

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 4th, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

Minutes

1. **Open Forum** **10 Minutes**

Nicole Kubon will be leaving the Executive Director position for Steps to End Domestic Violence. They will be posting the job next week.

On October 15th Spectrum Youth & Family Services is closing its Detail Works program.

Adam Avery will start as the new Executive Director for Anew Place next week.

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

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

Jen Hunter motioned to approve the August Meeting Minutes. Sarah Russell seconded the motion. The motion carried, by a vote of 15-0-1.

b. **Approval of the September Meeting Agenda**

Meghan Masterson motioned to approve the September Meeting Agenda. Ciara Kilburn seconded the motion. The motion carried, by a vote of 16-0-0.

3. **[Data Review](#)** **15 Minutes**

a. **Coordinated Entry – Stephanie Smith**

The Coordinated Entry list has been scrubbed for people who have lost touch with the program over the last several months, hence the drop in overall population seen in the month of July.

The increase in the 62+ age group in the last year has been due to several people aging into the range.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) is working to decrease waitlists for high service level programs that serve veterans in Chittenden County.

The number of households housed usually drops in the later summer as a lot of the apartment rentals renew in May and June in Chittenden County.

b. **Unsheltered Data – [Brenna Bedard](#) & [Jonathan Farrell](#)**

The decrease in the number of people counted this past month may be due to a lower level of supplies than they had for distribution earlier in the month.

The Community Resource Center (CRC) will return to their former location at 228 N Winooski Avenue on October 1st. The building will still be under construction, so hot meals may not be available on the first opening day.

The Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) Daystation served 486 individuals through 2083 visits over the month of July. The mail center serves roughly 1000 people.

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The CCHA is trying to bring some of these counts together to eliminate duplication; this will help create a clearer picture of the true count of homeless individuals in Chittenden County. The CRC does cross reference their list against the Coordinated Entry list to try to deduplicate. They are administering about five assessments per day onsite.

A question was asked if data is collected regarding how many people are medically vulnerable. The CRC does ask a few health-related questions regarding conditions of mental & physical disability, as well as substance use disorders when they serve folks onsite.

Coordinated Entry is doing assessments with their full capacity in the motels within the state program. The medical conditions are self-reported since the assessment staff cannot medically assess the people.

A question was asked if there is data collected regarding what percentage of the homeless population is refusing services. It was mentioned that the reality is often that people are interested in services but have lost motivation due to the inadequate service levels. More funding is needed to give hope to those who need the supportive services that our Alliance members need. There is a common stigma in the community that people who are homeless simply do not want services, which is a small piece of the picture often not considered in the full context of the situations of the individuals.

It was also said it can often be disheartening for folks when waitlists for services are months or even years long.

Another question was asked if there are any patterns in the population that have been scrubbed from the CE list. It takes 90 days of no contact within the system for them to be eligible to be scrubbed from the list. This is often because they have returned to staying on couches of friends or family, potentially out of state.

4. **Collaborative Applicant Update** **10 Minutes**
 - a. **Rebecca Reese**
Rebecca has been tasked with hiring and working with Abby Lynn Miller as the consultant to serve as the Collaborative Applicant. It is still uncertain whether the Department of Housing and Urban Development will release an application this year.
5. **City of Burlington Overdose Prevention Center** **10 Minutes**

The organization, Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform, has been chosen to operate the center. The contract is under review and will be finalized soon. The site selection process will involve a significant amount of public outreach and discussion.
6. **HOP Grant Update** **25 Minutes**
 - a. [Kara Casey - Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence](#)
They have 15 member organizations in the state. They provided training, technical assistance, and advocacy support to their partners throughout the state.

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They receive a HOP award for two activities. Since domestic violence prevention providers cannot enter their data into HMIS, they have received funds to administer their own, private database.

They also use HOP funding to operate their Housing Fund; this fund covers rental assistance, security deposits, assistance with utilities, paying back rent, as well as transportation costs.

b. [Lily Sojourner – Office of Economic Opportunity](#)

Every year the office is faced with more requests for funding than they can meet. This year is a tougher year than usual since the scaling back of the General Assistance Emergency Housing statewide motel program.

The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) released their [report](#) highlighting the HOP awards granted throughout the state. They are focusing on providing more shelter beds for year-round services, instead of seasonal beds.

7. Legislative Updates

30 Minutes

a. Frank Knaack – Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont (HHAV)

The special session of the legislature is not likely to occur, so we can expect them to resume their regular session again in January. The federal 2026 budget proposed taking homelessness programs and moving them all into a CDBG program and reducing funding as well.

There is also a concern that the federal government will refuse to release funds that have already been allotted.

September 17th the National Alliance to End Homelessness is hosting their Virtual Capitol Hill Day to hear from local coalitions across the country. HHAV and CCHA will be representing Vermont.

HHAV is hosting its annual meeting next week September 9th from 9:30am-2:30pm. Food will be provided.

b. Senator Sanders' Office

James Paradis provided some perspective from Senator Sanders' office.

On July 24th an executive order was signed that will make it easy to target homeless individuals, especially those with who are disabled due to mental health and substance use conditions and force them into institutionalized treatment programs.

1 billion dollars in SAMHSA grants were cut from the federal budget.

Trump has announced his federalizing of the police and calling into the National Guard to remove homeless individuals from the streets in Washington D.C.

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The Sanders' team believes these moves are not made to make the country safer.

Sanders' office is advocating for a rent cap policy nationally.

A question was asked about whether Burlington or Vermont will become a target of the presidential administration. Welch's office mentioned it has been alluded to that more cities across the country will call in the National Guard.

Sanders' office mentioned this Executive Branch is wielding power in a ways it has never before, the impacts of which have not been fully realized.

A question was asked if there is any federal support available. Are backups being created for materials that have been pulled from government sites? The "Wayback Machine" was cited as a resource that can find information that may no longer be available on government websites.

c. Peter Welch's Office

Miles McGurriman, representing Welch's office, believes the administration is targeting individuals and working to remove civil liberties and repressing dissent. Their office is pushing back against these measures in as many ways as possible.

The House and Senate's budgets are more supportive of housing resources than the original budget presented by the Trump administration.

The Public Housing Capital Improvement Budget received significant cuts, as well as to new tenant-based rental assistance vouchers. The budget has been set to maintain current vouchers instead.

d. Becca Balint's Office

Thomas Renner from Congresswoman Balint's office mentioned the House of Representatives has been slashing some of the budget to appease the Trump administration. The House is scheduled to take a recess the week before the deadline for the budget.

It is still uncertain whether the government will be forced to shut down until a budget can be agreed upon.

Jessica Radbord provided a [relevant article](#) from the Washington Examiner.

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Katie Blanchard from the HUD office mentioned that due to a new Executive Order they have been forced to remove material in any language other than English. They are also no longer able to provide translation services.

The executive order is not law yet, so those who have been required by law to provide translation services should continue to do so.

HHAV has messaging prepared that they can share with partners.

A question was asked whether the City of Burlington's recent sweeps of City Hall Park is related to changes at the federal level. The city is now clearing the park outside of park hours.

The government shut down, due to the budget, is likely.

Federal grant applications are being scraped by AI to remove applications that use some language that may not align with the values of the presidential administration. Balint's office said it may be smart for organizations to avoid potentially conflicting language in federal grant applications. The funds are still available, but some language may make applications less competitive.

The presidential administration has seized more power from the legislative branch to regulate how funding is distributed and where.

Balint's office may be able to assist in unfreezing funding.

The Department of Labor is refusing to release funds that have been earmarked, which has been acutely affecting older Vermonters.

8. Standing Sub-Committee Updates

15 Minutes

a. Strategic Planning

Nicole Kubon will be leaving the Co-Chair position, and they will be looking for a new co-chair to fill her position. The committee is hosting the annual co-chairs retreat on September 8th.

b. Coordinated Entry

They are working on the 2024 CE Evaluation now. The Committee is still looking for a second co-chair.

c. Housing Retention

The Fall Housing Resource Series with a legal and housing retention focus will be held on November 13th in Contois Auditorium at Burlington City Hall from 9:00am-12:00pm.

d. Outreach and Membership

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The Fall Community Meeting will be held on October 9th at 5:30pm in Contois Auditorium at Burlington City Hall. Food will be provided. Vacancies for Steering Committee seats will be communicated in the meantime.

The [CCHA Membership Survey Summary](#) is complete and ready to review.

e. NOFO and Ranking

They will start working with the new Collaborative Applicant consultant soon.

f. Veterans

g. Data, PIT, & HMIS

Meeting adjourned at 10:48am.

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.