Sonoma County CoC Quarterly Membership Meeting

October 20, 2022
Karissa White, Continuum of Care Coordinator
Araceli Rivera, Homeless Project Specialist

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. CalFresh Application Training
3. HUD's Equal Access Final Rule and Gender Identity Final Rule Annual Training
4. General Continuum of Care and Committee Updates
5. Community Updates

This meeting is being recorded and will be posted online for staff who were unable to attend.

Welcome and Introductions

For Technical Support or to submit questions in writing please contact Araceli Rivera @ Araceli.Rivera@Sonoma-county.org.

Please feel free to raise your virtual hand if you have any questions or comments during the presentation.

Today's Agenda

- ➤ What is CalFresh

- ➤ Important CalFresh Eligibility Concepts

- ➤ Benefit Access and Use

- ➤ How to Apply

- ➤ Maintaining Benefits

- ➤ Questions about my CalFresh

What is CalFresh?

➢ CalFresh is California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps

➢ Helps to improve the health and well-being of qualified households and individuals by providing them a monthly food benefit to supplement their nutritional needs

➢ Largest food assistance program in California, serving approximately 30,000 individuals in Sonoma County

Who May be Eligible for CalFresh?

➢ Households or individuals with low or no income

➢ Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients

➢ Legal Permanent residents and qualified immigrants

➢ Persons residing at an authorized homeless shelter even if meals are provided

Household Composition

➤ A CalFresh household is defined as a group of people who live together and normally purchase and prepare food together.

➤ CalFresh households do not necessarily need to be related but certain family members are required to apply as a household.

➤ Youth that are not under parental control can apply for CalFresh on their own

Homeless Youth

➢ No minimum age to apply

➢ Youth that are not under parental control can apply for CalFresh on their own

➢ College Students*
  ➢ Must meet student eligibility requirements

Calculating Benefits

➢ Benefit amount is based the households' monthly income, household size and allowable monthly expenses/deductions

CalFresh Income Limits

Effective October 1, 2022- September 30, 2023

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income 200% of Federal Poverty Limit	Maximum Net Monthly Income 100% of Federal Poverty Limit
1	$2,266	$1,133
2	$3,052	$1,526
3	$3,840	$1,920
4	$4,626	$2,313
5	$5,412	$2,706
6	$6,200	$3,100
Each Additional Member	+ $788	+ $394

CalFresh Benefit Allotment

Effective October 1, 2022- September 30, 2023

Household Size	Maximum Allotment
1	$281
2	$516
3	$740
4	$939
5	$1,116
6	$1,480
Each Additional Member	+ $211

*Minimum Allotment $23

Expedited Benefit

Expedited Benefit
Expedited CalFresh is an emergency benefit established to help clients who are in need of food assistance receive benefits as quickly as possible. Eligible households are able to receive benefits within **3 days** of application.

Expedited Criteria
Have shelter costs (housing & utilities) that exceed their combined monthly gross income AND liquid resources in the application month OR Have less than $150 gross income AND $100 or less in liquid resources in the application month OR Is a migrant or seasonal farm worker who has less than $100 in liquid resources

Types of Countable Income

Earned Income
➤ Wages from an employer
➤ Self Employment
➤ Odd Jobs or Gig Work
➤ Cash Gifts from friends or relatives
➤ Cash from recycling

Unearned Income
➤ Social Security
➤ SSI/SSP
➤ Unemployment
➤ State Disability
➤ Workers Compensation

Expenses & Deductions

Typical Expense and Deductions

- ✓ Shelter cost (Homeless Shelter Deduction)

- ✓ Utilities and Phone

- ✓ Medical Expenses for Elderly and Disabled Persons

- ✓ Child or Dependent Care

- ✓ Court Ordered Child Support Paid

Benefit Issuance

➢ Each month CalFresh benefits are issued onto the recipients Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Card

➢ Recipients use the EBT card like a debit card and must provide their PIN number to complete the food purchases

➢ The purchase amounts are deducted from the EBT balance and the recipient can only spend the amount that is in the account

Where is EBT accepted?

➢ EBT can be used in person, for curbside pick-up and online at participating retailers (Safeway, Walmart, Amazon, Instacart)

➢ EBT cards are accepted at most major grocery retailers, some convenience stores and local businesses that are approved through the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) branch of the USDA

➢ EBT card holders can shop at participating Farmers Markets. Many markets offer matching and other incentives to maximize EBT benefits

Shopping with CalFresh

Eligible Purchases	Ineligible Purchases (Non-Food Items)
✓ Fruits & Vegetables	✓ Pet food
✓ Breads & Cereal	✓ Toilet Paper
✓ Beans & Legumes	✓ Cleaning Supplies
✓ Meats, Fish, Poultry	✓ Diapers
✓ Milk & Dairy Products	✓ Salad Bar or Hot Bar Food
✓ Juice or Coffee	✓ Vitamins
✓ Food Producing plants and seeds	

Ways to Apply for CalFresh

1. Apply Online

➤ Get CalFresh getcalfresh.org

➤ My Benefits CalWIN mybenefitscalwin.org

2. By Phone

➤ 211 Sonoma County
(dial 2-1-1 from any phone 24/7)

➤ Economic Assistance Service Center
(877) 699-6868 toll free
9:00am-3:30pm Monday-Friday

3. In Person

➤ Economic Assistance Office
2550 Paulin Drive, Santa Rosa
8:00am-4:00pm Monday-Friday

➤ Human Services South County Center, 5350
Old Redwood Highway,
Suite 100, Petaluma
8:00am-4:00pm Monday-Friday

4. Fax
➤ (707) 565-2929

5. Mail
➤ P.O. Box 1539, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Application Process

➤ After the application is submitted the applicant will receive an appointment letter in the mail with the date of their future CalFresh interview. The household may also receive a call from the county as an effort to conduct the interview early, however the call will be from a blocked number

➤ In most cases an interview is required and can be completed over the phone or in-person. During the Public Health Emergency some applications may be processed without an interview

➤ For any scheduled phone interviews the applicant <u>must call the county</u>. The county is no longer calling the client for scheduled interview appointments

Application Process

- Some applicants may be eligible for Expedited Services and have their benefits issued within 3 days of submitting the application

- Most applicants will receive an approval or denial determination within 30 days. Households are approved/certified for 12, 24 or 36 months

- Eligible applicants will receive their EBT card within ten days of approval via mail or they can come to a local office to pick it up

Important Household Information

- Identity
- Residency
- Social Security Number
- Immigration Status
- Earned and Unearned Income
- Housing & Utility Costs
- Child Care Costs
- Medical Expenses
- Student and Financial Aid Information

Authorized Representative

➢ The CalFresh household may appoint a non-household member as an Authorized Representative to submit or assist with the application, interview, case updates and annual reports

➢ The AR can be designated on the CalFresh application, recertification form, or the household can write a letter of designation

➢ There can be more than one Authorized Representative. A copy of each of the authorized representative's identity must be submitted

Authorized Representative

➤ An employee of a community-based organization (CBO), community agency, residential facility, or other similar institution may act as an AR for the household. Please note that an institution can not be designated only an individual employee(s)

➤ The household may also appoint the Authorized Representative to have an additional EBT card issued to them by completing the Designated Alternate Cardholder Request. Please note that an Authorized Representative is not automatically granted an EBT card

Maintaining Benefits

➢ After CalFresh has been approved there may be a mid-certification report that must be completed to keep benefits going at 6 or 12 months. The county will send recipients a letter when its due

➢ Households must also complete a recertification interview at 12, 24 or 36 months. The county will send recipients a letter when its due

➢ If the periodic report and/or recertification are not completed by the due dates, CalFresh benefits will be discontinued

➢ It is important for the household to contact the county to update the address and phone number if there is a change since the last application or report

Contact Economic Assistance

When CalFresh applicants/households have questions, want to submit verification, or speak to an Eligibility Specialist, they have the following options:

Call the Economic Assistance Service Center

➢ 877-699-6868 (9:00am-3:30pm/ Monday-Friday)

Come to our public lobbies (8:00am-4:00pm/ Monday-Friday)

➢ 2550 Paulin Dr, Santa Rosa

➢ 5350 Old Redwood Hwy North, Suite 100, Petaluma

Mail in verifications/paperwork to:

➢ P.O. Box 1539, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Submit Documents:

➢ getcalfresh.org

➢ mybenefitscalwin.org

More Information Available Online

Please visit the Economic Assistance Food and Nutrition Website listed below for more information!

sonomacalfresh.org

Questions

HUD'S EQUAL ACCESS RULE

The Sonoma County Community Development Commission welcomes your comments. The purpose of this discussion is to present information and provide training relevant to HUD's Equal Access and Gender Identity Final Rule. We encourage you to raise your virtual hand with any comments or questions, but please note this is a moderated meeting.

Please note that the public comments expressed during this meeting do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, its officers, agents, affiliates, or employees.

HUD'S EQUAL ACCESS RULE

By participating in this training, you agree to the following terms:

- Attendees will treat others with respect, this is a safe space.

- SCCDC Staff reserves the right to remove permission to speak during the meeting if comments contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or comments that promote, foster or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

HUD'S EQUAL ACCESS RULE

CoC Quarterly Meeting

20 October 2022

Sarah Vetter, Senior Housing Services Manager

Committee on the Shelterless (COTS)

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Overview and basic terminology

- Why is this conversation important?

- HUD's Equal Access Rule

- Next steps for organizations

HUD'S EQUAL ACCESS RULE

- Aims to ensure equal access in programs, facilities, housing, and shelter without discrimination based on **sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression**.

APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY

- Gender Identity – Innate sense of one's gender. May or may not match assigned sex.

- Gender Expression – External expression of gender identity exhibited through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, body language, voice, etc.

- Sexual Orientation – Physical or emotional attraction to same and/or opposite sex.

- Transgender – Refers to individuals whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex.

- Transitioning – process that some (but not all) transgender people go through to begin living as the gender with which they identify. May or may not require medical treatment.

The Genderbread Person

by www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com

Identity

Orientation

Expression

Sex
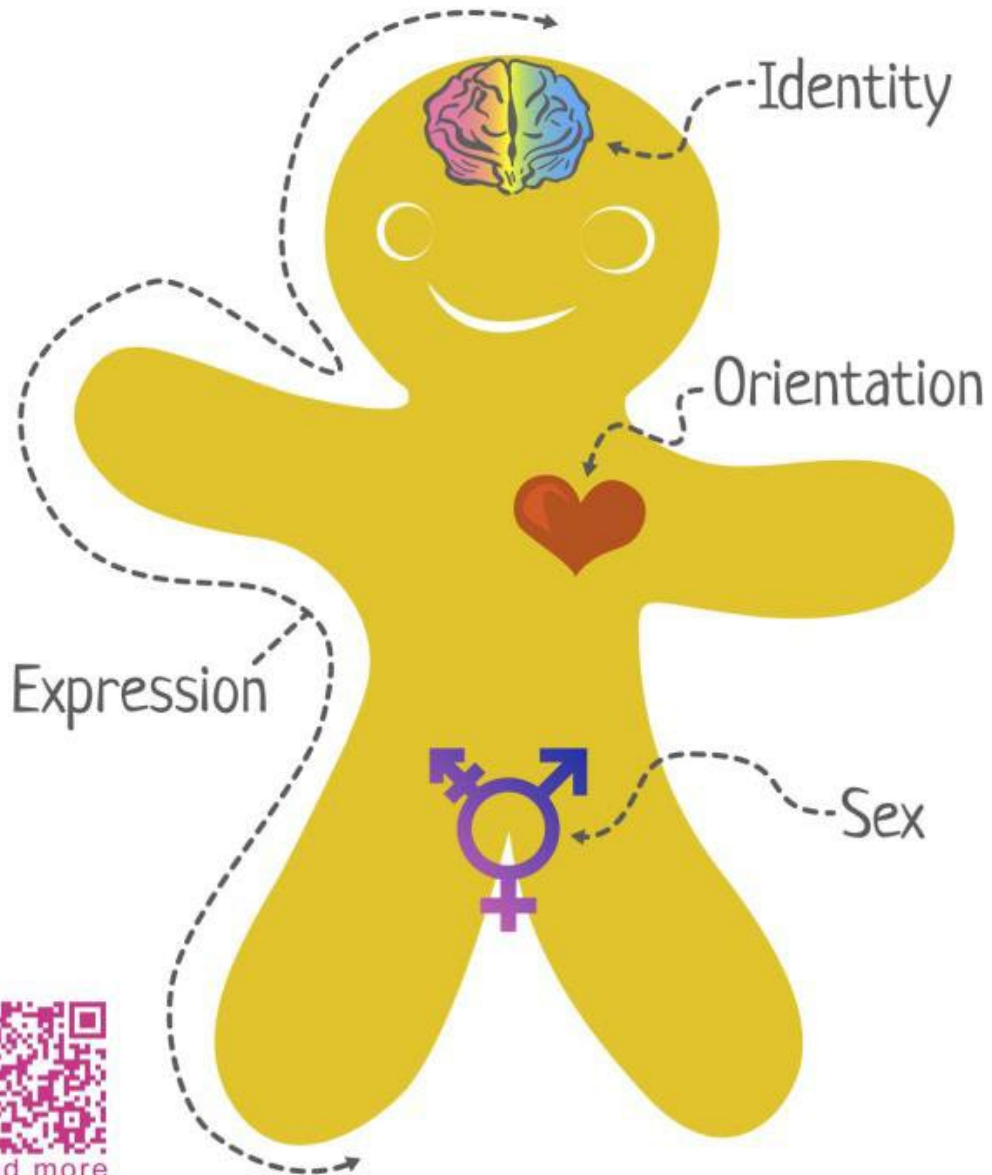
Gender Identity

Woman ◄———————— Genderqueer ————————► Man

Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.

Gender Expression

Feminine ◄———————— Androgynous ————————► Masculine

Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.

Biological Sex

Female ◄———————— Intersex ————————► Male

Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual ◄———————— Bisexual ————————► Homosexual

Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.

read more

WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS CONVERSATION?

US Transgender Survey – Released December 2016

(Survey due to be updated in 2020, but pandemic has delayed)

Over 27,000 adult respondents

	Transgender US Population	General US Population
Severe psychological stress in past month	39%	5%
Attempted suicide in lifetime	40%	<5%
Homeowners	16%	63%
Living in poverty	29%	14%

MORE REASONS WHY WE ARE TALKING TODAY

- Transgender individuals have 3x the unemployment rate of the general population

- 30% of the transgender community experienced homelessness at some point in their lives

- Of those who have experienced homelessness in the past year, 26% avoided shelters because of fear of mistreatment

- Homeless LGBT youth (up to age 24) – average age for 1st time homelessness is 15

- Recent Center for American Progress study – nearly two-thirds of shelters failed to enroll individuals properly once they identified as transgender

VIDEO – GIVING HOMELESS TRANSGENDER YOUTH A SAFE HAVEN FROM THE STREETS

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRTEWALGVmw

HISTORY OF EQUAL ACCESS RULE

- In 2012, HUD required that all HUD-assisted housing be made available to individuals and families without regard to actual or perceived **sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status**.

- In September of 2016, HUD empowered **transgender** individuals by requiring that decisions related to placement and accommodations in single-sex shelters and facilities must be made in accordance with the resident's **gender identity**.

- In July 2020, HUD Secretary Ben Carson attempted to weaken the Equal Access Rule by allowing providers to determine placement based on assigned sex without regard to client choice.

- In July 2021, HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge withdrew the previous administrations proposed changes, ensuring continued protections for individuals. (Whew!)

DOES THE EQUAL ACCESS RULE APPLY TO MY PROGRAM?

- ANY program that receives HUD funding of any sort <u>must</u> comply
- This includes (but is not limited to) programs that receive:
  - CDBG
  - HOME
  - COC
  - ESG
  - HOPWA
  - Housing Trust Fund
  - Rural Housing

Question: Does the Equal Access Rule Apply to My Program?

- "**I operate a DV shelter that only serves women and children.** Does the Equal Access Rule apply?"

- "**I operate a homeless shelter that only serves women and children.** Does the Equal Access Rule apply?"

- "**I operate an emergency shelter for men.** Does the Equal Access Rule apply?"

- "**I operate a Housing Choice Voucher program.** Does the Equal Access Rule apply?"

- "**I operate a shelter that does not allow boys over the age of 12.** Does the Equal Access Rule apply?"

ANSWER: **YES!** THE EQUAL ACCESS RULE APPLIES TO YOUR PROGRAM!

"If the provider is permitted to segregate services based on gender, the provider must create policies that ensure housing and services to all eligible individuals identifying with that gender, including those individuals whose gender identity does not match the sex assigned at their birth."

Excerpt from HUD's Equal Access Expectations Toolkit (p. 15)

THE PRACTICAL BITS

- Assigned sex is confidential information, per HUD.
- Clients are to be placed in shelter/housing according to their **gender identity**.
- If an individual does not identify as M or F, they are to be enrolled and housed where their gender identity **most aligns**, where they would prefer to be housed, or where they will be safest.
- If issues arise within our population, corrective actions must be focused on aggressors who violate non-discrimination rules, not on the subject of their harassment. This can start with education!

MORE PRACTICAL STUFF

- Projects cannot require individuals to prove their gender identity. This includes the asking of probing questions or requiring ID to match gender identity.

- Transgender clients can be given accommodations, but only if the accommodations do not segregate or isolate individuals based on their gender identity. (Example: using respite area instead of bed in main shelter area.)

  - Other ideas for accommodations?

BATHROOMS & SHOWERS
(HOW MUCH MORE PRACTICAL CAN YOU GET?)

- 59% of transgender individuals from the US Transgender Survey reported avoiding using a public restroom in the past year because of fear of confrontation

- 32% limited the amount they ate/drank in the last year to avoid using public restrooms

BATHROOMS AND SHOWERS

What strategies can we employ to offer safe and comfortable accommodations to transgender or gender non-conforming residents?

- Allow transgender residents to use our single-use staff bathroom when necessary.

- Provide specific times of the day when vulnerable residents will use the showers.

- Ensure that toilet stalls/showers are private and secured to allow for modesty and dignity.

- Other ideas?

THE TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

- Client choice prevails! (Even when client is not consistent with reporting or expressing gender.)

- **Transgender women are women; transgender men are men.** This is NOT dependent on transition, gender expression, etc.

- When projects serve families with children, they must do so without discrimination.

INCLUSIVE POLICY STANDARDS – WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Trainings (like this one!) to ensure that staff don't act out of ignorance

- Establishing internal policies about language & behavior for staff and volunteers

- Using inclusive language in all signage; publications; intake forms; interactions with staff, residents, the public

- Establishing and maintaining guidelines for resident language & behavior

REFERENCES

- HUD Exchange info on the 2016 update to the Equal Access Rule

- US Transgender Survey – ustranssurvey.org

- National Center for Transgender Equality – transequality.org

- GLAAD – glaad.org

- federalregister.gov (24CFR Part 5) – 9.21.2016

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Services are provided to program participants and are offered in a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to race; color; national origin or citizenship status; age; disability (physical or mental); religion; sex; sexual orientation or identity; genetic information; HIV or AIDS; medical conditions; political activities or affiliations; military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence, assault or stalking; or any other federal, state or locally protected group

Providers of the Continuum of Care are required to adhere to HUD's Equal Access Final Rule and HUD's Gender Identity Final Rule. Through the final rules, HUD ensures equal access to individuals in accordance with their gender identity in programs and shelter funded under programs administered by HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD). HUD's housing programs are open to all eligible individuals and families regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status

HUD'S CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) AND EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG)

- HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program recipients and subrecipients must comply with the Fair Housing Act (Act) and Equal Access Rule (Rules)'s nondiscrimination provisions.

- The Act requires HUD's recipients to implement CoC and ESG projects in a manner that "affirmatively furthers fair housing" (AFFH) by assessing and taking meaningful actions to address their community's disparities in housing needs.

- For more information on AFFH, federal fair housing laws, and other laws that may apply (Section 504, Title VI). See, e.g., Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and Fair Housing; and Rights and Obligations | HUD.gov

- All CoC and ESG assisted projects must have updated policies and procedures that reflect fair housing requirements.

REQUIRED ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

- HUD requires CoC-Wide and agency level anti-discrimination policies.

- CoCs should ensure privacy, respect, safety, and access regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation in projects.

- Policies adopted should ensure LGBTQ+ individuals and families receive supportive services, shelter, and housing free from discrimination.

- Anti-discrimination policies created should incorporate references to all protected classes under the Fair Housing Act.

- In addition, the policy should also specifically include language and guidance on adherence to HUD's Equal Access and Gender Identity Final Rules.

- If you are a provider seeking guidance about the creation of an agency level anti-discrimination policy, please contact:

Araceli (Chelli) Rivera, Homeless Projects Specialist at Araceli.Rivera@sonoma-county.org

Questions?
Comments?

svetter@cots.org

General Continuum of Care and Committee Updates

Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee

THAI HILTON, COORDINATED ENTRY COORDINATOR

Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee (CEA) Updates

CEA continues to update the new CE policies and procedures based on feedback and to further refine the system.

CEA recently approved new standards for Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing programs

A working group of the CEA is meeting to develop a more streamlined approach to referrals to shelter's set-aside beds.

In October, the CEA directed staff to begin exploring options to replace the community's assessment tool.

Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAP) Updates

- Rebekah Sammet, LEAP Chair

Lived Experience Advisory & Planning Board (LEAP) Updates

▶ Currently composed of 12 board members; representing Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Sonoma, Windsor and Guerneville

▶ Currently accepting applications to fill vacant seats (2 remaining)

▶ Finalized governance charter

▶ In the process of reviewing both City of Santa Rosa and County of Sonoma's Strategic

▶ Plans

▶ Currently providing feedback for Centralized Housing Location

▶ Voted to create the LEAP Adult Shelter Solutions Committee (LASS) on August 12, 2022

▶ Have members serving on all active standing committees of CoC Board, including Strategic Planning, Coordinated Entry Advisory (CEA), Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and Funding and Evaluation committees

▶ Meets privately every 2 weeks on Fridays at noon

▶ Operates under Rosenberg's Rules of Order

▶ Identified several emergency items as short-term and long-term priorities

▶ All community members with lived experience of homelessness interested in becoming involved are welcome to contact Andrew Akufo, Andrew.Akufo@Sonoma-County.org or 405-213-9957

Funding and Evaluation Committee

- Teddie Pierce, Funding & Evaluation Committee Chair

F&E Committee Members – Oct 2022

- **Teddie Pierce**, Chair and Consultant

- **Dennis Pocekay**, Vice Chair/City Petaluma

- **Andrew Hening**, CDC Staff

- **Chessy Etheridge** – Lived experience/CoC Board

- **Don Schwartz** – City Rohnert Park/CoC Board

- **John Moore** – City Cotati/CoC Board

- **Kelli Kuykendall** – City SR

- **Ludmilla Bade** – Lived experience

- **Madolyn Agrimonti** – City Sonoma/CoC Board

- **Rebekah Sammet** – Lived experience

- **Una Glass** – City Sebastopol/CoC Board

F&E Committee Email

fundevalcommittee@sonoma-county.org

Funding and Evaluation Committee

Summary

- ▶ Approved by the Continuum of Care Governance Board (CoC) on April 27, 2022

- ▶ Committee members appointed on June 22, 2022, first meeting on July 18, 2022

- ▶ Currently made up of 11 committee members, including those of lived experience, representatives of local government and Governance Board members

- ▶ Regular meeting schedule has been set for 2nd Thursday, monthly 2-4pm (recordings available on request)

Responsibilities

- ▶ Develop and/or review long-term funding strategies and plans to achieve the CoC's vision (in alignment with 'in-process' strategic plan)

- ▶ Develop recommendations for the CoC Board on use of funds under the purview of the Continuum of Care

- ▶ Develop recommendations for the CoC Board to comment/consult on funding decisions by other parties (as identified)

- ▶ Evaluate the performance of the system of care, programs, and service providers to inform funding decisions, support public communications (including a dashboard of metrics) and approaches improve the local System of Care

- ▶ Participate with the HMIS Committee in the evaluation of the HMIS Lead's performance

CoC Strategic Planning Committee

STEPHEN SOTOMAYOR, COC BOARD MEMBER

Strategic Planning Phase II

- ▶ Incorporating feedback on the Strategic Plan Draft Goals & Strategies
- ▶ Preparing DRAFT Strategic Plan
- ▶ Coordinating with other jurisdictions/regions that have strategic plans of their own
  - ▶ Crosswalking all regional homelessness Strategic Plans
  - ▶ Aligning terminology

Strategic Planning Workgroups

- Coordinated System of Care:

  ▶ Looking to focus on coordination between the multiple strategic plans in development & building in an accountability structure for our strategic plan

- Housing & Increase Income (no longer meeting):

  ▶ Recommendations presented and being incorporated into the Strategic Plan

Opportunities to Provide Feedback

1. This coming Friday, **October 21st at 9:00 a.m.** on Zoom – it's a public meeting of the CoC's Strategic Planning Committee.

2. Next week – Wednesday, **October 26th, at 1:00 p.m.** on Zoom – it's a public meeting of the Continuum of Care Board.

3. A month from now, Friday, **November 18th at 9:00 a.m. to Noon** on Zoom - it's a public meeting of the CoC's Strategic Planning Committee, the CoC Board, and the Lived Experience Advisory Planning Board.

4. Next month – Wednesday, **November 30 at 1:00 p.m.** on Zoom – it's a public meeting of the Continuum of Care Board.

HMIS Data Committee Updates

- Heather Sweet, HMIS Data Committee Chair

HMIS/Data Committee Updates

▶ Committee has been meeting regularly since June 2021

▶ Developing new and updating existing HMIS Documentation and forms

▶ Continues to evaluate public facing data and information to improve the way it is communicated. The Homeless Data page on the Community Development Commission's website can be found here – https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/CDC/Homeless-Services/Continuum-of-Care/Homeless-Data/

▶ The group meets on the second Monday of each month. More info and access to meetings and materials can be found here - https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/CDC/Homeless-Services/Continuum-of-Care/HMIS-Data-Committee/.

Continuum of Care Board Elections 2022

Karissa White, Continuum of Care Coordinator

What is the Continuum of Care Board?

- The CoC Board is the governing body that determines policy and acts as the CoC's decision-making group.

- Mandated by HUD's Continuum of Care Program, the board is responsible for oversight of funds designated to the Continuum of Care and regional planning/policy development for addressing homelessness.

- The Board consists of local elected officials, nonprofit representatives, subject matter experts, and individuals with lived homeless experience.

Who Should be on the CoC Board?

- The CoC Board must be representative of the relevant organizations and of projects serving homeless populations and subpopulations within the CoC's geographic area.

- The CoC Board must also include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual.

Who Elects the CoC Board Members?

- Organizations with CoC Voting Membership

- Any organization that is interested in preventing and ending homelessness can apply for voting membership of the CoC

- Organizations applying for voting membership are required to have a location within Sonoma County

- Votes are limited to one individual on behalf of the organization as a whole

- The Lived Experience Advisory Planning Board (LEAP) elects the lived experience representative seat.

- Because the CoC's Youth Advisory Board is not yet formed, the CoC Voting Members shall vote on the TAY Lived Experience (age 18-24) seat for the 2022 election

Vacant Seats

The following seats shall be elected by the CoC's approved Voting Members:

- Lived Experience Seat (Transitional Age Youth 18-24, experienced homelessness within the past 5 years)

- Homeless Advocacy Organization

- At Large (anyone can apply for this seat)

The following seat shall be elected by the LEAP Board:

- Adult Lived Experience Seat (experienced homelessness within the past 5 years)

Timeline for Elections

Voting Membership Applications

- November 1st – Published list of current voting members

- November 23rd – due date for new Voting Membership Applications to vote in 2022 Elections
    - Applications are open all year round

CoC Board Nominations

- November 17th – Solicitation/open nominations (self nomination permissible)

- December 7th - CoC Board Nominations due

- December 12th - list of candidates and applications published on the CoC website

- December 15th - Special Membership Meeting for elections

Diversity & Representation on the CoC Board

- HUD continues to encourage us to significantly improve the Homeless Response System experience and the housing stability outcomes for Black, Brown, Indigenous, and all people of color.

- Black and American Indian or Alaska Native Sonoma County residents are overrepresented in our homeless population and appear to be underrepresented in leadership positions within the System of Care.

- A strategy within our pending Homeless Strategic Plan to "Eliminate disparities in access, service provision, and outcomes in the Homeless Response System," is a year one priority which includes:

    "Increase the number of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) individuals on the CoC Board and throughout the System of Care" and to "update the Charter to include designated seats for BIPOC members."

The CoC Board is responsible for the oversight of federal, state and local funding and policy development for the Sonoma County CoC's homeless response system.

We encourage organizations that have not applied for voting membership to do so (there are no meeting requirements, dues or fees)

Remember, we are looking to elect new board members that are representative of the populations being served in our system of care.

We look forward to the elections meeting in December and seeing you there!

Your Vote Counts!

Questions ?

PLEASE RAISE YOUR VIRTUAL HAND.

Community Updates

Opportunity for open discussion with attendees to provide program updates, ask questions, and converse over issues related to homelessness.

Thank You!