & HMIS Committee is meeting on July 21st.

Sarah Russell motioned to adjourn the meeting. Travis Poulin seconded the motion.

The meeting ended at 10:56am.

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 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.