

Three County Individual Services Meeting - 12/13/21

In attendance: MJ Adams, City of Greenfield, Shaundell Diaz, Community Action, John Fisher, Way Finders, Erin Forbush, ServiceNet, Jen Glover, Life Path, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Amherst Community Connections, John Hornik, Amherst Affordable Trust, Laura Hudson, Positive Place, Shalyn Kempepa, Way Finders, Andy Klatka, Eliot Services, Michele LaFleur, Community Action Pioneer Valley, Nora Lutz, Housing Navigator, Luis Martinez, CHD, Brooke Murphy, Three County CoC, Keleigh Pereira, Community Action, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Kathy Wiggins, Construct, Chris Zabik, DMH

Data Update: Michele reported that the CoC is in the process of moving to a new data system that will take effect on 12/31; HUD data standards also changed on 10/1. Monthly comparative data is not available right now as a result of these changes but the current snapshot is as follows:

- 202 people entered emergency shelter in the month of November, 20 new individuals in total; 38 people were in transitional housing, including 4 new people. These numbers do not include Soldier On.

Coordinated Entry Update for November:

- 22 move-ins to housing, including 4 to CoC units, 3 using HUD-VASH and 15 to other private market units (many using vouchers)
- 243 people are on the by-names list (28 new people for November)

Seeking people with lived experience: The CoC is recruiting people to serve on its committees. Compensation provided. Please see the outreach flier [here](#).

The Landlord Engagement Work group is meeting bi-weekly and will be moving to a permanent committee of the CoC. See the flier [here](#) for more info.

The CoC Equity and Inclusion Committee is recruiting individuals who will bring diversity to the committee (with or without lived experience). Learn more [here](#) and contact Shaundell Diaz for more information.

Shelter Updates:

ServiceNet:

Northampton: First Churches opened with 25 beds, hovering at capacity; running Grove St with 15 individuals.

Greenfield: Wells Street is at capacity with 30 people.

Pittsfield: capacity is at 50 and currently between 35-40 people are sleeping at the shelter each night. A warming center is also available in Pittsfield and resource centers are open in all 3 counties.

Craig's Doors - Amherst: Immanuel Lutheran Church is full every night with 23 beds; University Lodge doubling up a lot so currently at 34 people. Just opened at the VFW a new site - The Warming Place - for a resource center, which is especially critical in view of the Church not being open in the day time.

Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) update:

All vouchers in 3 county have either been actually referred or households identified to receive them.

Franklin - 15 vouchers, referred all 15, 7 are submitting paperwork; 1 person has been leased up as of 12/1

Northampton - 17 vouchers, all 17 referred, 3 submitting paperwork, 4 leased up

DHCD (36 vouchers) - 12 referrals made; remaining identified, back-up list

DHCD referrals then get channeled to Way Finders or Berkshire Housing

About a month from referral to contact, working on shortening the timeline.

Biggest issue is lack of available housing!

Eviction/foreclosure update: Rental assistance applications are as high as ever; eviction filings for non-payment of rent continue; foreclosures are also on the rise. There is a new Homeowners Assistance Fund coming on line in January which will provide foreclosure prevention for homeowners (if the defaulted payments began before January 2020). Learn more by going here: massmortgagehelp.org.

Rental assistance application help: Amherst Community Connections received funding from CHAPA to provide application support for people seeking rental and utility assistance. Amherst residency is NOT a requirement. Learn more here:

<http://www.amherstcommunityconnections.net/financial-assistance>

State and Local ARPA updates:

The Governor signed the state ARPA budget yesterday which includes \$600 million in housing funds, including \$150 million for permanent supportive housing, \$150 million for public housing, \$115 million for rental housing production and more. It also includes Senator Comerford's earmarks for \$50,000 in overflow winter non-congregate shelter (\$25,000 to CHD for Franklin County; \$25,000 to Craig's Doors for Hampshire County); \$128,000 for the permanent supportive housing project in Northampton; and from Senator Hinds \$75,000 for the Louison House's non-congregate shelter in the Northern Berkshires.

Housing Navigator MA: Nora Lutz of [Housing Navigator](#) presented on this new tool that offers a "one stop shop" of all the income-restricted, permanent rental housing in MA. See the Powerpoint shared [here](#). If you want to sign up for the Housing Navigator mailing list or to have new listings sent to you directly, please [go here](#). If you want to sign up for an hour-long provider-focused demo for your organization, please [go here](#).

Over 2,000 visible properties on the website. Please see [the website](#) or contact Nora at hello@housingnavigator.org for more info.

Next meeting date: Monday, January 10, 2-3 pm