



CoC Board Meeting
April 27, 2021

- Introductions
- Approve March 25, 2021 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)
- Approve VHSP Renewal Application – Due April 30, 2021 (ACTION ITEM)
- Approve Permanent Supportive Housing Community Standards (ACTION ITEM)
- Approve Policy Priorities (ACTION ITEM)
- CoC Board Membership
 - Recent election results
 - Vacant Board seat to be filled

Next meeting: May 27, 2021 at 2PM



FREDERICKSBURG REGIONAL
CONTINUUM OF CARE

CoC Board Meeting

Date: March 25th, 2021

Time: 2pm

Location: Virtual via GoToMeeting

MEETING CALLED BY	Sam Shoukas (GWRC)
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular
NOTE TAKER	Aisha Balogun (AmeriCorps VISTA)
ATTENDEES	Christian Zamas (Individual) Dave Cooper (TBC) Karen McLaughlin (Stafford DSS) Kathy Anderson (Empowerhouse) Leslie Martin (University of Mary Washington) Lisa Crittenden (Loisann's Hope House) Michelle Swisher (Spotsylvania Schools) Susanna Finn (City of Fredericksburg) Wendy Sneed (Caroline DSS) Sam Shoukas (GWRC) Aisha Balogun (AmeriCorps VISTA)
ABSENT	Lori Yelverton (Micah Ministries) Alex Reidell (Legal Aid Works) Clay Milhoulides (Crismarr Realty) Joe Hargrove (Individual)

DISCUSSION	
Introduction	
Approve February 25, 2021 Minutes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wendy Sneed noted a correction regarding her organization, David Cooper noted a correction in the spelling of his name.• Pending the above corrections, Leslie Martin moved to approve the February minutes. Wendy Sneed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.	

Approve Funding Policies and Procedures

- Christian Zamas asked if any changes had been made to the document in response to public comment. Sam Shoukas noted that the inclusion of an Appeals process was inspired by public comment.
- Leslie Martin moved to approve the Funding Policies and Procedures. Lisa Crittenden seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Discharge Planning Action Plan

- Aisha Balogun gave context and definitions for the goals of the Discharge Planning Committee.
- Christian Zamas moved to approve the Discharge Planning Action Plan. Leslie Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Draft Policy Priorities Discussion

- Sam Shoukas reviewed the process of drafting the Policy Priorities.
- Dave Cooper asked for clarification on the “Move On” program. Sam will add a footnote to the document that defines the meaning of the term.

Emergency Shelter Planning Subcommittee Updates

- Sam Shoukas reviewed the progress of the Emergency Shelter Planning Subcommittee, including the consensus around the efficacy of non-congregate shelter for specific populations and the desired focus on affordable, accessible housing.
- Sam also notified the Board of the City Manager’s proposal to host a homelessness summit that the CoC would co-host and/or facilitate.
- Lisa Crittenden highlighted Meghann Cotter’s work in organizing focus groups among shelter guests.
- Kathy Anderson asked for ideas on how the CoC Board may be proactive respond to new funding opportunities. Christian Zamas requested that CoC staff keep the Board updated about new funding opportunities from localities.
- Sam Shoukas proposed that the Board postpone the preparation of a long-term community proposal until the CoC has more information on what paths of action will be best. Christian Zamas agreed.
- Christian asked the Board to consider what focus areas the Subcommittee should emphasize in future efforts.

Next Meeting: April 22, 2021 at 2pm.

CONCLUSION



Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care

Permanent Supportive Housing Program Standards

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1. Purpose

This document is intended to serve as a guide to service providers implementing the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program in the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (CoC). The document promotes a unified understanding of the core program elements and expectations of local PSH providers. As the local coordinated entry system continues to evolve and strengthen its ability to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-reoccurring, there is an increased need for system-wide alignment around common goals and outcomes, program models and activities, and performance standards. **All PSH providers within the CoC are expected to adhere to the model outlined in this document.** Fidelity to this model will help ensure that all program participants enrolled in PSH have similar experiences and opportunities to attain housing regardless of which service provider they work with.

2. Access and Prioritization

Diversion

CoC providers work through diversion conversations with both sheltered and unsheltered program participants to problem solve their current housing crisis and support participants to self-resolve. By helping individuals and families immediately identify alternative housing arrangements and connecting them with mainstream and community resources, households are able to find permanent housing options without utilizing homeless services at all. All participants seeking assistance should be diverted if possible, safe, and appropriate. If a household has not been successfully diverted or been able to quickly self-resolve within 14 days on the street or in shelter, they are considered for additional housing resources through the community prioritization process.

Eligibility & Coordinated Entry

Permanent supportive housing is a housing first, low-barrier intervention with no preconditions to enrollment other than homeless status. All referrals to the permanent supportive housing program should be received through the CoC's approved coordinated entry process (Refer to the *CoC Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures* for further details on access and eligibility). Persons fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence are connected through the Domestic Violence (DV) specific coordinated entry process. Providers that receive referrals are responsible for all final eligibility determinations. Providers should follow any additional funding guidelines in determining eligibility. There is no limitation on the number of times a household may access and receive permanent supportive housing services, so long as the household meets eligibility criteria outlined by funding sources and is referred and prioritized through coordinated entry.

Prioritization

To ensure that those most in need of assistance are prioritized for limited resources, the CoC has implemented a community process that assesses an eligible participant's level of vulnerability to target resources to those most vulnerable, least likely to self-resolve, and least likely to sustain in housing without the availability of intensive case management and supportive services, including the following:

- Prioritization score calculated for each household using multiple vulnerability criteria;
- Evaluation of intensity, frequency, and duration of case management needs; and
- Case conferencing

Details regarding CoC prioritization for permanent supportive housing beds can be found in the *CoC Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures*.

3. Core Components

Permanent supportive housing combines non-time-limited housing subsidy with voluntary, flexible services to support households to obtain and maintain housing. Core components of permanent supportive housing include housing identification, financial assistance, and case management. The services described below for each core component are primary types of assistance, but not an exhaustive list.

Participants should be assessed for and connected to other programs and services that better meet their situation as their needs change over time. Mainstream resources and housing subsidies, and in-home or long-term care should be considered as options for participants as available and as the participant chooses.

Grant guidelines may further determine aspects of permanent supportive housing projects at the agency level, including agency staff training requirements.

Housing Identification

Permanent supportive housing programs support participants to identify housing options and may be project-based or scattered-site. Project-based programs place participants in a building or part of a building dedicated to permanent supportive housing. Scattered-site programs support participants to lease individual units in the community.

A participant in scattered-site style program should be supported to quickly locate housing options for the household. The *Housing Barrier Assessment* should be used to identify potential barriers to housing, which should be considered when matching participants to potential vacancies in the area. Program participants receiving housing identification support may conduct their own search and choose housing they identify independently. Activities under this core component are targeted for both landlords and tenants:

1. Landlord Recruitment and Support
 - Engage landlords, homeowners, or renters with housing options
 - Negotiate with landlords or homeowners to facilitate household access, including for households with rental barriers
 - Support landlords, homeowners, or roommates in order to preserve and develop partnerships for current and future housing placements. The case manager should provide information to the landlord about how they can contact the project again if needed and what kind of follow-up assistance may be available
 - Respond to landlord needs that would risk participant tenancy. This includes:
 - Providing detailed contact information for appropriate staff
 - Responding quickly to landlord calls about serious tenancy problems
 - Seeking to resolve conflicts around lease requirements, complaints by other tenants, and timely rent payments

- When necessary and whenever possible, negotiating move-out terms and assisting households to quickly locate and move into another unit without an eviction

2. Household Housing Search and Support

- Assess tenant needs and barriers to housing placement
- Set household expectations on location, size and/or rent
- Conduct a targeted housing search and support households with completing rental applications
- Provide tenant counseling, including education on communication with landlords, understanding rental applications and leases, and understanding tenant obligations

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance in permanent supportive housing provides long-term support to households so they can sustain permanent housing. Financial assistance may include rent, utility, and security deposit assistance and other similar, indirect payments. Case managers are responsible for ensuring that both the landlord and the participant are informed of the supports that are being provided.

Case Management

Intensive and frequent case management is provided to participants within permanent supportive housing to quickly obtain and stabilize participants in housing. Participants are constantly evaluated for demonstrated independence and the level of case management intensity and frequency is adjusted accordingly. At any time, participants may have case management support increased or decreased based on progression of need. The level of assistance to be provided is assessed and determined by the providing agency with the participant. Length of tenancy should not be conditioned on provision of or participation in supportive services.

Case management should use a strengths-based approach to support households to obtain permanent housing, stabilize in housing, and connect to community and mainstream services and supports as needed. Case management should be participant-driven and voluntary. Decisions regarding where, how, and when case management is received should be made in collaboration with participants. Case management should be flexible in intensity and frequency so that essential assistance is offered based on the tailored needs of the participant. Case management services may include:

- Conflict resolution and mediation with landlords, family members, friends, and roommates
- Leveraging personal, family, friend, and community resources to obtain and stabilize in housing
- Preparing households to fully assume housing costs
- Maintaining working relationships with landlords for future participants and to respond to landlord needs that would risk participant tenancy
- Connection to community resources that provides well rounded stability

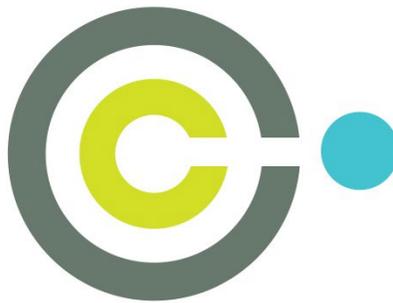
4. HMIS and Data Collection

All permanent supportive housing providers are required to enter data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or a comparable data system if the agency is prohibited from using HMIS. Prompt and accurate data collection assists the homeless system to determine which services and projects participants are utilizing, evaluate the impact of services, and make system improvements. It is the responsibility of the project staff to have accurate and complete data. Providers should refer to the latest version of HUD's *HMIS Data Dictionary* for detailed instructions on what is required to be collected.

5. Performance Standards

Permanent supportive housing projects will be evaluated on their ability to meet CoC approved Project Performance Standards.

DRAFT



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CONTINUUM OF CARE

2021 Policy Priorities

Each year, the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) establishes local priorities for allocating federal and state funds made available to the community for programs working to prevent and end homelessness in the region. The CoC funding process provides limited funding for specific program types and sets the expectation of strategic resource allocation, system coordination, and system-level performance. The CoC Board recognizes that many more programs contribute significantly to the work of addressing homelessness in our community and that the federal and state funding allocations through the CoC is not sufficient to meet the needs in the community.

The CoC priorities reflect local needs and are based on priorities established in the federal HEARTH Act and the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program guidelines. The 2021 policy priorities were developed to guide the grant review, selection, and ranking process. The key objectives underlying the priorities for funding include ensuring that projects are competitive for funding, meet local needs, and maximize impact.

General CoC Philosophies

- 1. Ending homelessness for all persons.** To end homelessness, the CoC will identify, engage, and effectively serve all persons experiencing homelessness. The CoC will measure their performance based on local data that take into account the challenges faced by all subpopulations experiencing homelessness in the geographic area (e.g., veterans, youth, families, or those experiencing chronic homelessness). The CoC will have a comprehensive outreach strategy in place to identify and continuously engage all unsheltered individuals and families. Additionally, the CoC will use local data to determine the characteristics of individuals and families with the highest needs and longest experiences of homelessness to develop housing and supportive services tailored to their needs. Finally, the CoC will use the reallocation process to create new projects that improve their overall performance and better respond to their needs.
- 2. Creating a systemic response to homelessness.** The CoC will be using system performance measures such as the average length of homeless episodes, rates of return to homelessness, and rates of exit to permanent housing destinations to determine how effectively they are serving people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, the CoC will be using their Coordinated Entry process to promote participant choice, coordinate homeless assistance and mainstream housing and services to ensure people experiencing homelessness receive assistance quickly, and make homelessness assistance open, inclusive, and transparent.
- 3. Strategically allocating and using resources.** Using cost, performance, and outcome data, the CoC will improve how resources are utilized to end homelessness. The CoC will review project quality, performance, and cost effectiveness. The CoC will maximize the use of mainstream and other community-based resources when serving persons experiencing homelessness. Finally, the CoC will review all projects eligible for renewal to determine their effectiveness in serving people experiencing homelessness as well as their cost effectiveness.

4. Using a Housing First approach. Housing First prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing and does not have service participation requirements or preconditions. Projects will help individuals and families move quickly into permanent housing, and the CoC will measure and help projects reduce the length of time people experience homelessness. Additionally, the CoC will engage landlords and property owners, remove barriers to entry, and adopt client-centered service methods without the requirement of service participation at entry or throughout program participation.

Specifically, the CoC will focus on:

- Supporting projects providing services that are low barrier, housing first, and client centered
- Partnering with community organizations and mainstream resources to meet the needs of households at risk of homelessness
- Leveraging mainstream resources to effectively connect clients experiencing homelessness and recently rehoused receive community support once program ends
- Continuing to support housing-focused emergency shelter
- Funding permanent housing programs
- Leveraging all possible resources to increase permanent housing availability in the community
- Addressing the needs of vulnerable subpopulations experiencing homeless through community partnerships and targeted resources as available

Priority Programing for CoC Funding

- New applicants for all programs will be accepted. Applications that maximize direct client services and follow industry and locally determined standards and best practices will be prioritized.
- Maintain support for high performing projects. Reallocate funding from lower performing to high performing projects
- Support the implementation of [Moving On¹](#) strategies to create additional system capacity to serve those experiencing homelessness
- Permanent housing programs increase staffing and support to maximize use effective housing case management to assist with housing stabilization and retention

¹ [Moving On is a collection of strategies and principles promoted by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) that supports tenants in transitioning out of permanent supportive housing projects if they are ready and wish to exit.](#)