

Minutes

Orange County Continuum of Care | Housing Opportunities Committee

Friday, October 8, 2021 10:00am – 12:00pm

Location

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81634170299?pwd=NONBaTNvdmo3VnVsczNJbTVDa3QrZz09>

Meeting Phone Number: +1 346 248 7799

Meeting ID: 816 3417 0299

Passcode: 940236

Agenda

1. **Call to Order (10 am)**
 - a. Judson Brown appointed Grace Stepter to chair meeting in his absence. Grace Stepter called meeting to order.
2. **Additions / Deletions to Agenda**
 - a. No additions or deletions.
3. **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Eligibility Expansion – Sofia Nava and Jennifer Vallejo, Supervisory Social Worker, OC HUD – VASH Program Triage Team**
 - a. Jennifer Vallejo presented an update on HUD-VASH eligibility expansion
 - i. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (PL 116-283) included provisions expanding eligibility for HUD-VASH. The law went into effect on January 1, 2021.
 - ii. Changes to HUD-VASH eligibility are as follows:
 1. For the purpose of HUD-VASH eligibility, the term “veteran” is defined as “a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released therefrom,” excluding anyone who received a dishonorable discharge or was discharged or dismissed by reason of a general court-martial (38 USC § 2002 (b)).
 2. A bad conduct discharge can result from a general court-martial or a special court-martial. A person with a bad conduct discharge from a general court martial is not a “veteran” as defined in 38 USC § 2002 (b) and is thus ineligible to participate based on that period of service. A person with a bad conduct discharge from a special court-martial is a “veteran” as defined in 38 USC § 2002 (b) and thus is eligible to participate.
 - iii. In practice, this means, those eligible for HUD-VASH include veterans with an Honorable Discharge, General Discharge, Other than Honorable Discharge (in lieu of court-martial or from a special court martial), Bad Conduct Discharge (from a special court-martial), Uncharacterized, Undesirable. Additionally, minimum duty requirements do not apply. Those ineligible for HUD-VASH include veterans with a Dishonorable Discharge, Other than Honorable Discharge (from a general court-martial), and/or Bad Conduct Discharge (from a general court-martial).

- iv. Veterans enrolled in HUD-VASH, but otherwise ineligible for U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) health care services, may receive case management and supportive services offered by HUD-VASH providers through the local VA Medical Center’s HUD-VASH program.
 - v. HUD-VASH enrollment does not entitle covered veterans to the full range of VA health care services if the veteran is otherwise ineligible. Eligibility for services provided through HUD-VASH ceases upon discharge from the HUD-VASH program.
 - vi. Veterans served under the new legislation may not be eligible for additional healthcare services offered by the VA and should be linked to community resources/services for support.
- b. Public comments:
- i. Grace Stepter asked if this legislation applies strictly to how HUD-VASH is used, or if it can be applied to veteran eligibility for Section 8 housing vouchers as well. Jennifer Vallejo stated she believed it applied to directly to HUD-VASH.
 - ii. Marie Vu from Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) stated HUD will also have an upcoming webinar on October 18, 2021 as an additional resource.
 - iii. Steve McNally asked about the number of VASH vouchers by county and by housing authority. Marie Vu shared how to find HUD-VASH information on the OCHA website or recommended going directly through the VA Community Resource and referral Centers (CRRC).
 - iv. Steve McNally asked if HUD-VASH can be ported/ transferred to other counties. Jennifer Vallejo stated there is a committee that goes through the process with a veteran to determine eligibility for transferring to another county.
4. **Update on Volunteers of America’s (VOA) Veteran Services – Eric Richardson and Jennylyn Adviento, Volunteers of America**
- a. Four Key elements for Orange County (OC) Programs for veterans: Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), Veterans Shallow Subsidy Program, Welcome Home OC, and Grant for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals (GBHI).
 - b. SSVF program provides prevention assistance to veterans at risk of homelessness and rapid rehousing (RRH) for veterans who are literally homeless and have an income below 50 percent Area Median Income (AMI). This provides third-party payments to landlords, case management, and possible emergency housing assistance. VOA supports over 400 veteran households per year through SSVF.
 - c. Welcome Home OC is a collaborative program with OC United Way. Veterans must have HUD-VASH and will be provided housing navigation, financial assistance, and case management.
 - d. GBHI program is for veterans and the general public with substance use disorders and co-occurring disorders. Participants are provided with housing navigation, case management, and financial assistance for recovery treatment/support.
 - e. VOA recently received \$2 million through the VA for the Veteran Shallow Subsidy program.
 - f. Public comments:
 - i. Member of the public, asked about getting an individual connected to services. Eric Richardson provided the referral contact number.
 - ii. Member of the public asked for clarification on the definition of homelessness and at-risk of homelessness. Jennylyn Adviento shared the specific definitions Eric Richardson recommended to refer individuals even if unsure of eligibility criteria, so that VOA can potentially work with them.
5. **Project-Based Housing Updates:**
- a. **Project Homekey Update – Marie Vu, OC Community Resources**
 - i. The County of Orange is working on reviewing potential applications for Project Homekey.

- ii. Applications for Project Homekey will be due January 30, 2022, and counties are vetting potential properties for Project Homekey. More updates on viable properties will likely be made available at the next Housing Opportunities Committee meeting.
- b. OC Housing Finance Trust Update – Adam Eliason, OC Finance Trust**
- i. OC Housing Finance Trust Updates: OC Housing Finance Trust is currently waiting on an announcement from California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) about application for grant funding.
 - ii. Status of projects are available on the website: Airport Inn and North Harbor properties began construction, Center of Hope is expecting to close and start construction in December 2021 or January 2022, and Mountainview property in Lake Forest will close soon.
 - iii. Adam Eliason stated that the County of Orange’s goal is to produce 2,700 new permanent housing units by 2025, and referenced the website to view plan.
 - iv. A campaign and collaboration have been initiated with OC United Way. OC Housing Finance Trust is reaching out to the 11 cities who are not part of the OC Housing Finance Trust and inviting them to consider joining in order to increase the amount of permanent housing units available.
 - v. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be released in January 2022, and partners are encouraged to be planning for future affordable housing projects.
 - vi. Public comments:
 - 1. Helia Daigeau from Dayle McIntosh asked how Orange County is ensuring that there are shelters, temporary units, and affordable housing solutions available that can serve individuals with disabilities, and requested units be included on future projects for those with disabilities.
 - 2. Steve McNally asked whether there is a summary chart for OC Housing Finance Trust and if any consideration been given to adjusting the 2,700 unit goal. He also requested more of an overview on how housing goals are established and informed by research.
 - 3. Jacky Trani asked how advocates can help convince the nonmember cities to join the OC Housing Finance Trust.
- c. Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and No Place Like Home (NPLH) Update – Stephani Bryson, Health Care Agency**
- i. Health Care Agency is preparing for No Place Like Home Round 4, which will be going to the Board of Supervisors for approval in December.
 - ii. Stephani Bryson provided updates on the following properties:
 - 1. Buena Esperanza is continuing to lease-up.
 - 2. Westminster Crossing Property has 16 households moving in within the week.
 - 3. Altrudy Senior facility will be opening soon, providing 10 units.
 - iii. Overall, eight projects are opening in the upcoming year, with over 100 units becoming available.
 - iv. Public Comments:
 - 1. Member of the public asked about whether any properties/units were being made available in the South Service Planning Area.
 - 2. Steve McNally asked if a link could be provided detailing the eligibility criteria and application process for MHSA and NPLH programs.
- d. PHA Project-Based Vouchers Updates and Projections – Kerrin Cardwell, Marie Vu, Judson Brown, Nate Robbins**

- i. **Zulima Lundy provided update on behalf of Nate Robbins for Garden Grove Housing Authority (GGHA):**
 1. On September 14, 2021, the Garden Grove City Council approved the first-ever permanent supportive housing (PSH) project, which is being developed in partnership with American Family Housing. The 10-unit, acquisition/rehabilitation project is utilizing eight Mainstream Project-Based Vouchers to house non-elderly, disabled, literally homeless households, with the ninth unit being a Very-Low HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME) unit, and the tenth being a manager's unit. The project is scheduled to lease-up by end of February 2022.
 2. GGHA has received referrals for 78 of 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) and 10 of 30 Mainstream Vouchers. City staff are in the process of executing funding agreements with EHV Housing Service Providers to award a Not-To-Exceed amount of \$49,000 in EHV Service Fees, which is enough to serve 14 vouchers with pre-lease services. Post-lease services are being funded with ESG-CV Rapid Rehousing funds.
 3. GGHA is currently negotiating a 56-unit, new construction, affordable housing project that's contemplating inclusion of 20 PSH units.
 4. Garden Grove is scheduled to receive \$3 million in HOME-American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds, which will be utilized to house the homeless via PSH, temporary shelter, etc.
- ii. **Anaheim Housing Authority (AHA) – Kerrin Cardwell**
 1. AHA is continuing to lease Buena Esperanza units, with 14 of the units being MHSA units.
 2. AHA has received \$5 million for permanent housing units and is working through challenges associated with getting landlords ready to lease-up units for vouchered individuals.
- iii. **Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) – Marie Vu**
 1. OCHA has 20 HUD-VASH units for Buena Esperanza.
 2. Westminster Crossing has 20 units and has begun leasing-up.
 3. Altrudy Senior project is to have eight units by end of 2021.
 4. Fountain Valley Housing project is to have eight HUD-VASH units by end of 2021.
 5. OCHA has received 331 referrals to date, issued 100 EHV, and has not yet leased-up any units.
- iv. **Santa Ana Housing Authority (SAHA) – Maria Hudson**
 1. Casa Querencia is still operating.
 2. The Orchard property has some vacancies.
 3. Heroes Landing has a few vacancies for veterans.
 4. FX Residences is an upcoming project that will be going to City Council in November 2021.
 5. North Harbor Village in an upcoming project that will be available for lease-up in June 2022.
 6. SAHA has received 57 referrals, issued 10 EHV, and households are searching.
- v. **Public Comment**
 1. Ugochi Nicholson from the Public Law Center asked if housing authorities are helping to educate landlords about the law, protecting against discrimination of Households with housing choice vouchers.
 2. Kyle Paine with Community Development Partners (CDP) asked about how project types are being determined locally and the partnership with the Coordinated Entry System.

3. Aubrey Pellicano stated that it does seem like a good idea to share characteristics of those in need of housing more often and make sure that we have opportunities that match the needs of those experiencing homelessness throughout the county.

6. Tenant-Based Housing Updates:

a. Welcome Home OC Update – Becks Heyhoe, OC United Way

- i. Becks Heyhoe gave a brief description of the Welcome Home OC program, stating it is part of United to End Homelessness.
- ii. Welcome Home OC outcomes include 157 households housed, 97 veterans housed, and 107 households in the pipeline after receiving referrals from OCHA, AHA, and SAHA.
- iii. Becks Heyhoe provided an update on the staffing recruitment, including 15-16 staff being onboarded with a couple open positions remaining.
- iv. Welcome Home OC's goal is to house 800 households by June 2022.

b. Whole Person Care (WPC) Update – Sharon Boles, Whole Person Care

- i. WPC will sunset on December 31, 2021, and transition to CalAIM in 2022.
- ii. A stakeholder meeting occurred September 30, 2021, to work out policies and procedures related to CalAIM.
- iii. Regarding eligibility, if an individual only has State Medical rather than CalOptima, they will not be eligible for transition from WPC to CalAIM.
- iv. Approximately 2,000 clients will transition from WPC to CalAIM.

c. PHA Special Purpose Vouchers Updates – Kerrin Cardwell, Marie Vu, Judson Brown, Nate Robbins

- i. These updates were already covered under item 5.d.

7. County-wide Performance Metrics Updates:

a. County-wide Performance Metrics – Rebecca Ricketts, Coordinated Entry System (CES) Manager


- i. For the month of September 2021:
 1. Adult Only Households in CES: 2,688
 2. Adult Only Households on Community Queue: 718
 3. Households with Minor Children in CES: 427
 4. Households with Minor Children on Community Queue: 41
 5. Veteran Households in CES: 240
 6. Veteran Households on Community Queue: 110
- ii. During the 2020-2021 program year, one in three households that accessed CES received a housing referral from CES to an available housing opportunity. There was a 64 percent in available housing opportunities, equating to 2,895 households.

b. Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) Coordinated Entry System –Mayra Vargas, CES Specialist

- i. Update provided on inflow and outflow of TAY CES. For the month of September 2021:
 1. 27 households entered TAY CES.
 2. 12 households exited TAY CES.
 3. Of the exited households, 4 exited to permanent housing.

c. Family Coordinated Entry System – Katherine Rodriguez, Family Solutions Collaborative

- i. There are currently 427 families in Family CES, comprised of 570 adults and 841 minor children
 1. 31 percent of families are in assessment phase.
 2. 47 percent of families are currently working with or matched to a housing provider.

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3. 112 families have been housed as of October 1, 2021, with additional families that have been diverted from the homeless service system.
 - ii. Service providers are having difficulty finding permanent housing units for families due to lack of housing inventory
 - iii. Family service providers are working to ensure families are aware of different opportunities that are available and connecting them with the best housing opportunity to meet individual family needs.
- d. **Public comments:**
- i. Grace Stepter encouraged providers who are working with households behind on rent due to COVID-19 financial hardship be refer to Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA), available through Housing is Key website.
 - ii. Ugochi Nicholson asked about website for utility assistance and emergency rental assistance.
 - iii. Curtis Gibbs with CAP-OC mentioned that online applications are available for utility assistance.
 - iv. Steve McNally asked about where to locate the meeting presentations online.

Adjournment to:

Regular Meeting on Friday, December 3, 2021 from 10am – 12pm