



## General Meeting Minutes June 13, 2024

### Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- CoC program overview
- Service mapping
- Break
- Committee updates
- Agency updates
- Announcements

### CoC Program Overview

- The role of Coordinated Entry is to connect people to housing programs in our CoC as quickly as possible. This is a central point for people seeking help directly, people who are directed to the line from encampments, shelters, street outreach, or mainstream systems.
- Coordinated entry then asks questions about a person's situation, determines if they are eligible for a program, and then refer them to that agency for further assessment and prioritization. Calling coordinated entry is not an emergency hotline or a guarantee of service eligibility.
- In our CoC, the coordinated entry system is called "Centralized Housing Intake": 540-271-1701, and it is operated by Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter and Mercy House for the entire region
  - People who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness should call 540-271-1701, leave a message, and receive a call back within 48 hours (often much less than that). The callback does appear as a restricted number. For people who aren't able to receive a call back, they can email [hrcintake@gmail.com](mailto:hrcintake@gmail.com) to set up an appointment time to call and be answered directly.
- Other CoCs in Virginia have their own coordinated entry lines; Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has a [crisis assistance directory by community](#)

### Service Mapping

- CoC administrator Allison Henry provided an overview of the CoC's active agencies using an interactive map that is organized by:
  - **region** (Harrisonburg and Rockingham County in the south, Shenandoah, Page, and Warren in the center, and Winchester, Frederick, and Clarke in the north)
  - **service type** (shelter, rapid rehousing, prevention, street outreach, permanent supportive housing, and others), and
  - **funding source** (CoC-administered Virginia Housing Solutions Program (VHSP), CoC-administered HUD funding, state-funded programs not through the CoC (i.e. DHCD's Housing Trust Fund, Virginia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), and federal HOME funds), as well as other funding sources.
- Discussion during and following the presentation identified the following gaps and bottlenecks:
  - There are limited **mental health and substance treatment resources** in the area

- Low-income housing is more available in the counties than in the cities, but **transportation** is limited to get to/from rural housing to employment, services, etc.
- **Medical care** is difficult to access especially in rural areas due to not only transportation but also the scarcity of providers, with appointments being scheduled a year out to establish a primary care provider
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** has uneven utilization and access, especially for chronically homeless people in rural areas
- **Lack of affordable housing** is a baseline issue everywhere, especially relating to security deposits, application fees, and 3x income requirements

### Committee Updates

- **Executive Committee:**
  - Preparing for implementation of upcoming VHSP grant cycle and reviewing results of application for ways to improve system performance.
- **Data Committee**
  - *seeking deputy chair*
  - Finalizing VHSP performance evaluation metrics and policy in conjunction with Executive Committee
  - Adapting PIT count survey questions to remove duplicative questions and add a question about interactions with law enforcement in conjunction with PWLE committee
- **Best Practices Committee**
  - *seeking deputy chair*
  - Conducted two-part Excel Training series this spring, which was attended by 18 people from 14 agencies
  - Anticipating client-facing engagement series this summer (more details in announcements)
  - Seeking deputy chair
- **Compliance and Evaluation Committee**
  - scheduling peer monitoring visits for VHSP grantees this summer/fall: has already conducted onboarding support meeting with Horizon Goodwill and monitoring visit with Choices
  - DHCD monitoring visits are anticipated this fall
- **Media and Advocacy Committee**
  - Seeking new members, especially those with experience in social media and graphics/visualizations of information
  - Reviewing goals for the year
- **Persons with Lived Experience Committee**
  - Seeking additional members, especially those in center/north regions with current/recent experiences of homelessness
  - Planning to meet more frequently in order to provide more proactive input to CoC operations
  - Preparing for upcoming peer panel (see announcements)

### Agency Updates

- **Katie Furneisen, Shenandoah Alliance for Shelter:** they are currently hiring for a Coordinated Entry intake specialist

- **Tara Bishop, Network2Work:** Paula Woods will be covering Harrisonburg/Rockingham and the Northern Shenandoah Valley, supporting people with job readiness
- **Jenni Collings, Strength in Peers:** opening a respite house in the beginning of August to extend beyond the hotel voucher program for hospital discharges from Sentara (not limited to Harrisonburg/Rockingham)
- **Robyn Miller, WATTS:** Summer program will operate July 29-August 30, and will now be offering showers for guests
- **Carol Wilson, Sentara:** Medicaid case managers can help assist clients with use of services. They are trying to contact clients, and clients can call member services (the number on the back of Medicaid card) and ask for “case management” to get routed to their local care manager.
- **Bob Boulter, Faithworks:** providing accessibility modifications of up to \$8000 for veterans, low-income owners and renters (see Virginia Housing website for more details)
- **Deirdre Longacher Smeltzer, Bridge of Hope:** new case manager will be starting on Monday

### Announcements

- Save the date for a **three-part training series on Best Practices for Care** that is tailored toward client-facing staff. All three trainings will take place in person in the Cooperative Extension office of the Shenandoah County Government Building (600 N Main St, Suite 100, Woodstock, VA 22664). CoC agency staff are able to attend one, two, or all three dates – they are intended as a series, but each will also be appropriate as a stand-alone training.
  - **July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 11am-2pm:** Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), Larry Friedland
  - **August 15<sup>th</sup>, 11am-2pm:** Trauma-informed interviewing and conflict resolution, FairField Center
  - **September 5<sup>th</sup>, 11am-2pm:** Peer Panel providing lived experience feedback and storytelling, PWLE committee
  - For more details about all trainings, see the email from Allison on 6/14/2024 and [register online](#) to reserve your space

**Next meeting:** August 8<sup>th</sup>, 10am-12pm  
Eagles Room, 329 N Cameron St  
Winchester VA 22601

Minutes submitted by Kaitlin Heatwole