[DRAFT for Review] Orange County CoC Strategic Plan

Land Acknowledgement

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. A Land Acknowledgement is also the first step in educating oneself on building a deeper and more meaningful decolonized relationship with Native peoples and the land itself. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and a connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. Because of this, it is critical that institutions such as the CoC have land acknowledgments that address the full history of the lands they reside on.

The Orange County CoC occupies land located in the ancestral and unceded territories of the sovereign Acjachemen and Tongva Indigenous Peoples, whose traditions of caretaking and protecting this land continue today. We are grateful to these original stewards of the land where we live, work, and study, who despite the history of violence and racism, forced displacement, land theft, and colonialism still hold strong cultural, spiritual, and physical ties to this region and continue to assert their sovereignty by acting as caretakers of their ancestral lands as they have since time immemorial.

This Land Acknowledgement is informed and inspired by the statements from the University of California Irvine Land Acknowledgement Task Force, Department of Earth System Science, UCI Libraries, and Tongva and Acjachemen tribal community members.

Acknowledgements & Sources

This Strategic Plan was structured and drafted by a Vision Ad Hoc convened by the Orange County CoC Board from July-December 2024. Members included:

- Angela Mooney D'Arcy
- David Gillanders
- Jason Phillips
- Khloe Rios-Wyatt
- Marisol Johnson
- Nishtha Mohendra
- Shakoya Green Long
- Dr. Tiffany Mitchell
- Tim Shaw

Orange County Office of Care Coordination staff provided significant support in this process.

The Vision Ad Hoc brought their personal and professional experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives to build out the framework for this plan. They also pulled in strategies, ideas, and action items from three other sources:

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024

- The C4 Racial Equity Analysis Report & Roadmap. All elements of these recommendation that had not already been accomplished or addressed were accounted for in this plan.
- The 2021 Vision Ad Hoc's Leadership Vision strategic aims, goals, and objectives.
- Public feedback offered in writing and on a virtual call in July 2024.

CoC Vision Statement

All people in Orange County experiencing homelessness and those at-risk will have equitable access to navigation, housing, and supportive services in ways that ensure equitable outcomes including overall well-being and long-term housing stability.

CoC Strategic SMARTIE Goals

This section is currently a placeholder. The CoC Board will finalize this plan's SMARTIE goals in the first 6 months of 2025. They will likely include person-centered goals and system-centered goals. For example:

Example person-centered goals:

By [end date of strategic plan], 90% of people across historically marginalized identities (including but not limited to Black, Indigenous and people of color; people with a disability; transition-aged youth and young adults; people over 55; LGBTQ+ people; undocumented people) will report that:

- They felt understood and respected by staff they interacted with at CES access points, in shelter, and in housing projects.
- They felt safe accessing services and working with staff
- They were able to receive accessible materials, including
- They were aware of resources available
- They were informed about policies regarding discrimination and equity

Example system-centered goals:

- By December 31, 2026, the Orange County CoC will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the homelessness response system, identifying systemic inequities and injustices in housing and services for marginalized and underrepresented groups. This will include an analysis of whether and, if applicable, why certain groups tend to be more or less likely to be enrolled in shelter/TH, RRH, and PSH program types.
- Based on these findings, by [plan end date], the CoC will collaborate with people with lived experience and agency staff to design and implement at least three new policies, procedures, or practices that address these inequities, with the goal of improving equitable outcomes for at least 80% of individuals from historically marginalized communities who interact with the system. The CoC will also ensure that at least 95% of staff and partners working for CoC-funded agencies receive training on the history of systemic injustices and their impacts on homelessness.

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024

Strategic Aim 1: Improve and expand the homelessness response system to permanently house people experiencing homelessness equitably, efficiently, and with dignity.

Objective 1A: Collaborate with Orange County homelessness service providers to embed evidence-based and best practices to improve clients' experiences in and outcomes from interacting with the system.

Strategy	Actions
Provide training to CoC Board members and agency staff on proven methods and practices that focus on understanding the historical and systemic inequalities in housing and homeless services for marginalized groups to promote fair and equal outcomes for everyone.	Work with direct service providers to identify training needs and develop a curriculum of trainings and supervision model needed for all staff, as well as staff in specific roles or programs, including but not limited to: ● Housing First ● Authentic collaboration with people experiencing homelessness ● Motivational Interviewing ● Trauma-Informed Care Practices, including trauma and brain development ● Racial equity ● LGBTQ+ identities and equity ● Intersectionality ● Cultural competence and humility ● Culturally-informed outreach and service provision ● Harm Reduction ● History of housing segregation and homelessness ● Anti-ableism ● Disability acceptance and etiquette training ● Targeted universalism ● Legal Rights and Protections
	Develop a plan for creating and delivering training curricula for staff across roles and within specific types of programs on an ongoing basis. Ensure ongoing availability of live and recorded training.
	Aligned with Objective 4B, ensure funding to develop training and ensure staff can participate in trainings.
Collaborate with direct service providers to create streamlined and trauma-informed documentation and processes	Develop a toolkit for direct service providers to: ● Review their policies and processes ● Assess alignment with best practices ● Evaluate how well they are implemented across staff ● Understand how clients experience engaging in services ● Identify opportunities for ongoing improvement.
	Perform an audit of CoC programs (legal and policy review) to identify the essential documentation required for each program and eliminate unnecessary paperwork or steps to simplify the process for both program participants and staff
	Adopt a universal documentation system to standardize the required paperwork for accessing programs and services across the board.
Collaborate with direct service providers to implement a	Develop a case management model in collaboration with a diverse group of local partners, ensuring the working group includes partners with lived experience to reflect racial and ethnic representation.

Strategy	Actions
people-centered, holistic, trauma- informed, case management model standard	Co-create guest bill of rights that sets expectations on communication and relationship building
	Develop performance measures to ensure that staff and the agency adhere to the new case management model.
Support CoC agencies in building a more equitable workforce where people with diverse identities and lived experience can thrive across all positions in the system and organizations	Develop tools and standards to support organizations in building a more equitable workforce, including: ● Standards and practices for staffing infrastructure that can also be supportive and inclusive of peers ● Supports and pathways for staff/partners with lived experience (e.g., mentorship opportunities) ● Practices to engage partners with lived experience and marginalized identities in authentic ways and supported as necessary to be able to inform system change (e.g., compensation, knowledge sharing to support onboarding, assistance to address barriers to participation, etc.) ● Pathways to organizational leadership for Black, Indigenous, people of color and others who have traditionally been excluded from leadership positions
	Add project performance measure for agencies receiving funding to display progress towards equity and/or diversity of staff.
Support grassroots organizations in building capacity to become CoC-funded agencies	Identify gaps in culturally specific service providers, and identify potential culturally specific service providers interested in becoming grant recipients or subrecipients. Build capacity and knowledge of CoC if needed
Use data to develop and implement strategies to address systemic inequities.	Analyze the data and information gathered from Objective 3A to identify specific systemic inequities affecting marginalized groups

Objective 1B: Improve CoC policies and processes

Strategy	Action
Update Written Standards to more intentionally embed racial and intersectional equity principles and align with evidence-based approaches	Review & Update Prevention / Diversion Written Standards
	Review & Update Outreach / Engagement Written Standards
	Review & Update Emergency Shelter Written Standards
	Review & Update Transitional Housing Written Standards
	Review & Update Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Written Standards
	Review & Update Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Written Standards
Improve Coordinated Entry System (CES) policies & processes to address racial and intersectional inequities and disparities in housing access and outcomes	Develop more strategic outreach and culturally-informed service provision to Black/African American households
	Conduct a racial and intersectional equity impact assessment on all CES policies and procedures that impact access to resources. Account for racial and ethnic identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, languages spoken, nationality, disabilities, veteran status, age, experience of DV and trafficking, and household size and composition. Make recommendations to update policies and procedures based on findings.
	Improve access to the system and available materials for non-English speakers and English learners

Objective 1C: Collaborate with partners throughout Orange County that provide non-CoC housing resources and services

Strategy	Action
Collaborate and coordinate efforts with Public Housing Authorities (PHAs)	Advocate with PHAs to increase flexibility of documentation/program requirements
	Develop a strategy to expand Access to Housing Choice Vouchers
	Develop a shared strategy to provide ongoing supportive services to ensure housing stability.
Coordinate and collaborate with others who provide non-CoC housing resources	Develop and implement a strategy of engagement and collaboration to support quick and sustainable housing for people experiencing homelessness with: ● Orange County Housing Finance Trust ● Affordable housing developers ● Landlords ● Other housing partners
Collaborate with Housing Developers	Advocate for new housing complex developments to not only meet the ADA requirement of accessible units but to exceed it as the population of seniors and people with disabilities continues to grow.
	Ensure that accessible units are prioritized for individuals with disabilities and older adults who need them, rather than being assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.
	Advocate for housing developers to partner with Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) when housing development is being built, to ensure that there is a new bus stop within ¾ miles radius so that ACCESS is available for those who need it.

Objective 1D: Ensure support and funding for people with lived expertise to continue participating equitably in CoC- and provider-level work.

Strategy	Action
Provide compensation, transportation, technology, and access for people with lived expertise	Aligned with Objective 4A and 4B, ensure consistent and adequate funding to ensure people with lived experience can be in all spaces where decisions are being made. Ensure equitable compensation for their time and contributions (i.e., for attending meetings, participating in committees, and contributing to strategic planning). Cover costs of transportation, parking, and any other costs that might otherwise prevent participation.
	Aligned with Objective 4A and 4B, ensure consistent and adequate funding to implement a robust access strategy that ensures people with lived expertise have the technology and ability to participate in meetings and plans. This may include: ● Providing laptops or tablets, covering costs of Wi-Fi or phone data, and reserving meeting space. ● Ensuring that all meetings where people with lived experience will attend have an option to join virtually when needed. ● Providing interpretation and translation services/translated materials that meet the participant's language needs
Create leadership and skill development opportunities for people with lived experience	Provide training and capacity-building programs that enhance the skills and knowledge of people with lived expertise, empowering them to contribute more effectively in meetings and decision-making processes.
	Develop and implement a plan to pair individuals with lived experience with peers who can help guide them through the CoC and become more active in leadership roles within the CoC or with the community partners.
	Develop and implement a plan to regularly get feedback from people with lived experience on CoC policies and CoC programs

Strategy	Action
Engage in continuous feedback, evaluation, and quality improvement of support for & collaboration with people with lived experience	Develop and implement a plan to use feedback and data to refine and enhance the CoC's efforts. Continuously adjust strategies based on their feedback to ensure their needs are met and their involvement remains meaningful.
	Identify and launch methods to connect service providers with each other to learn from each other's experiences, tools, and practices.

Strategic Aim 2: Collaborate with leaders, providers, and community members across service systems to align practices, coordinate resources, and better support people experiencing homelessness.

Objective 2A: Strengthen partnerships with adjacent systems & providers in Orange County

Strategy	Action
Provide training opportunities to partners across systems on homelessness and the homeless system	Create cross-system trainings to increase other systems' abilities to understand and meet the varying and unique needs of people experiencing homelessness, and to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
	Develop and implement a Learning Management System (LMS) database for CES and CoC trainings
Improve coordination and collaboration with <u>food providers</u>	Create and continuously update a food insecurity/food provider database of resources easily accessible to service providers. Advocating for food delivery options for easy access
	Invite and maintain representation from food providers with the CoC Service Provider Forum
Improve coordination and collaboration with Orange County <u>education</u> systems	Identify needs and develop training opportunities specifically for education partners to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
	Coordinate an annual series of training events with Orange County Department of Education (OCDE), County-wide McKinney Vento (MV) Liaisons, special education/specialized programs, and CoC Board/partners focused on K-12
	Create and sustain regular communication and coordination with MV liaisons at each school district and OCDE to ensure case cross-referencing, direct problem-solving, and troubleshooting
Improve coordination and collaboration with the <u>workforce</u> system	Strengthen partnerships with the workforce development system to minimize bias against program participants and increase employment opportunities for people who have experienced homelessness
	Invite and maintain representation from the workforce development system with the CoC Service Provider Forum
	Identify needs and develop training resources specifically for workforce partners to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
	In partnership with other aligned organizations, create and continuously update policy and advocacy priorities and strategies for more job opportunities for housing insecure and homeless people with disabilities and older adults
Improve coordination and collaboration with <u>hospitals, healthcare, mental health, and behavioral health systems</u>	Identify needs and develop training resources specifically for healthcare/mental health, behavioral health partners to promote equity and access to care and to reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
	Partner with mental health organizations to assess and develop a plan for increased wrap around mental health care for program participants.
	Establish, formalize, and sustain the CoC's engagement with the larger collaborative around those addressing older adult wellbeing/services
	Conduct a landscape analysis of the current status, quality, accessibility, equity, cultural competence, and sustainability of mental health, behavioral health, disability services, and healthcare services provided to people experiencing homelessness
	Invite and maintain representation from the healthcare system with all relevant CoC committees
Improve coordination and collaboration with <u>law enforcement</u>	Develop and implement an ongoing process of engagement with local police, Sheriff's Department, and law enforcement
	Identify needs and develop training resources specifically for law enforcement partners to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024

Strategy	Action
Improve coordination and collaboration with the legal system	Identify needs and develop training resources specifically for legal system partners to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
Improve coordination and collaboration with the child welfare / foster care system	Identify needs and develop training resources specifically for child welfare and foster care system partners to promote equity and reduce harm for people experiencing homelessness.
Improve coordination and collaboration with Organizations that work with individuals with disabilities	Identify opportunities to share information (including providing and receiving trainings) from partners that specifically work with people with disabilities, to promote equity, reduce harm, and promote more compassionate, informed, and culturally sensitive responses that address unique needs and challenges.
Improve coordination and collaboration with Older adult organizations	Identify opportunities to share information (including providing and receiving trainings) from partners that specifically work with older adults, to promote equity, reduce harm, and promote more compassionate, informed, and culturally sensitive responses that address unique needs and challenges.
Improve coordination and collaboration with transportation organizations	Identify transportation gaps and needs and develop an engagement strategy with transportation organizations to promote equity/access and reduce harm for people experiencing or exiting homelessness.

Objective 2B: Strengthen partnerships with the public & community members in Orange County

Strategy	Action
Engage with faith communities	Conduct asset mapping of faith communities providing resources
	Gather and host faith community leaders, starting with leaders from asset mapping for Homelessness 101, and other trainings for continued education and collaboration.
	Identify and inform faith communities about the possibilities of using their underutilized property for affordable housing and catalyzing collaboration with developers and other organizations.
Encourage more housing production by partnering with and providing data, guidance, and policy information to housing advocacy organizations	Identify Key Housing Advocacy Organizations. Develop a comprehensive list of local and regional housing advocacy organizations (e.g., affordable housing groups, tenant rights organizations, community development NGOs, real estate developers)
	Regularly provide housing advocacy partners with up-to-date data on local housing needs, trends, and gaps, including information on homelessness and housing affordability. Offer customized data reports that highlight specific areas of interest to each partner organization. Provide Policy Guidance and Recommendations: • Organize informational sessions or workshops where policy experts from the Continuum of Care (CoC) can present key housing policies and legislative updates. • Develop and distribute policy briefs that offer actionable recommendations for local governments, developers, and advocates to promote housing production.
Engage with local non- housing-specific advocacy groups whose values and priorities align with the CoC	Identify, continuously update, and work with partners engaged with racial equity objectives to share best practices and lessons learned and develop a shared racial equity vision for OC
	Identify, continuously update, and work with partners engaged with LGBTQIA+ objectives to share best practices and lessons learned and develop a shared equity vision for OC

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024

Strategy	Action
	Identify, continuously update, and work with partners engaged with additional marginalized populations and advocacy work to share best practices and lessons learned and develop a shared equity vision for OC
	Maintain consistent representation of CoC at the Equity in OC meetings.
Engage with general community members to promote public leadership and compassion toward ending homelessness	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness about the systemic inequities faced by marginalized groups through community outreach, workshops, and social media campaigns.

Objective 2C: Strengthen partnerships with philanthropic partners

Strategy	Action
Build partnerships with philanthropic entities to strategically align funding and strengthen impact	Aligned with the findings from strategic investment planning conducted in Objective 4B, develop a strategy to build ongoing collaborative relationships and spaces with funders

Objective 2D: Engage in policy and funding advocacy to improve equity and housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Orange County.

Strategy	Action
Develop a policy agenda and priorities to measurably improve the resources and performance of the CoC	Develop a plan and structure to work with other CoCs, collaboratives, and advocacy groups to understand, align, and (when possible) strategize shared policy and funding advocacy agendas on all levels: ● Local policies and funding (cities, counties, and Tribal entities) ● State policies and funding ● Federal policies and funding

Strategic Aim 3: Engage in ongoing data collection, analysis, and evaluation to promote transparency and hold the CoC accountable for its role in ending homelessness.

Objective 3A: Improve data collection and analysis processes to collect more accurate data on system inequities, embed expertise from people with lived experience, and ensure data collection is trauma-informed and equitable.

Strategy	Action
Develop and implement data collection and analysis processes that seek to hear people's experiences in the system, understand holistic system performance, and address gaps in equity / inequity data.	Identify any gaps in data available for marginalized and intersectionally marginalized groups, including but not limited to: Black people, Indigenous or Native American people, people of color, people with visible and invisible disabilities, trans / non-binary / gender-expansive people, LGB / queer people, people over 60, TAY-headed households, and veterans.
	Aligned with this plan's SMARTIE goals, develop racial and intersectional equity goals, measures, data collection plans, and analysis strategies to understand people's experiences in each part of the system (i.e., while unsheltered, staying in shelter, when connected to housing, and after moving into housing) that get at what it means to have a dignified, equitable system
	Aligned with Objective 1A in this plan, create and implement data collection and analysis plans that will allow the system to develop and implement strategies to address systemic inequities and injustices for historically and currently marginalized groups of people.
	Conduct listening sessions regularly to understand and improve the experiences of people utilizing the homeless service system
	Conduct participant, agency and other service partner feedback surveys, in alignment with the SMARTIE goals included in this plan and with the data analysis plans developed above.
	Develop a standard method and timeline for soliciting and analyzing feedback from clients and staff on CoC policies, processes, projects, and priorities.
Support data integration projects and ensure HMIS database is capable of data integration without manual data imports or exports - minimize need for assessments, self-report or service engagement	Conduct an assessment of cross-system data systems and integration potential. Based on findings, develop CoC Board recommendations for data integration initiatives.
	Based on CoC Board decisions and priorities, develop data integration plans, including funding and other resources needed and timelines.

Objective 3B: Develop a method to analyze and publicly share project and system performance data to understand barriers to and promote progress toward implementing an equitable system in alignment with this plan.

Strategy	Action
Develop real-time homelessness system data dashboards that provide community-wide transparency, promote CoC accountability, and translate	Identify system performance measures to include in a public-facing data dashboard that may include HUD- and state-required system performance measures in addition to other measures informed by equity-focused data collection and analysis methods established in Objective 3A.
	Develop a dashboard that includes these system performance measures and racial & intersectional equity goals and measures.

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024

Strategy	Action
directly into actionable strategies.	Monitor progress toward racial and intersectional equity goals (in Objective 3A) through regular review of Racial Equity Dashboard to measure progress against determined benchmarks.
Utilize disaggregated quantitative data and qualitative data for continuous quality improvement and accountability	Strengthen ongoing feedback loop/mechanism to monitor for quality standards of services
	Monitor the impact of CES prioritization criteria and referral processes using disaggregated data analysis that evaluates how different demographic groups are prioritized for and enrolled in different types of resources and housing programs
	Regularly conduct listening sessions with diverse groups of people to understand and improve the experiences of people utilizing the homeless services system
	Alongside Strategic Aim 4, use these data to inform funding opportunities to pursue and funding decisions.
Report out information about funding and spending	Develop a plan to report out on funding decisions and ongoing spending tracking (including project and funding stream spending and leftover amounts at project implementation milestones) to improve fiduciary accountability and transparency.

Strategic Aim 4: Pursue and allocate funding to strategically address racial and social inequities and fill system gaps.

Objective 4A: Allocate existing funding in alignment with this strategic plan.

Strategy	Action
Use data collection and analysis conducted in Strategic Aim 3 to inform funding priorities	Establish a routine schedule for reviewing and analyzing data to keep funding priorities aligned with current community needs and ensuring that resources are equitably distributed.
	Based on the data, develop clear funding priorities to support initiatives aimed at reducing inequities, such as funding for programs or services that specifically benefit marginalized communities whose needs are not being met.
	Establish clear, measurable funding opportunities focused on addressing the identified inequities and/or social gaps.
Develop a standard scoring & decision-making framework to use with existing funds to ensure funding decisions align with this plan	Ensure funding tool embeds threshold for strengthening the infrastructure for racial equity work, supporting staff retention, and diversifying the workforce in alignment with this plan.
	Set up a continuous evaluation process for funded programs to assess impact and identify areas for improvement. Use insights gained from evaluations to redirect funds where necessary.

Objective 4B: Identify funding gaps and develop funding strategies to fill those gaps in alignment with this plan's priorities.

Strategy	Action
Conduct a strategic coordinated investment planning process to map current funding resources, analyze current funding impacts, and identify gaps	Recruit key collaborators to participate in resource mapping and strategic investment analysis and planning
	Hire consultants to conduct comprehensive resource mapping and strategic investment analysis and planning that focuses on resource allocation & investment in 1. Housing and services across intervention types 2. Housing and services that will increase equitable access and outcomes for specific populations and marginalized groups 3. Support for administrative and planning activities needed to execute this plan 4. Strategies to support collaboration and braided resource allocation / service provision across systems noted in Strategic Aim 2.
In alignment with resource mapping and strategic investment planning, identify potential new funding opportunities to fill gaps in housing, services, and system-level supports	Establish a sustainable funding stream and process to compensate partners with lived experience
	Identify funding to pay for culturally specific training and training on best practices to equip staff to best support underserved populations, in alignment with Objective 1A
	Identify other funding sources and leveraging opportunities to support addressing homelessness
	Reach out to other CoCs to learn about additional funding initiatives, strategies, and best practices
	Develop a proposed funding strategy to fill gaps in the system (e.g., prevention, street outreach, housing/system navigation, ES, TH, RRH, and PSH).
	Identify funding to ensure staff are paid a fair and equitable
	Secure ongoing flexible, low-barrier / quick-access funding that can address common challenges that contribute to people's housing instability and homelessness (e.g., transportation, childcare, bridge funding)

Strategic Aim 5: Manage and ensure effectiveness of the CoC's operations and structure.

Objective 5A: Manage and implement this strategic plan

Strategy	Action
Educate all CoC Board and Subcommittee members on this plan's components and intended impact	Develop standard communication materials to describe this plan, its components, its goals, timeline, and key partners for Board members.
	Develop standard communication materials to describe this plan, its components, its goals, timeline, and key partners for the public.
Develop a structure to ensure accountability and progress with this plan	Using a standard template and process, each lead entity determines the timeline for accomplishing strategies and action items and measurement of progress, impact, and accountability.
	Develop a method for revising this strategy and refining concrete tasks and work plans to achieve objectives, strategies, and actions.
	Develop a standard method for monitoring and reporting out progress on this plan, tracking deadlines, managing information and communications.

Objective 5B: Evaluate the CoC Board, Collaborative Applicant, HMIS lead, and CES lead effectiveness and performance

Strategy	Action
Evaluate and provide feedback to key partners about their effectiveness and performance	Develop an ongoing plan to evaluate and provide feedback and recommendations to the CoC Board on its effectiveness and performance
	Develop an ongoing plan to evaluate and provide feedback and recommendations to the Collaborative Applicant on its effectiveness and performance
	Develop an ongoing plan to evaluate and provide feedback and recommendations to the HMIS Lead on its effectiveness and performance
	Develop an ongoing plan to evaluate and provide feedback and recommendations to the CES Lead on its effectiveness and performance

Approved by the CoC Board on December 18, 2024