



STAFF REPORT FROM THE CONTRA COSTA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

Contra Costa County Homeless System of Care Quarterly Report for Quarter 1, 2024 (January - March)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

As we reflect on the first quarter of this year, we can see that there is much to be grateful for. While we had heavy rain the morning of our Point in Time Count on January 24th, our system did not have to respond to the same type of weather-related emergencies we had this time last year. In addition to being notified of an award of close to \$20 million in the annual HUD CoC competition, we also learned we received the highest possible score on the CoC application! We also were fortunate enough to hear and learn from community members and stake holders through a number of community input sessions.

We look forward to seeing what next quarter brings for our system of care and thank you, as always for your support.

Sincerely,

Wayne Earl, Chair of the Council on Homelessness

Juno Hedrick, Vice Chair of the Council on Homelessness



INTRODUCTION

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness (CoH) is the governing and oversight body for the County homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Council provides advice and input to the Board of Supervisors on the operations of homeless services, program operations, and program development efforts in Contra Costa County. The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness is the governing body for the Contra Costa County Continuum of Care (CoC).

The Contra Costa CoC is comprised of multiple partners, including service providers, members of faith communities, local businesses, private and public funders, community members, education systems and law enforcement, and others who are working collaboratively to end homelessness. The COH and COC are supported by Contra Costa Health - Health, Housing & Homeless Services (H3) Division. H3 functions as the CoC administrative entity and collaborative applicant, CoC Lead Agency and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS database) Lead Agency.

The purpose of this report is to share information about the CoC and COH activities with the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and to provide recommendations from the COH to the County Board of Supervisors on long range planning and policy formulation that would support the county homeless CoC. This report includes information on system data, funding and policy activities, and CoC initiatives. All information will reflect activities and data for the prior quarter.

This report was produced on behalf of the CoH by H3 in collaboration with the CoH and CoC partners.

SYSTEM FUNDING

This quarter the CoC continued to evaluate the system of care and pursued funding opportunities to address the gaps in Contra Costa's homeless system, including our largest source of funding, the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

FEDERAL

HUD NOFO: The Continuum of Care (CoC) program is a program of the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, designed to promote a community-wide commitment to ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, states, and local governments to quickly re-house the homeless and minimize the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness; to promote access to and utilization of mainstream programs by the homeless; and to optimize self-sufficiency among those experiencing homelessness. In January,



Contra Costa received notification that it was granted \$19,300,140 in the annual CoC competition and that we received the highest possible score on the CoC application!

STATE

Homeless, Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP): HHAP grant through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) that provides local jurisdictions, including federally recognized tribal governments, with flexible funding to continue efforts to end and prevent homelessness in their communities. In this quarter, H3, on behalf of the County and CoC, hosted three public meetings to receive feedback on the HHAP-5 regional action plan and submitted the application to Cal-ICH. Over 100 stakeholders provided input to the regional action plan.

Encampment Resolution Grant (ERG): H3 applied for one ERG grant through the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) targeting encampments across the county. The Council on Homelessness provided a letter of support for this application.

SYSTEM INITIATIVES

The CoC regularly engages in multiple activities, partnerships, evaluations, and improvement that are designed to improve services to clients and achieve various system goals.

Equity: The Equity Committee goal is *“By Dec 31, 2024, Equity Committee will have provided equity focused input to all COH committees and Working Groups, partnered on equity focused projects and strengthened relationships with partners essential to increasing equity.”* Progress this quarter includes:

- Providing Input to all COH Committees and Working Groups: Provided input on Funding Committee and Governance Committee items.
- Partnering on Equity-Focused Projects: Continued to focus on building out materials designed to provide information to people experiencing homelessness, particularly Latinos. Will continue to strongly engage Latino-serving partners for feedback and distribution.
- Strengthening Relationships With Equity Partners: Will have presentation by Reentry provider next quarter to increase knowledge of reentry system and where it intersects with the homeless system of care

Engagement of People with Lived Experience of Homelessness (PWLE): This quarter the Council on Homelessness elected a Chair (Wayne Earl) and Vice Chair (Juno Hedrick), both of whom have a lived experience of homelessness. Continue to engage PWLE in materials development.

Youth and Young Adult Community Needs Assessment: The Council heard a presentation from Matthew Aronson Consulting at their March meeting about the Youth and Young Adult (YYA)



Community Needs Assessment. One of the initial themes was the missing authentic youth partnership at the system level, including opportunities to contribute their expertise and exercise their leadership. Community partners and YYA have been meeting to build out a Youth Action Board (YAB) as a workgroup within the COH’s Oversight Committee. The YAB hybrid meetings started in March with 7-9 YYA and in-person space hosted by the RYSE Center and Rainbow Community Center.

Point in Time Count (PIT): On January 24, 2024, with the support of over 150 volunteers, Contra Costa conducted the observational portion of the homeless Point in Time Count. A team of providers, including CORE outreach and People With Lived Experience conducted approximately 400 surveys with people experiencing homelessness to provide additional data. Preliminary data will be released this spring.

GOVERNANCE/REPORTING

- The Youth Representative selected at the end of 2023 needed to step down from their seat early in 2024, so the Council recruited and nominated a replacement candidate. This candidate is expected to be approved by the Board of Supervisors in April.
- The Council selected Wayne Earl as the new Chair and Juno Hedrick as the Vice Chair in January 2024.
- Polls conducted at the beginning of each Council on Homelessness regular meetings capture data on # of Council meetings previously attended, lived experience of homelessness and race/ethnicity of attendees. (See Appendix B for Q1 averages.)

MEETINGS, TRAININGS AND EVENTS

Council on Homelessness (COH) Meetings: The Council on Homelessness held three (3) regular business meetings in addition to an Orientation this quarter. In addition to the regular Council on Homelessness meetings, the following committees met:

Committee	Purpose
Equity Committee	Create accessible information, outreach, and educational materials to engage hard to reach or previously unreached communities in Contra Costa County.
Funding Committee	Direct the community input process for several time-sensitive federal and state funding streams. NOFO prep work that previously happened at the CoC/ESG Committee will now happen at the Funding Committee.



HMIS Policy Committee	Develops and shares updates on HMIS policies and practices, compliance, and troubleshooting; Plans technical assistance and training; Informs standards of practice and monitoring
Oversight Committee	Reviewing and assessing the development, implementation, and improvement of the CoC, Coordinated Entry System, HMIS database, and system outcomes
PATH Innovation Committee	Work towards the goal of reducing unsheltered homeless in Contra Costa County by 75% .
Point in Time Count Committee	Plan and implement the annual Point-in-Time Count, an annual HUD-required count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness

Trainings

- Working with Clients with Criminal Records (1/8/24)
- Working with Families with Children or Unaccompanied Minors (2/12/24)
- Housing First (3/11/24)

Events

- CoC Provider Meetings (3)

The recordings, minutes and materials for trainings and meetings can be found on the H3 website¹ and on the County agenda center², and a calendar of upcoming meetings and events can be found on the H3 website.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In alignment with the California State Association of Counties, support ongoing funding for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Program and other critical safety net services that support people experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County.

¹ [Trainings | Contra Costa Health \(cchealth.org\)](https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/agendacenter)

² <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/agendacenter>



APPENDIX A

Commonly Used Acronyms and Terms

Acronym	Definition
APR	Annual Performance Report (for HUD homeless programs)
BIPOC	Black and Indigenous People of Color
CARE	Coordinated Assessment and Resource
CCYCS	Contra Costa Youth Continuum of Services
CDBG, CDBG-CV	Community Development Block Grant (federal and state programs) and the federal Community Development Block Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
CESH	California Emergency Solutions and Housing program (state funding)
Continuum of Care (CoC)	Continuum of Care approach to assistance to the homeless. Federal grant program promoting and funding permanent solutions to homelessness.
Con Plan	Consolidated Plan, a locally developed plan for housing assistance and urban development under CDBG.
CORE	Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement program
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DCD	(Contra Costa County) Department of Conservation and Development
DOC	Department Operations Center
EHSD	(Contra Costa County) Employment and Human Services Division
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESG and ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant (federal and state program) and the federal Emergency Solutions Grant CARES Act coronavirus allocation.
ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant CARES
FMR	Fair Market Rent (maximum rent for Section 8 rental assistance/CoC grants)
HCD	Housing and Community Development (State office)
HEAP	Homeless Emergency Aid Program (State funding)
HEARTH	Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009
HHAP	Homeless Housing and Assistance Program
HMIS	Homeless Management Information System
HOME	Home Investment Partnerships (CPD program)
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (federal)
MHSA	Mental Health Services Act
NOFA/NOFO	Notice of Funding Availability/ Notice of Funding Opportunity
PHA	Public Housing Authority
PUI	Persons Under Investigation
PWLE	People With Lived Experience of Homelessness
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
SRO	Single-Room Occupancy housing units
SSDI	Social Security Disability Income
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TA	Technical Assistance



COH QUARTERLY REPORT

TAY	Transition Age Youth (usually ages 18-24)
VA	Veterans Affairs (U.S. Department of)
VASH	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing
VI-SPDAT	Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool



APPENDIX B

Poll Question Answers Q1

How many Council on Homelessness meetings have you attended? Q1 avg

This is my first meeting	7%
I've attended some meetings	25%
I've attended a lot of meetings	52%
I prefer not to answer	0

Do you have lived experience of homelessness?

Yes, currently	4%
Yes, within the past 7 years	14%
Yes, more than 7 years ago	13%
No	68%
I prefer not to answer	1%

What best describes your racial identity?*

African American/Black	16%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	7%
Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	10%
Hispanic/Latinx	20%
White	37%
Multi-racial	7%
I prefer not to answer	3%
I describe myself in another way	1%

*This category allows people to select multiple options