

**ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE
LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location:

**County Administration South (CAS) Building
Conference Center Room 104
425 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701**

[Click here](#) for parking instructions.

Virtual Meeting Option*:

Zoom Meeting Link: [Click here for meeting link](#)

Join by phone: +1 669 444 9171

Webinar ID: 944 5349 6548

****Listen-in option only***

Committee Chair: Nichole Gideon, Individual

Committee Vice Chair: Paul Kaiser, Individual

Committee Members:

Reha Agar, Individual

Elizabeth Flores, Individual

Deborah Kraft, Individual

Miranda Mears, Individual

Jason Mercado, Individual

Robert "Santa Bob" Morse, Individual

Larry "Smitty" Smith, Individual

Vinny Zarrella, Individual

AGENDA

Welcome and Meeting Overview – Nichole Gideon, Chair

- **Meeting Start Time:** - 10:03pm (Call to Order)
 - **Present:** Reha Agar, Elizabeth Flores, Nichole Gideon, Jason Mercado, Robert "Santa Bob" Morse, Larry "Smitty" Smith, and Vinny Zarrella
 - **Absent:** Deborah Kraft, Miranda Mears, and Paul Kaiser

Reha Agar arrived during Business Calendar 1 (10:17am). Jason Mercado arrived during Business Calendar 1 (10:39am)

Public Comments – Members of the public may address the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC) on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the LEAC. Public comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes.

To address the LEAC during the Public Comment period, members of the public are to complete a Request to Address the Committee form prior to the beginning of each agenda item and submit it to Continuum of Care (CoC) staff. Staff will call your name in the order received.

Members of the public may also submit public comment by emailing CareCoordination@ocgov.com. All comments submitted via email at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the LEAC members, and all comments will be added to the administrative records of the meeting. Please include “LEAC Meeting Comment” in the email subject line.

Public Comments:

- Alan Achterberg: (Laguna Beach) expressed excitement about LEAC's return to in-person meetings and praised the CoC for quickly approving a supportive housing project proposal. With extensive development experience, he suggested making the process publicly accessible, allowing realtors and developers to review and gain insight into application procedures for future projects.
 - Nichole Gideon, Chair, thanked Alan Achterberg for the comment, and offered networking with CoC Board Members to continue the discussion about recommendations provided.

LEAC Member Comments – Members of the LEAC may provide comments on matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the LEAC. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five members wishing to speak, this time will be reduced to two minutes.

- Elizabeth Flores announced the creation of the [Susan G. Baker and Elizabeth Boyle Innovation Fund](#) by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH). This grant will award \$25,000 to individuals with lived experience to support professional or creative pursuits, such as starting a business or writing a book. Online office hours are available on November 7, 2024.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

1. LEAC Chair and CoC Board Member Nomination and Selection Update – Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

- a. LEAC Chair nomination and selection process overview.
- b. LEAC-appointed CoC Board member nomination and selection process overview.
- c. Introduction and time of sharing for current nominees.

Felicia Boehringer updated on the LEAC Chair and CoC Board member nomination process. Revisions to the CoC Governance Charter allow LEAC to appoint its own Chair, as well as establish a term commitment for the positions. On October 27, 2024, nominations for Chair were collected. Chair responsibilities include meeting facilitation, committee support, and reporting to the CoC Board.

The following individuals were nominated and/or expressed interest in serving as LEAC Chair.

1. Nichole Gideon
2. Robert “Santa Bob” Morse

3. Larry Smith

Chair Nichole Gideon proposed splitting up Business Calendar 1 discussion into 1a and 1b.

Committee Discussion 1a:

- Chair Nichole Gideon started with a recommendation that the LEAC Chair *mirror* the CoC Board, as a two-year term, and asked if the Office of Care Coordination had a formal recommendation.
- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse agreed with a two-year LEAC Chair term, stating one-year terms often limit the ability to be efficient and effective in their role.
- Elizabeth Flores agreed a two-year LEAC Chair term would align with other CoC committees. Additionally, they wanted clarity on the LEAC Chair term start and end timeline.
- Vinny Zarrella agreed with a two-year term, reemphasizing its alignment with other CoC committees.

Chair Nichole Gideon endorsed that the two-year LEAC Chair term be added to the December LEAC Meeting for a vote.

The following individuals were nominated and/or expressed interest in serving as the LEAC-appointed CoC Board member.

- Nichole Gideon
- Larry Smith

Committee Discussion 1b:

- Elizabeth Flores asked for clarity around an email sent by Robert “Santa Bob” Morse about the proposed LEAC Chair and LEAC-appointed CoC Board positions and additional clearness for how the LEAC Vice Chair process would proceed.
- Chair Nichole Gideon answered Elizabeth Flores question about Robert “Santa Bob” Morse email stating that “Santa Bob” and herself suggested to the committee that instead of conducting an election process for both positions; “Santa Bob” would be solely nominated for LEAC Chair, and Nichole Gideon would solely be nominated for CoC Board Representative. This approach aims to avoid placing LEAC members in a position where they must choose between candidates. Gideon clarified that with the Charter change, the committee could revise the process, but traditionally, the Chair selects the Vice Chair; and that Paul Kaiser expressed interest in remaining Vice Chair. Gideon encouraged member involvement and fully supported Larry Smith’s potential CoC Board service sharing her own year-long learning process.
- Larry Smith explained that since Robert “Santa Bob” Morse and Nichole Gideon have experience on the CoC Board, it’s in the committee’s best interest to retain current representatives. He confirmed withdrawing his nomination for the LEAC Chair and CoC Board to prioritize continuity and the experience of existing members.
- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse indicated that, if elected Chair, he would renominate Paul Kaiser for Vice Chair.
- Reha Agar sought clarification on the expected number of meetings the Chair would be required to attend.

Public Comment:

- Anonymous: “Thank you for providing important transparency to the process. I would like to remind the members of the committee about the importance of their role in the Coordination of Care process. As you may know, one of the most, if not the most, important provisions of Proposition 63 which created the MHSA is the mandate to require "meaningful" participation of the community and those affected in the process of planning and implementation. That is why your group was formed by the County. You have the authority of this mandate to demand your input be used to drive decisions on how funds are used, the policies and procedures, as well as its oversight. So we ask this committee to remember Patrick Swayze's quote from the 1987 movie "Dirty Dancing": "Nobody puts Baby in the corner." An attempt was made to include in the comments a copy of an update to the implementation of the MHSA by [The Nicholas C. Petris Center on Health Care Markets and Consumer Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley](#) from 2006 to provide historical context to the committee.”
 - Nichole Gideon, Chair, clarified the established process for submitting items of interest to the committee. She noted that this has been a valuable learning experience, helping LEAC increase its public visibility, and expressed appreciation for individuals reaching out, as LEAC is now a public-facing committee.

2. Collaborative Agenda Setting Discussion – Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination and Nichole Gideon, Chair

- a. Discuss process for committee members to communicate requests for LEAC agenda item consideration.

Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination, provided context on a previous procedure template used by LEAC members to submit recommendations and priorities. The Office of Care Coordination has revised this document and will distribute it to all LEAC members for collaborative agenda setting. Members are encouraged to submit topics and items of interest to the Office of Care Coordination, Chair, and Vice Chair prior to monthly planning meetings for inclusion on the agenda.

Chair Nichole Gideon expressed appreciation for the document created by the Office of Care Coordination, emphasizing the importance of collaborative agenda setting. While LEAC is still in the process of vision-setting, this initiative allows members to raise topics and address community issues. She stressed that the process enables proactive communication, goal-setting, and inclusive agenda design. Although the form may appear formal, submissions need not be complex; even a simple idea or sentence is sufficient. Leadership and the Office of Care Coordination will help refine these ideas into agenda items.

Committee Discussion:

- Reha Agar suggested using this process to catch up on CoC board discussions, as she feels LEAC members are underrepresented. She emphasized the need to actively ask members perspective on CoC Board matters to ensure the committee as whole feels more involved, informed, and valued in decision-making processes.
- Vinny Zarrella proposed holding a virtual meeting after the CoC Planning meeting to allow LEAC members to provide input on any items agendized. He also asked about LEAC agenda planning meetings to ensure that feedback is incorporated.
- Larry Smith emphasized the need for the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC) to engage in more local government advocacy, like Anaheim and Santa Ana, where local ordinances have undermined the CoC's efforts. He expressed concern over policies that threaten homeless individuals with arrest and the loss of belongings while facing significant barriers to shelter access.

Smith highlighted the main challenge to shelter access is needing a referral and that individuals can still face negative repercussions in cities with restrictive policies. He suggested that LEAC should be updated on local policy decisions to effectively advocate for those currently in the system.

- Robert "Santa Bob" Morse clarified that the Commission to End Homelessness only advises the Orange County Board of Supervisors and does not have actionable authority. He also noted that CoC Agenda Packets are available on the CoC website, where LEAC members can access them to provide feedback.
- Elizabeth Flores requested CoC Agenda Packets be forwarded to LEAC members, allowing for comments to be submitted to the LEAC CoC Representative.
- Nichole Gideon discussed her ongoing efforts since taking on the role of LEAC Chair and CoC Board Lived Experience representative to improve the flow of information between the CoC Board and the Lived Experience Advisory Committee. She emphasized the importance of involving more members in decision-making, rather than relying solely on her perspective. However, she acknowledged challenges due to the timing conflict between LEAC and CoC Board meetings, which makes it difficult to bring timely feedback. As an alternative, she proposed providing regular updates to LEAC on CoC Board discussions and decisions. She suggested that a change in meeting times might allow LEAC to offer feedback before decisions are made at the CoC Board level. Gideon also supported the idea of LEAC developing an advocacy component, particularly as the committee continues to define its mission. She pointed out that while the CoC has authority over funded partners, it lacks control over non-funded partners. Identifying that some cities are more receptive than others, she recommended focusing advocacy efforts on cities already engaged with the CoC. Gideon proposed the idea of Advocacy Ad Hoc group to coordinate these efforts, which would involve obtaining letters of support, collaborating with city partners, and advocating at the CoC Board level.

Public Comment:

- Anonymous: "It would be good to bring up a recent example of a Coordination of Care agenda item from September's meeting that might have benefitted from LEAC's input. So on the September 25 agenda, there was a discussion about temporarily granting access to HMIS from 2026 to 2023 to "Advance OC", a consulting firm used by the County to get approval for budget items. This work will be on behalf of Legal Aid to evaluate whether or not more Legal Aid resources could be used to reduce homelessness. Now there was no consideration presented over the regulatory requirements necessary related to HIPPA and SMIA about the release and care of the data, and when it would be destroyed. Ostensibly, both Advance OC and Legal Aid would have permanent access to the historical data, including PII, from the HMIS for 2016 through 2023. Now if LEAC would have been asked to be involved in this decision, it could have improved the accountability of Legal Aid to the homeless community and even open up the discussion to your input into their policies and procedures. However, by limiting the voting power on the CoC from LEAC, they effectively make your voices moot."
 - Nichole Gideon emphasized that all action items should go through LEAC for review. She noted that data requests have traditionally been sent directly to the CoC Board, but with 20 members, a single vote doesn't carry enough influence. The Legal Aid data request was presented twice to the CoC Board due to concerns about safeguarding personal information. While many requests expect a quick turnaround, Gideon raised concerns about whether LEAC could review each one and stressed the importance of ensuring no personal information is disclosed.

- 3. Coordinated Entry System (CES) Policies and Procedures** – Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination; Sarah Jones, CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination; and Paul Kaiser, Vice Chair
- a. Discuss CES policy stating that CES participants will be made inactive in CES after 90 days of nonengagement and potential next steps for recommended a policy revision.
 - b. Review CES Policies and Procedures recommendation from Paul Kaiser.

Chair, Nichole Gideon decided to push Business Calendar 3 to next meeting since this item was set by Vice Chair Paul Kaiser and he is absent.

4. CoC Updates – Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

Felicia Boehringer, CoC Administrator, discussed the ongoing recruitment for additional LEAC members. While Jason Mercado has filled one seat representing North SPA, the LEAC Nominating Ad Hoc will continue meeting to fill the remaining two seats for Central and South SPA. She also reminded members that CoC Board nomination forms are due tomorrow (11/07/24) and encouraged anyone wishing to vote in the upcoming CoC Board election to submit their membership application to the Office of Care Coordination.

Discussion Comments:

- Robert "Santa Bob" Morse inquired whether the Office of Care Coordination has reached out to the remaining candidates to confirm their continued interest in the position. He emphasized the importance of ensuring candidates are aware of the process, expectations, and requirements, so if no suitable candidates are identified, the Ad Hoc can adjust the approach and avoid repeating the process.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Location: Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) Large Conference Room, 1501 East Saint Andrew Place, Santa Ana, CA 92705