



Sonoma County Continuum of Care (CoC) Strategic Planning Committee
Agenda for September 16, 2022
9:00am-10:30am Pacific Time

Virtual Meeting: Join Zoom Webinar

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/j/94233222676?pwd=TIExUDVFdnRpSFkrVGQzSmxZMS9BZz09>

Passcode: 976436 Webinar ID: 942 3322 2676 Telephone: 1 669 900 9128

| # | Agenda Item | Packet Item | Presenter | Time |
|----|---|--|-----------------------------------|---------|
| | Welcome, Roll Call and Introductions | | Committee Co-Chairs/ CDC Staff | 9:00am |
| 1. | Approve Agenda (ACTION ITEM) | 9/16 Agenda | Committee Co-Chairs | 9:05am |
| 2. | Approve Minutes from 7/15 & 8/19 (ACTION ITEM) | 7/15 & 8/19 Minutes | Committee Co-Chairs | 9:10am |
| 3. | Strategic Planning Committee Secretary (ACTION ITEM) | | Committee Co-Chairs | 9:15am |
| 4. | Increasing Income Recommendations (ACTION ITEM) | -Increasing Income Presentation -Increasing Income Recommendations Report -Attachment A (Authorization for the Sonoma County Multi-Disciplinary Team to Share and Use Information) | Karen Fies | 9:20am |
| 5. | Homebase Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homebase interim report out on deep dive sessions (Potential ACTION ITEM) | | Homebase Team | 9:50am |
| 6. | Discuss Workgroup Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated System of Care Housing (Potential ACTION ITEM) | | Workgroup Leads | 10:05am |
| 7. | Public Comment on Non-agendized Items | | Committee Co-Chairs | 10:25am |

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public Comment may be made via email or during the live zoom meeting. To submit an emailed public comment to the Committee email Araceli.Rivera@sonoma-county.org. Please provide your name, the agenda number(s) on which you wish to speak, and your comment. These comments will be emailed to all Committee members. Public comment during the meeting can be made live by joining the Zoom meeting. Available time for comments is determined by the Chair based on agenda scheduling demands and total number of speakers.

Increasing Income Recommendations

CoC Strategic Planning Committee

September 16, 2022

Workgroup Participants

- Adriana Arrizon – Sonoma Connect | Sonoma Unidos
- Ludmilla Bade – Lived Experience
- Greg Baker – Human Services, General Assistance
- Michelle Bendyk – Human Services, Housing Manager
- Karen Fies – Human Services Director, Retired
- Jessica Fonseca – VOICES, Program Specialist
- Yesenia Gaytan – United Way, 211 Director
- Katie Greaves – Human Services, Employment & Training Director

Workgroup Participants (cont.)

- Amy Holter – Catholic Charities
- Kris Hoyer – Probation Department, Division Director
- Stephen Marshall – Social Security Administration, District Mgr
- Madison Murray – Community Development Commission
- Mark Orlando – Human Services, Veterans' Services Officer
- Adam Peacocke – Feathervine, Exec. Director (faith-based services)
- Araceli Rivera – Community Development Commission
- Stephen Sotomayor – City of Healdsburg, Housing Administrator

Income Types Discussed

- CalWORKS/SonomaWORKS
- CalFresh
- General Assistance (GA)
- Probation Services
- Social Security Benefits
- Veterans' Benefits
- Employment (part-time and full-time; subsidized)

Questions Considered

- How do the homeless and risk-of-homeless best access income?
- How do service providers, the homeless, and others know about training opportunities, jobs, and services?
- How can service providers keep program information up to date?
- How do changes in income impact eligibility for benefits?
- How do homeless individuals make connections with others, make an impact in the community, and discover where they can be useful and give value?

Workgroup Recommendations

1. Increase resource information for individuals to increase income and find housing options (via 211)
2. Establish a peer navigator pilot (to assist with navigation to supportive services/resources)
3. Establish a countywide SSI advocacy program
4. Increase employment and training opportunities for homeless adults

1. Increase Resource Information (211)

- Increase 211 outreach and marketing
- Update resource and referral information within 211
- Enable 211 to be an “access partner” in the Coordinated Entry System
 - Able to access HMIS
 - Able to update client information
 - Able to write case notes
- Fund 211

2. Establish Peer Navigator Pilot

- Utilize peer navigators who have knowledge and respect of homeless peers
- Contract with a service provider to provide peer navigation services
- Provide a 12-month, detailed 4-phase curriculum
 - Phase 1: Meet with clients 5 days/week, 1-2.5 hours/day, where client resides
 - Phase 2: Meet with clients 3 days/week, 1-2.5 hours/day at residence or Center
 - Phase 3: Meet with clients 2 days/week, 2 hours/day at residence or Center
 - Phase 4: Meet with clients 1 day/week, 2 hours/day at Peer Center

3. Establish SSI Advocacy Program

- Determine potential # of So Co residents who may be eligible for SSI
- Make a commitment to assist homeless individual to apply for and maintain SSI benefits
- Create, or partner with an existing agency, to support a one-stop homeless drop-in center for individuals to obtain services, including a direct link with SSA
- Promote the use of peer navigators within the center(s)
- Fund and/or financially support the center(s)

4. Increase Employment & Training for Homeless Adults

- Create a formal referral system between service providers and Sonoma County Job Link
- Expand outreach to employers (business engagement)
- Explore paid internships or work experience opportunities (PT/FT)
- Establish social enterprise programs
- Provide supportive services to individuals in training or employment

Thank you!

Questions?

CoC Strategic Planning Committee
Increasing Income Workgroup Recommendations
August 2022

Background:

The Increasing Income Workgroup (“workgroup”) of the Continuum of Care (CoC) Strategic Planning Committee first met on September 15, 2021. The goal of the workgroup was to make recommendations to the CoC Strategic Planning Committee, to be considered for inclusion in the Strategic Plan, on ways individuals could improve their income. Increases in income help prevent homelessness as well as assist individuals to recover from homelessness. The workgroup looked at the “status quo,” the “desired state,” and the driving/restraining forces” to increase income in Sonoma County.

The workgroup acknowledges that increasing income is a small component; income is beneficial, provides individuals with some securities, and helps to build social skills, but many more gaps need to be filled before an individual can successfully recover from homelessness.

Workgroup Members:

The following individuals participated in the workgroup since September 2021:

- Adriana Arrizon – Sonoma Connect | Sonoma Unidos, Director
- Ludmilla Bade – Lived Experience
- Greg Baker – Human Services, General Assistance Manager
- Michelle Bendyk – Human Services, Employment & Training, Housing Manager
- Karen Fies – Human Services Director, retired
- Jessica Fonseca – VOICES, Program Specialist
- Yesenia Gaytan – United Way of the Wine Country, 211 Director
- Katie Greaves – Human Services, Employment & Training Director
- Amy Holter – Catholic Charities
- Kris Hoyer – Probation Department, Division Director
- Stephen Marshall – Social Security Administration (SSA), District Manager
- Madison Murray – Community Development Commission

- Mark Orlando – Human Services, Veterans’ Services Officer
- Adam Peacocke – FeatherVine, Executive Director (faith-based services)
- Araceli Rivera – Community Development Commission
- Stephen Sotomayor – City of Healdsburg, Housing Administrator

Discussions:

The workgroup met monthly, through August 2022, to discuss a variety of topics related to increasing income and develop recommendations.

- Discussed income types, including but not limited to:
 - CalWORKs/SonomaWORKS
 - Veterans’ Benefits
 - Social Security Benefits
 - CalFresh
 - General Assistance
 - Probation services
 - Employment, including part- and full-time work
- Discussed some research, including the Healdsburg Homeless Survey
- Discussed the “Desired State” for Improved Income
- Discussed and considered the following questions:
 - How do the homeless and risk-of-being-homeless best access income?
 - How do service providers, the homeless, and others know about training opportunities, jobs, and services?
 - How can service providers keep their program information up to date and relevant?
 - How do changes in income impact eligibility for benefits?
 - How do homeless individuals make connections with others, make an impact in the community, and discover where they can be useful and give value?

Recommendations:

After twelve months of discussing these issues, the workgroup is requesting that the following recommendations be included in the CoC Strategic Plan:

1. Increase resource information for individuals to increase income and find housing options (via 211)

It is clear to the workgroup that individuals in Sonoma County need better access to resource information to increase income and secure housing. We discussed the possibility of a unique database to track income information but agreed that it would be more efficient to use the existing 211 system. We recognized also that funding for 211 is limited and more staffing is needed.

The scope of work under this recommendation includes:

- Increase resource and referral information within 211.
 - Ask the CoC to fund 211 for these services.
 - Work with Sonoma Connect | Sonoma Unidos to follow-up on referrals provided to individuals by 211.
 - Develop metrics to measure impact of additional resources.
- Utilize 211 in the Coordinated Entry System.
 - Enable 211 to be an “access partner” to view HMIS information and write case notes, update client contact information, and refer clients to their original service provider access partner.
 - Train 211 staff to conduct a full assessment, as needed.
- Increase 211 marketing/outreach efforts to allow more Sonoma County residents to know about and utilize 211 to address more needs, including when residents are homeless or precariously housed.

2. Establish a peer navigator pilot (to assist with navigation to supportive services/resources)

The workgroup members recognize that individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness do not always know about available resources. The members also know that, many times, individuals are not comfortable reaching out to government agencies for assistance.

The scope of work under this recommendation includes:

- Utilize peer navigators who have knowledge and the respect of their homeless peers to provide access to resources and navigation assistance.
- Contract with a service provider to provide peer navigation services (West County Community Services, as an 18-month pilot as they have an existing “Transitions to Housing” peer support program), to hire, train, and support peer navigators, and to develop metrics to measure impacts to clients.
- Provide a 12-month supportive curriculum for both clients and peer navigators.
- Support the development of a Peer Support Specialist Certification Program. This can be done for free or at little cost at Santa Rosa Junior College, non-profits such as the Center for Well Being or West County Community Services (or other institution), as outlined in Senate Bill 803. The bill requires the establishment of statewide requirements for counties to use in developing programs for the certification of peer support specialists, who are individuals who self-identify as having lived experience, providing value to others.

The workgroup realizes that many non-profit organizations currently work with individuals daily who are experiencing homelessness; this pilot would hopefully produce positive results that could be replicated further.

3. Establish a countywide SSI advocacy program

The workgroup members understand that there is a need for increased advocacy for SSI applicants. In Sonoma County, as well as other areas of California, there are existing efforts to assist individuals to apply for and retain SSI benefits.

In Sonoma County, the General Assistance program includes social workers who specialize in helping individuals obtain SSI. Many service providers, including Catholic Charities and others, also hire staff to work with clients to obtain SSI benefits.

Stephen Marshall, SSA, stated that there are only approximately 8,000 SSI beneficiaries in Sonoma County. He stated that there should be more SSI recipients based on the size of the county. Per Mr. Marshall, the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County, under their CoC, increased SSI beneficiaries locally by funding a one-stop center for homeless adults via signed agreements with partners, including the Social Security Administration.

Alameda County contracts with legal services to assist with SSI applications.

The scope of work under this recommendation includes:

- Determine the potential number of Sonoma County residents who might be eligible for SSI benefits, based on population and demographics. Use this number as a desired goal to reach.
- Make a commitment to assist homeless individuals to apply for and maintain SSI benefits and develop metrics to measure impacts to clients.
- Create, or partner with an existing agency (such as Catholic Charities' Caritas Center), a one-stop homeless drop-in one-stop center for individuals to obtain services, including a direct link with SSA for SSI benefits.
- Promote the use of peer navigators within the center(s).
- Ask the CoC to fund or financially support the center(s) and garner support from the County and cities as well.

4. Increase employment and training opportunities for homeless adults

The workgroup members acknowledge that homeless adults need more direct opportunities for full- and part-time work, as well as training opportunities. Employment and training opportunities provide individuals with much more than just increased income. Individuals gain connections and social skills as a result. Many homeless or former homeless do not want a "traditional" job. Sonoma County employers need to be more flexible to obtain and retain employees, including individuals who are homeless, have recovered from homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness. Service providers and faith-based organizations want to join in the efforts. The workgroup members recognize that there are a lot of details to work through to meet the goals of this recommendation (as well as the other recommendations).

Sonoma County Job Link provides training and employment services for the community and currently has a Homeless Employment Project. In the Project's June newsletter, two clients are highlighted:

- Phillip, a 58-year-old homeless Veteran. Through a collaborative effort of partners, including the funding of steel-toed boots by the Santa Rosa Rotary Club, Phillip was able to obtain a job with Interstate Batteries.
- Amber lost her housing when she was 8 and a half months pregnant. Amber was referred by the YWCA to the Homeless Employment Project and to SonomaWORKS, and is now being assisted with training, childcare, transportation, and mental health resources.

The scope of work under this recommendation includes:

- Create a formal referral system between service providers and other stakeholders to Sonoma County Job Link.
 - A referral system, to be effective, needs a commitment and dedicated resources for shared information and case management services.
 - Job Link staff need to be able to work directly with a job seeker and the service provider. Collaboration, communication, and feedback are difficult and key to the success of the individual.
 - A universal release of information (such as Attachment A from the IMDT) is critical to sharing of information.
 - It is also important to take on the long-term goal of working with elected officials to create State legislation to better share information with a common purpose of shared case management.
- Expand outreach to employers (business engagement) and the community through the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the Economic Development Board (EDB):
 - Conduct presentations to business groups (e.g., Rotary Clubs) and faith-based organizations.
 - Connect Job Link Business Services to numerous businesses who are open to hiring people struggling to find permanent shelter or who have recently experienced homelessness.

- Work with the EDB Business Representative and Sonoma Small Business Development Center (SBDC) regarding employment and self-employment options for individuals recovering from homelessness.
- Conduct mock interviews with volunteers for job seekers from a variety of businesses or community groups, such as faith-based organizations.
- Develop metrics to measure impacts to clients.
- Explore paid internships or work experience opportunities (part- or full-time) for homeless adults (30 days or longer).
 - Tap into Job Link’s Federal funding; would need additional non-Federal funding for those not eligible for Federal funding.
 - Target “public good” work for internship positions, such as vegetation management and fire mitigation efforts.
 - Refer people being release from jail, temporary shelters, etc., directly to Job Link.
 - Target training opportunities for positions in public employment.
 - Develop metrics to measure impacts to clients.
- Establish Social Enterprise programs, including café’s, hospitality, or warehouse work, to give individuals actual work experience while reinvesting income back into the programs.
 - Develop metrics to measure impacts to clients.
- Provide supportive services to individuals entering training or employment, including but not limited to:
 - Clothing and/or boots
 - Costs for background checks, including Live Scan
 - Transportation
 - Tools
 - Childcare

These supportive services could be provided through a network of providers, including Job Link, SonomaWORKS, Catholic Charities, faith-based groups, and Rotary Clubs, to name a few.

Authorization for the Sonoma County Multi-Disciplinary Team to Share and Use Information

Client's Legal Name: _____ DOB _____

Also Known As (Optional Alt Name): _____ Last 4 SSN Digits

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Sonoma County coordinates teams of health care providers, substance use services, social service agencies, homeless services, and public safety agencies to help clients get the services they need. By signing this form, you will allow these teams, and the individuals who are part of them, to share your health and other information so that they can provide you services and help you get better results. The teams who will be allowed to see and share your information will include individuals from some or all of the Sonoma County agencies and organizations listed below. If you choose not to share your information, you will still be able to seek services from these organizations on your own, but you will not be eligible for extra help from the Sonoma County Multi-Disciplinary Team.

AUTHORIZATION TO DISCLOSE AND EXCHANGE MY HEALTH AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Initial Here INITIAL HERE TO ALLOW ALL AGENCIES LISTED BELOW TO SHARE YOUR INFORMATION:
I've written my initials to acknowledge that the County agencies, health care providers, and other organizations listed below are allowed to share my information with each other.
I understand that I don't have to sign this form if I don't want to.

Sonoma County Departments:

Health Services

- Drug & Alcohol Services
- Mental Health Services
- Public Health

Human Services

- Adult and Aging including Veterans Services
- Economic Assistance
- Employment & Training
- Family, Youth and Children Services

- Housing and Homelessness Services (CDC)
- Probation Department
- Child Support Services
- Public Defender's Office
- Sonoma County Sheriff's Office

Other Agencies: (Community Partners)

Community Health Services

- Alliance Medical Center
- Petaluma Health Center
- Santa Rosa Community Health Centers
- West County Health Centers
- Sonoma Valley Community Health Centers
- Alexander Valley Health Care
- Sonoma County Indian Health Project

Hospital Systems

- St. Joseph Health System and clinics
- Kaiser Permanente Hospitals and clinics
- Sutter Hospitals and clinics
- Sonoma Valley Hospital and clinics
- Healdsburg District Hospital and clinics

Other Service Agencies

- Goodwill Industries
- Community Action Partnership
- North Bay Regional Center
- Legal Aid of Sonoma County
- Redwood Community Health Coalition
- Partnership Health Plan
- Family Justice Center
- Face to Face HIV Services

Homeless Services Agencies

- Catholic Charities of Santa Rosa
- Committee on the Shelterless - COTS
- Redwood Gospel Mission
- Interlink Self-Help Center
- Buckelew Programs
- West County Community Services
- Interfaith Shelter Network
- Sonoma Overnight Support
- Social Advocates Network
- The Living Room
- Reach for Home
- St. Vincent de Paul

Substance Use Disorder Services

- Drug Abuse Alternative Center
- Turning Point Residential Treatment
- Petaluma Sober Circle
- California Human Development
- Women's Recovery Services

Youth Services

- Child Parent Institute
- Early Learning Institute
- Head Start
- Community Child Care Council of Sonoma
- Social Advocates for Youth (SAY)

Other:

Other:

Other:

This authorization to release information will **expire 5 years from the date it is signed; or will expire on: _____ (Not to exceed 5 Years.)**

HEALTH AND PERSONAL INFORMATION THAT CAN BE SHARED BY THE IDENTIFIED AGENCIES

THIS AUTHORIZATION ALLOWS DISCLOSURE OF ALL YOUR HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES, AND PROBATION RECORDS

The agencies listed on this authorization form can share any and all information from your health care records or personal records. The information may come from your past, present or future physical health provider, mental health provider, or substance use treatment provider. The information may also come from your Social Services records, Justice Records (if any) or the records of any other agency listed on this authorization form. The information the agencies share may be written or spoken.

Initial Here Initial here to indicate you understand we will share your mental health information.

Initial Here Initial here to indicate you understand we will share your past 5 years of Substance Use Program information from past, present and future treating providers.

Initial Here Initial here to indicate you understand we will share your HIV/Aids information.

PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS ON THE USE OF YOUR HEALTH AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

The agencies listed on this authorization form will use the information they share to refer you to services or to work with other agencies to improve your health and well-being. These services may be in areas like health care, housing, employment, education, nutrition, parenting, child welfare, and/or other traditional social services. This information may also be used for research purposes.

I understand that:

- I have a right to receive a copy of this authorization and have been offered a copy.
- I have the right to tell you to stop sharing my information. I can tell you, or I can write a letter to:
Sonoma County Privacy Officer: 1450 Neotomas Ave, Santa Rosa, CA, 95405
or by e-mail at DHS-Privacy&Security@Sonoma-County.org; or call (707) 565-5703

If I tell you to stop sharing my information, you will stop on the day I tell you to stop, but it will not affect information you already shared.

- I understand I don't have to sign this form and my information won't be shared if I don't sign it. The County won't deny me treatment, enrollment, or eligibility for benefits if I don't sign this form; however, some services and treatment won't happen if I don't allow my information to be shared.

- Information that the agencies share with each other may then be shared by the person who gets the information, except for certain federally protected drug and alcohol records. I understand that some of the information that is shared may no longer be protected by privacy laws; for example if I allow information to be shared with a family member.

Employee Name:

Agency of Employee filling out this form:

Client Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

Representative Signature:

Relation:

Date: ²²