

Three County Individual Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 9/13/21

In attendance: Steve Connor, Veterans Services, Linda Cruz, River Valley Counseling, Shaundell Diaz, Three County CoC, Erin Forbush, ServiceNet, Laura Hudson, Positive Place, Jay Levy, Eliot CHS-Homeless Services, Becky Lockwood, Salasin Project, Jenifer Lucca, Samaratin Inn, Luis Martinez, CHD, Kevin Noonan, Craig's Doors, Omayra Quinones, Salasin Project, Marisa Perez, CHD, Jane Ralph, Construct, Susan White, Life Path, Chris Zabik, DMH

Three County CoC Update:

- By-names list: 210 people on it; 42 new people added over the last month
- approx. 10 exited list (a few re-housed, a few no contacts and removed from list)
- Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV): 8 referrals have been made to Northampton Housing Authority and Franklin County Regional Housing Authority; the CoC received a contract from DHCD for 36 additional EHV's - details will be released soon; a portion will be used to serve Berkshire County residents
- Shelter data between 8/1-8/30: 12 new people entered emergency shelter

Shelter updates:

Brief discussion of federal vaccine mandate: it does not apply to employers with less than 100 employees. Also discussed the stress facing shelter staff right now. Hard to hire and maintain staffing. This is a difficult time!

ServiceNet: operating at full capacity in all 3 shelters in Pittsfield, Greenfield and Northampton.

- *Pittsfield:* 49 resided in shelter at the former high school last night - never seen such numbers for this time of year; possible factors include the end of unemployment and stimulus payments; people coming from out of area (NY and VT); many new faces. The new shelter will open in January, designed for 40 individuals but unclear what the max number will be for COVID safety reasons.
- *Greenfield:* full with 30 beds (10 added this past year).
- *Northampton:* full at Grove (15) and cot shelter (10). Searching for a new site for the winter but currently no active leads. Please contact Erin with any possibilities - eforbush@servicenet.org.

Craig's Doors: continuing to operate the University Motor Lodge with 20 rooms (about 30 people). Very hard to find housing. Working on a congregate site with a church that will hopefully shelter 15-20 people. In conversation with architect to make site viable. Optimistic but still in process.

Holyoke Motel 6: at capacity with 45 individuals in motel (20 transferred from West Springfield hotel run by Catholic Charities).

It was that there is a significant increase in the street population in all communities across the region.

Safe Havens RFR is out! [Click here](#) to learn more. This will bring 7 new Safe Havens beds to Franklin and Hampshire County, intensive case management in a shelter setting for people with multiple barriers to housing. Very exciting that it is here!

Three County CoC in the NOFO process: HUD released its Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to CoC's across the country. Here in Western MA, the Hampden County and Three County CoC will be applying for its renewal and bonus funding - totaling approx. \$9 million in the region (\$3m for 3 County CoC). The Three County CoC will be releasing its RFP on 9/15 for local providers seeking either renewal funding or bonus funding (bonus funds are available for DV related projects and for housing projects that integrate supportive health services, e.g., CSPECH or a partnership with a health agency). This is an opportunity for organizations to think creatively! Stay tuned for the RFP later this week.

Next meeting date: Monday, October 18 (3rd Monday due to the holiday on 10/11), 2 pm - 3 pm
NOTE: The group decided to push back our meeting start from 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm in order to accommodate the bi-weekly DHCD call that starts at 1 pm.