



FREDERICKSBURG REGIONAL
CONTINUUM OF CARE

System Planning Committee Meeting Agenda

April 20, 2022

- Introductions
- Approve March 16, 2022 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)
- Review Emergency Shelter Program Standards
- Review Street Outreach Program Standards
- Community Benefit Navigator Process
- Youth Demonstration Grant
- Emergency Shelter
- Agency Updates

Next Meeting: May 18, 2022 at 3PM



FREDERICKSBURG REGIONAL
CONTINUUM OF CARE

System Planning Committee

Date: March 16, 2022

Time: 3PM

Location: George Washington Regional Commission

MEETING CALLED BY	Sam Shoukas (GWRC)
TYPE OF MEETING	Monthly
NOTE TAKER	Sam Shoukas (GWRC)
ATTENDEES	Loisann's Hope House – Cait Woodward, Lisa Crittenden Thurman Brisben Center – Dave Cooper, Deb Rapone, Chris Payton, Dale Town, Alice Stanton, Paul Stanton Empowerhouse – Kathy Anderson Micah Ministries – Meghann Cotter FAHASS – Kathy Douberly Healthy Generations Area Agency on Aging – Kim Merritt Rappahannock Area Community Services Board – Lori Weresnick Christian Zammis (Individual) George Washington Regional Commission – Sam Shoukas, Todd Rump
ABSENT	McGuire VA Med Center Spotsylvania County Schools

DISCUSSION	
<p>Introductions</p> <p>Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lori Weresnick motioned to approve the February 16, 2022 meeting minutes and Kathy Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. 	

Develop 2022 Action Plan

- Christian Zammass motioned to approve the 2022 action plan and Lori Weresnick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Community Eligibility Worker

- The Committee reviewed the options for using the Community Eligibility Worker funds. Lisa Crittenden motioned to create a subcommittee with Meghann, Sam, and Lisa to discuss the partnership to hire for the position and create MOU for the partnership between CoC, agency and DSS. Christian Zammass seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Homelessness Response System MOU

- The Committee discussed the draft homelessness response system MOU.
- TBC stated that they would not sign the MOU as stated and requested that the MOU be revised to state that the coordinated assessment list will be used as a primary or preferred list of those for shelter and not the only source. As this is a requirement of all other providers, CoC will not be including that revision.
- MOU will go to CoC Board for discussion and vote on removing TBC from the partnership.

Next Meeting: April 20, 2022 at 3PM In Person at the George Washington Regional Commission

CONCLUSION	
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Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care

Emergency Shelter Program Standards

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Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Emergency Shelter Program Standards

I. Purpose

This document is intended to serve as a guide for organizations providing emergency shelter within the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (FRCoC). All emergency shelters within the FRCoC are expected to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document. Fidelity to this model will help ensure that all individuals seeking assistance will have similar opportunities to access emergency shelter.

II. Access

Shelters will establish admissions processes that promote shelter access to those experiencing the most need for housing support within our community. Specific considerations around eligibility and coordinated entry are detailed below.

A. Eligibility

Individuals eligible for emergency shelter must meet the HUD definition for literal homelessness, imminent risk of homelessness, or fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence (DV).

The FRCoC is committed to low-barrier services, as described in the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Policy Priorities. To support this vision, emergency shelters that receive FRCoC funding must adopt eligibility standards that do not require income, participation in services not required by grants, or other criteria that screen out individuals in need of support.

B. Coordinated Entry

Emergency shelters will allocate available beds through the FRCoC Coordinated Entry process, a system that establishes streamlined entry points for individuals seeking services from the CoC. Details on the structure and implementation of coordinated entry are contained with the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures. Participation in Coordinated Entry will ensure that individuals and households with the highest need will gain access to shelter as soon as possible. Exceptions to Coordinated Entry-based bed allocation exist for seasonal shelters or shelters that serve specific sub-populations. However, even if beds are allocated outside of Coordinated Entry, shelters should confirm that residents receive the knowledge and support to connect to other community resources through the Homelessness Helpline.

III. Services and Policies

Shelters will provide low-barrier, temporary, and housing-focused overnight accommodations to meet the immediate needs of individuals and households experiencing homelessness. Basic shelter elements are detailed below, including considerations about the physical environment, case management, and resident guidelines.

C. Physical Environment

Emergency shelters should be clean and safe. Organizations should refer the following resources for specific guidance on the minimum physical requirements of shelters:

- Grant requirements (Emergency Solutions Grant Minimum Habitability Standards for Emergency Shelters, Virginia Homeless and Special Needs Housing Funding Guidelines, etc.)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Checklist for Emergency Shelters
 - If the shelter is not ADA-compliant, shelters should have a standard, written plan on how they will accommodate residents with disabilities.

Beyond basic habitability requirements, providers should also consider how the design of their shelters contribute to a sense of normalcy, empowerment, privacy, security and peace of mind, and positive community for residents. The following are resources that providers can reference as they begin or continue to design their shelters:

- Designing the Built Environment for Recovery from Homelessness (Michael J. Berens, Design Resources for Homelessness)
- Designing for the Homeless: Architecture that Works (Sam Davis)

D. Case Management

All shelter residents should have access to voluntary, consistent case management from trained staff members. Case management will have the following characteristics:

- **Housing-focused.** The primary goal of case management is to assist clients to gain and maintain stable permanent housing.
- **Client-driven.** Case managers work with the unique needs of each individual or household, assisting in the creation and achievement of client-defined housing goals.
- **Trauma-informed.** Trauma-Informed case management considers knowledge about trauma — its impact, interpersonal dynamic, and paths to recovery — and incorporates this knowledge into all aspects of service delivery.
- **Strengths-based.** Case managers recognize the capacity, skills, and assets of each individual or household, allowing them to make their own informed decisions.
- **Connected to community resources.** Case managers support individuals in building and maintaining connections to formal social services and informal social resources. Additionally, case managers will have continuous diversion conversations to assist clients in identifying housing resources as soon as possible.

E. Resident Guidelines and Termination

Emergency shelters must have written guidelines, program standards, or community expectations that are communicated to all residents upon intake. To promote low-barrier access to shelter, these guidelines will emphasize safety and community. Shelters should refer to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) Emergency Shelter Learning Series for guidance on creating and evaluating shelter rules.

Emergency shelters must also have a standard termination process. Providers can exercise their own judgement in deciding which program rule violations result in termination. However, termination should only be in response to severe cases, threats, or unsafe practices.

IV. HMIS and Data Collection

All emergency shelters are required to enter data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a centralized database for client information utilized by several Virginia communities. For

confidentiality reasons, DV service providers are exempt from using the HMIS system but must use a comparable database to collect data.

Prompt and accurate data collection helps the homeless system determine which services and programs are being utilized, evaluate the impact of emergency shelter, and make system improvements. It is the responsibility of shelter staff and administration to ensure data entered in HMIS is timely, accurate, and complete.

Providers should refer to the latest version of the following documents for HMIS guidance:

- HUD HMIS Data Dictionary (required data elements, definitions)
- Homeward Community Information System Policies and Procedures (data quality standards, data confidentiality standards)

V. Performance Evaluation

Emergency shelters will be evaluated on their ability to provide low-barrier, housing-focused, temporary shelter based on the metrics detailed in the most recent FRCoC Project Performance Standards. Project performance will inform decisions made by the Funding and Performance Committee and CoC Board regarding funding allocations.



Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Street Outreach Program Standards

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Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Street Outreach Program Standards

I. Purpose

This document is intended to serve as a guide for organizations providing Street Outreach within the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (FRCoC). Street Outreach is a program designed to provide essential services to unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness, meeting individuals where they are, both physically and psychologically. Program design includes engaging and developing relationships with unsheltered persons in unconventional settings (CFR 576.101).

This document describes a set of standards for Outreach in locations where individuals and families experiencing homelessness reside, including streets, parks, campsites, abandoned buildings, cars, and other places not meant for human habitation, to establish relationships, build trust and rapport, provide necessities, and begin the process of linking households to housing and support services. Fidelity to these principles and policies will help ensure that all individuals in need of assistance will have equal access to effective services.

II. Eligibility

To be eligible for Street Outreach, an individual or family must meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition for literal homelessness, imminent risk of homelessness, or fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence. Service providers may adopt additional eligibility criteria that are consistent with their mission, such as limiting service to individuals who are fleeing or at risk of domestic violence. However, the FRCoC is committed to low-barrier services, as described in the Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care Policy Priorities. To support this vision, Street Outreach providers that receive FRCoC funding should adopt eligibility standards that do not require a minimal level of income, participation in services not required by grants, or other criteria that screen out individuals in need of support.

III. Standards and Performance Indicators

The following program standards are required for Street Outreach services that are conducted through the FRCoC, along with associated performance indicators. These standards and indicators are adapted from [“Core Elements of Effective Street Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness”](#) (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2019).

A. Street Outreach Efforts are Systematic, Coordinated, and Comprehensive

- Street Outreach is conducted on behalf of the community, requiring collaboration among multiple stakeholders. Knowledge of and engagement with all partners leads to more strategic use of resources and more comprehensive coverage and identification of all people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- Street Outreach is coordinated among various FRCoC partners utilizing multiple funding sources.

- Street Outreach efforts are also coordinated with the broader network of programs, services, businesses, and individuals who are likely to encounter individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, but whose regular focus is broader than homelessness. This might include law enforcement and other first responders, hospitals, health and behavioral healthcare providers, child welfare agencies, homeless education liaisons, workforce systems, faith-based organizations, and other community-based providers.
- Street Outreach efforts are connected to Coordinated Entry processes. Participation in Coordinated Entry will ensure that individuals and households with the highest need will gain access to shelter as soon as possible.
- All Street Outreach contacts and housing outcomes are documented in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or another local data system. Outreach workers will have access to HMIS to be able to input data, look up previous contacts with the person experiencing homelessness, and access information that helps them deliver services more effectively. Prompt and accurate data collection helps the homeless system determine which services and programs participants are utilizing, evaluate the impact of Street Outreach and other services, and make system improvements. It is the responsibility of Outreach staff and administrators to ensure data entered in HMIS is timely, accurate, and complete.

B. Street Outreach Efforts Are Housing-Focused

- Street Outreach does not require individuals to enter emergency shelter or transitional housing as an ‘interim step’ or prerequisite to accessing stable housing. However, Street Outreach does make immediate connections to emergency shelter or temporary housing to provide safe options while individuals and families are on a pathway toward stability.
- To the extent possible, Street Outreach utilizes Housing First approaches that do not impose preconditions to make referrals to permanent housing, shelter, or other temporary housing, such as sobriety, minimum income requirements, absence of a criminal record, completion of treatment, participation in services, or other conditions.

C. Street Outreach Efforts Are Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed, and Culturally Responsive

- Street Outreach utilizes a person-centered approach, focused on the individual’s strengths and resources, and never makes assumptions about what a person might want or need.
- Street Outreach workers provide people experiencing homelessness with multiple opportunities to say ‘no’ and make repeated offers of assistance as necessary throughout the engagement process.
- Street Outreach staff receive regular training in evidence-based practices, including trauma-informed care, and are proficient in utilizing such practices.
- Street Outreach providers employ Outreach staff with lived experience and offer commensurate compensation to all Outreach staff.
- Street Outreach workers provide warm handoffs to Coordinated Entry or to shelter, housing, and service providers (e.g., Outreach staff may offer to physically accompany the individual to appointments to provide support).
- Street Outreach efforts are respectful and responsive to the beliefs and practices, sexual orientation, disability status, age, gender identity, cultural preference, and linguistic needs of each household.

- Street Outreach providers analyze local data regarding racial inequities and disparities among people experiencing homelessness and customize their Outreach efforts to ensure that equity is being achieved. This might include tailoring materials or procedures, assuring appropriate geographic coverage, training all staff in issues of equity and cultural competency, and regularly analyzing performance and outcomes with a focus on racial equity.
- Street Outreach workers utilize problem-solving techniques to identify existing support networks, explore possible safe housing options outside the homelessness service system, such as reunification with family, and connect the individual to community supports and services.

D. Street Outreach Efforts Emphasize Safety and Reduce Harm

- Street Outreach providers have protocols in place to ensure the safety of all individuals seeking assistance. These protocols help ensure that people fleeing domestic violence, as well as dating violence, sexual assault, trafficking, or stalking, have safe and confidential access to the Coordinated Entry process and appropriate services.
- Street Outreach efforts utilize harm reduction principles, including non-judgmental, non-coercive provision of services and resources.
- Street Outreach efforts accept that some individuals may not initially accept offers of emergency shelter or housing assistance. While maintaining a focus on creating connections to permanent housing, Outreach workers establish rapport and reduce harm by providing critical, life-saving resources such as food, water, clothing, blankets, and other necessities.

IV. Performance Evaluation

Street Outreach services will be evaluated on their ability to identify eligible participants and provide assistance that results in positive housing outcomes, based on the metrics detailed in the most recent FRCoC Project Performance Standards. Project performance will inform decisions made by the Funding and Performance Committee and FRCoC Board regarding funding allocations.

Community Benefits Navigator Job Description

Position Summary

The Community Benefits Navigator is a shared community position responsible for working with households currently or at-risk of experiencing homelessness or those who were recently housed to ensure connection to needed mainstream public benefits such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Energy Assistance, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), etc. This vital, client-centric role provides education and guidance to clients about available benefits and ensures the continuity of program benefits by providing support through the complicated enrollment and recertification processes. Based at Loisann's Hope House in Fredericksburg, VA, this position assists clients across the region and provides on-site support to the clients of numerous homeless services providers.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

- Conduct public education activities to raise awareness of the availability of public benefit programs to households currently or at-risk of experiencing homelessness or those who were recently housed.
- Provide a high-level of customer service to clients to ensure educational needs are met.
- Assess client eligibility for community benefit programs by completing a comprehensive intake assessment.
- Provide screening, information, and 1-to-1 assistance to connect clients with public benefit programs.
- Assist clients to complete the public benefit program applications using Common Help portal.
- Assist clients with post-enrollment activities, including completing verification requests and re-certifications, and by assisting with complex cases and appeals.
- Act as a liaison between clients and local Departments of Social Services throughout the application and recertification process.
- Provide in-person outreach to homeless services providers to connect with clients in need of navigation.
- Attend team meetings, phone conferences, and trainings as needed.
- Attend community meetings and events as needed to support the target population.
- Enter required data into the local Homeless Management Information System.
- Other duties as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications

- Strong interpersonal and oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work with diverse populations and persons experiencing a housing crisis.
- Flexibility, adaptability, and creative problem-solving approach to case management.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong desire and ability to work collaboratively with community partners and agencies.
- High level of self-direction, with an ability to multitask and prioritize demands effectively and quickly.

Education and Background

- Associate degree or higher

- Bachelor's Degree in human services, or related field, preferred
- Knowledge of the homelessness response system, preferred

Memorandum of Understanding Community Benefit Navigator Program

Between: Loisann's Hope House
And: Fredericksburg Department of Social Services
Date: [date of this MOU]

The Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agree to the following:

I. Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between Loisann's Hope House, a non-profit organization organized and existing under the laws of Virginia, having its principal place of business at 902 Lafayette Boulevard, Fredericksburg, VA 22401, and Fredericksburg Department of Social Services, a government entity, having its principal place of business at 608 Jackson Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. This MOU serves to outline the partnership Loisann's Hope House and Fredericksburg Department of Social Services for the Community Benefit Navigator program. This partnership is intended to support the coordination between the two agencies in the process of alleviating the challenges and stressors of connecting to public benefit programs for households currently or at-risk of experiencing homelessness or those who were recently housed.

II. Period of Performance

This MOU is effective on the date of execution of this MOU as established at the signing of this MOU and is renewable on a yearly basis without other written notice.

III. Expectations

Loisann's Hope House will:

- Employ a Community Benefit Navigator to implement the duties outline below.
- Conduct public education activities to raise awareness of the availability public benefit programs to households currently or at-risk of experiencing homelessness or those who were recently housed.
- Provides a high-level of customer service to patients to ensure educational needs are met Assess client eligibility for community benefits by completion of an intake.
- Provide screening, information, and 1-to-1 assistance to connect clients with public benefit programs.
- Assist clients to complete the public benefit applications using Common Help portal.

- Assist clients with post-enrollment activities, including completing verification requests, completing recertifications, and assisting with complex cases and appeals.
- Act as a liaison between clients and local Department of Social Services throughout the application and recertification process.
- Provide in-person outreach to homeless services providers to connect with clients in need of navigation.
- Attend team meetings, phone conferences, and trainings as needed.
- Enter required data into the local Homeless Management Information System.

Fredericksburg Department of Social Services will:

- Provide training to community benefit navigator in completing benefit applications and recertifications and required verifications.
- Inform community benefit navigator of updates and changes to benefit process and information.
- Provide materials to community benefit navigator need to educate clients on available benefits.
- Identify a point of contact at the department to serve as liaison for the community benefit worker communication.
- Communicate with community benefit navigator on the status and outcome of client applications.

IV. Termination

In the event that either or both parties fail to fulfill any or all obligations under this MOU, the offending party shall make substantial attempts to remedy such failure within a reasonable period of time after becoming aware of or upon notification of the failure by either party. Either party may terminate this MOU in whole or in part, by written notice of termination, if attempts to remediate any failure to fulfill obligations by either party within a reasonable period are unsuccessful.

Authorized Signatures of the MOU:

Both parties acknowledge that they have read and understood this MOU in its entirety. Both parties agree that this MOU supersedes all prior MOUs, written or oral, relating to the subject matter of this MOU. No modification or waiver of any provision shall be binding unless in writing signed by the Party against whom such modification or waiver is sought to be enforced.

Lisa Crittenden, Chief Executive Officer
Loisann's Hope House

Date

Christen Gallik, Executive Director
Fredericksburg Department of Social Services

Date