

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 3, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

Minutes

1. Open Forum

10 minutes

ICA has started to process HUD system performance measures. They will have a new staff member starting April 21st.

Sean Thomas reported that the Burlington HUD office lease has been cancelled, but the local team plans to continue working.

CVOEO volunteer income tax assistance (VITA) program is still operating. Call 211 to book an appointment.

Chittenden Accountable Community for Health has granted CCHA \$20,000 to help fund after hours streets outreach team's reimbursements supplies and for bulk purchases of other supplies for outreach purposes. Requests can be sent to [Travis Poulin](#).

Vermont 211 has a new online [database](#) on their website that is more user friendly, including a map where clients can save their favorite resources.

Safe Harbor recently launched an outreach calendar for the medical team and asked that partners reach out for medical support scheduling.

Sarah asked when Point-in-Time (PIT) count numbers will be available. ICAs goal is to compile the data by the end of April, but they are still unsure when the data is due to HUD. ICA hopes to have data to present on the PIT count at the spring community meeting on May 8th.

Sarah asked Sean from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), if there have been any updates on CoC funding awards. Sean mentioned there is not a lot of clarity at the federal level and he does not have an update at this time. Sean stated that there may be new HUD representatives in the field offices in the coming weeks.

Sarah asked Stephanie Bixby if the HUD continuing resolution changes whether Burlington Housing Authority will issue tenant-based rental assistance (vouchers) during CY25. Stephanie said the continuing resolution is still a cut in funding and will likely result in a budget shortfall. There is uncertainty as to the budget situation for FY2026.

Marcella announced the Continuum of Care has not received any information regarding grants assigned this year. She is expecting the grant funds to be available this year.

2. Approves Minutes and Agenda

5 minutes

a. Approval of the March Meeting Minutes

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Ari Kisler had a brief administrative change noting that the Housing Opportunity Program was separate from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Travis motioned to approve, as amended. Jen Hunter seconded. 17 in favor. None opposed. 2 abstentions.

b. Approval of the April Meeting Agenda

20 in favor. None opposed. No abstentions.

3. H.91 Overview

30 minutes

a. Paul Dragon – Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)
REPORT

Paul reiterated CVOEO and VCAP have a lot of questions and concerns, as they imagine others in this sector do as well. He wants to keep an open door of communication regarding the proposed changes and regional funding administration and allocations. These changes have come as a surprise to CVOEO. CVOEO has not yet had a chance to testify regarding the changes. The expectation is that planning for regional administration of State funding (HOP and Emergency Housing Program) will begin July 2026. VCAP is advocating for OEO to continue to administer HOP grants for FY27, with transition to the CAP agencies in FY28. CVOEO has requested more time to plan for the changes included in the bill. If funding is to be administrated by CVOEO in the future they will distribute them through a democratic process with the continuum of care (CCHA).

The funding for the HOP and GA Motel programs will remain static. The changes may offer an opportunity to creatively spend funds from a more local perspective. CVOEO has advocated strongly for continuing the state Office of Economic Opportunity. The bill has passed the House Human Services Committee and has been sent to the Senate Health and Welfare Committee and will hear testimony from the CAP agencies on April 16th.

Jonathan thanked Paul and said they have similar concerns. The concern is the disruption of funding. CVOEO does not plan to change to the funding provisions, unless the continuum of care were to decide a change to other programming makes sense.

Will Towne asked if the changing federal dollars passed through to the state is going to cause challenges with unfunded mandate to administer funds locally. The state does provide additional funding for the planning team, including a Grants Manager, support staff, and a new director for the new program, but only for FY26. VCAP is continuing to press the legislature to provide sustainable administrative funding beyond FY26.

Sarah asked about the purpose of the community needs assessment called for in the bill. Paul will share the last [Community Needs Assessment](#) with Bryce Bierman to include in the minutes. The hope is to keep the funding streams the same for two years before any changes would be discussed by the continuum of care.

Will asked if we know if the GA or HOP funding is dependent on federal funding. The state government has been faced with reductions to budgets as well, which will mean this process will contain many

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unknowns. Federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds, while a small percentage, are combined with State General Funds to comprise the total pool of HOP grant funds.

Jonathan Farrell asked about how reporting and billing will operate under the new structure. The Office of Economic Opportunity is responsible for monitoring the Community Action Agencies (CAA) and setting the standard for the state. The CAAs will be tasked with the billing after the transition.

Sarah Russell asked what opportunities are available for continued dialogue, since there hasn't been any testimony heard on this bill yet. CVOEO plans to testify for the first time next week and Paul encourages others in the continuum of care to request the opportunity to testify as well. Paul will share his testimony with the CCHA.

Paul is hoping the allocation from the state will be strong for this region since CVOEO provides support to more people experiencing homelessness than the other CAAs combined. It will be critical to ensure our regional allocation is sufficient to meet the needs.

b. See Bill [HERE](#).

4. Data Review

20 minutes

Stephanie Smith shared a [REPORT](#).

Marcella Gange asked about the difference between households in Coordinated Entry (CE) and those existing outside the program. Stephanie reports this is due to households moving into housing and being moved to "inactive" status because they have not engaged with the system in 90 days. s

Kerri asked Stephanie about the increase in the number of those who are "chronically" homeless. Stephanie mentioned this had, at least partially, to do with changing definitions of the word, "chronic".

Stephanie noted that the 62+ data point is for individuals and not households, which is inconsistent with the other sub-population data points.

5. April 1st Motel Exits

20 Minutes

Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, with the Agency of Human Services, provided an overview of the Governor's Executive Order, following the veto of the BAA on March 28th. The Governor's Executive Order allows the elimination of the 80-day stay cap for eligible households; extending hotel stays for families with children under 19 years of age and those who are considered medically vulnerable, which is classified as:

- a household who is housebound
- requires a lifesaving device that requires electricity
- is in active cancer treatment
- is actively receiving Medicaid-eligible or Medicare-eligible "home-based" nursing services,

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- or is a woman in the third trimester of pregnancy or a woman who will enter the third trimester of pregnancy during the period April 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025.

See the Executive Order [HERE](#).

Prioritized medically vulnerable people will self-certify and be granted provisional approval for extension for 7 days, at which time they will need to provide documentation and have medical records sent to AHS to be reviewed by AHS clinical staff to ensure eligibility.

Jess Holmes from ESD reported Emergency Housing Program was removed from the economic services district office last July.

Sarah mentioned she heard there is a question regarding the legality of the recent executive order signed by the Governor. He may not have been able to create a new class of people to be prioritized but it does not sound like this will be challenged by the legislature at this time.

Marcella asked if the state has any data regarding the number of households that are expected to have their stay extended. Kerri mentioned approximately 19 households with families are expected to have their stays extended, but it is still unclear how many of the total 86 households will be extended due to medical vulnerability.

If people were not housed in the motel program as of March 31st, they will not be eligible for this prioritization for extension through June 30th. This group of people is being referred to as the "March 31 Cohort".

Travis mentioned that Harbor Place was forced to exit 8 households on April 1st.

6. HOP Reports

15 minutes

a. Ascend Housing Alliance – Zeke Davison or Jen Wright

Tabled. See Report [HERE](#).

b. Champlain Housing Trust – Mike Ohler

Tabled.

Sarah would like to have the reports sent in written form as soon as possible to satisfy her sign-off requirements for HOP applications.

7. Legislative Updates

10 minutes

a. Frank Knaack – Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont

Tabled.

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8. Standing Sub-Committee Updates

10 minutes

a. Strategic Planning

Update about sub-committee workplans and sub-committee co-chairs' retreat.

b. Coordinated Entry

CE Evaluation Working Group formed. Please contact [Will Vilardo](#) and [Ciara Kilburn](#) if interested in participating.

c. Housing Retention

May 22nd Housing Retention Seminar in Contois. More details to come!

d. Outreach and Membership

May 8th 4:30-6:30pm spring community meeting. The committee is discussing the formation of the engagement working group for people with lived experience.

e. NOFO and Ranking

f. Veterans

They have their quarterly meeting on April 17th. Reach out to Jason Brill with questions.

g. Data, PIT, & HMIS

ICA will now be sharing a quarterly data report with the CCHA. They are reviewing more potential data sources that may be valuable to include in the report.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32am.

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.