

Three County Individual Services Committee Meeting - 1/11/21

In attendance: Sierra Bradley, Highland Valley Elder Services, Steve Connor, Veterans Services, Allison Dane, ServiceNet, Shaundell Diaz, Three county CoC, Rose Facto, Wells Street Shelter (Greenfield), John Fisher, Way Finders, Erin Forbush, ServiceNet, John Hornik, Amherst Affordable Housing Trust, Laura Hudson, Positive Place, Andy Klatka, Eliot CHS - Homeless Service, Michele LaFleur, CoC, Jay Levy, Eliot CHS-Homeless Services, Jen Lucca, Samaritan Inn, Luis Martinez, CHD, Kevin Nooan, Craig's Doors, Morgan O'Connor, Craig's Doors, Keleigh Pereira, 3 County CoC, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Kate Shapiro, DMH, Susan White, Life Path

Shelter Updates:

ServiceNet:

- **Pittsfield:** using St. Joe's High School - serving roughly 30, capacity for 50 - no test requirement
- **Greenfield:** Wells St. construction should be done within the next couple of weeks, will expand capacity by 10 beds; currently approx. 20 beds and almost at capacity. ServiceNet has access to hotel rooms if needed. No testing requirement.
- **Northampton:** First Churches: 25 people (capacity is 30-32); no longer requiring negative test prior to entry but must stay within quarantine space with 3 beds - which are now full. This is the City of Northampton's policy. The Resource Center is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 am - 4 pm, available to all (within social distancing capacity limits); showers are available for non-First Churches guests on a case-by-case basis. Church is always available 24/7 to anyone who needs some assistance.

Amherst: full at both UU (14 people) and the motel (24 people). Last night a person was referred to Holyoke hotel but now the hotel is full. Talking to Gordie Calkins at DHCD re: possible hotel room acquisition in and around Amherst.

Samaritan Inn - 30 beds. 6 women's beds - all filled. 24 men's beds - 13 now available. Required to have negative covid test within 3 days of arrival.

Vaccination Discussion: We discussed the vaccination process at shelters. DPH held a webinar earlier in the day that several shelter providers attended. Vaccines will be available in shelters as of 1/18 but there are still many details to get clear on (e.g., how to make arrangements with health dept or pharmacy). Other questions include what happens when new guests arrive at the shelter following the first round of vaccinations; and how to keep in touch with guests who leave shelter before the second dose. Keleigh, Michele and Shaundell will consider how the CoC can assist with developing a data tracking system.

Coordinated Entry Update:

Currently 171 people on the by-names list; 46 added in Nov. and Dec. - this is an increase largely due to the increased number of assessments being done, which is largely due to the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) in Franklin

County. More young people are being assessed and entered into the system. (note on YHDP programs: there will eventually be 36 new beds available to young people; currently these programs are getting staffed, although DIAL/SELF has 4 beds available now, 2 of which are being filled). There were also 6 move-ins to CoC projects in Nov./Dec.

Point in Time Count: This annual count will take place on Wed. Jan. 27 (typically the last Wed. of Jan. statewide). For 3 County region, the count is conducted by survey - Michele will be sending out an email letter to providers across the region, inviting participation, and will include the survey. Anyone who was experiencing homelessness on the night of 1/27 should complete the survey. The survey can be returned within 14 days (Covid accommodation, usually 7 days).

Legislative/Policy updates:

- The Legislature passed the Economic Development bill on Jan. 6 which is now awaiting the Governor's signature. NOW is the time for us to write/call the Governor to urge him to sign the bill ASAP without any amendments. See [this Network blog post](#) for more information and contact info.
- The FY21 Budget, passed on 12/31/20, included important tenant eviction protections. See [this Network blog post](#) for the details. In short: a pending rental assistance application will suspend an eviction case for non-payment of rent. AND, a specific Notice to Quit must be issued - with very specific information around tenant rights and resources - or the eviction filing is not valid and the case cannot continue.
- DHCD has just issued new RAFT policies that will make RAFT more accessible, including a lifting of the "sustainability" requirement and more flexibility around documentation requirements. Stay tuned for more details soon.

Next meeting date: Monday, Feb. 8, 1:30 pm