

Hampden County Individual Services Meeting

In attendance: Cleopatra Allain, Mental Health Association (MHA), Ric Avila, Eliot Services, Olivia Bernstein Amy Conklin, Mental Health Association (MHA), Lynn Conway, Eliot Services, John Fisher, Way Finders, Kim Fontaine, Eliot Services, Tim Glover, MHA, Dave Havens, MHA, Janice Humason, Friends of the Homeless/CSO, Jay Levy, Eliot Services, Jennifer Lucca, Samaratin Inn, Nora Lutz, Housing Navigator, Gerry McCafferty, Hampden CoC/City of Springfield, Bill Miller, Friends of the Homeless/CSO, Theresa Nicholson, CHD, Christine Palmieri, MHA, Kim Puffer, Domus, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Stephanie Tonelli, Springfield Police, Kathleen West, Eliot Services

Shelter Update:

No COVID outbreaks as of this time. Concerned about Isolation and Recovery access over the holidays; a new isolation site will open on 1/3 in the southeastern part of the state with 150 beds; no western site as of now (due to availability and staffing needs).

Presentation: Mental Health Association Programs - GRIT and The Good Place: Thanks to Christine Palmieri who presented on these two programs of MHA. For the powerpoint that summarizes the program and eligibility criteria, click [here](#); for the GRIT referral form click [here](#); for the Good Place and other housing programs referral form click [here](#).

Presentation: The Housing Navigator Tool: Thanks to Nora Lutz of the Housing Navigator for presenting on this [online housing search tool](#) of all the income-restricted, permanent rental housing in MA. See the powerpoint [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](#). Don't hesitate to contact Nora at hello@housingnavigator.org for more information.

CoC Updates:

Point in Time count: Scheduled for Jan. 26. Providers should have as up to date info as possible in HMIS. Please contact Gerry at gmccafferty@springfieldcityhall.com with questions and to get connected to the count.

Emergency Housing Vouchers: - A total of just over 60 vouchers are available; 43 people have been referred; about 10 vouchers issued. In view of the historical under-representation of people of color in receiving permanent supportive housing slots, efforts were taken to adjust the definition of chronic homelessness so people of color would be better served. Analysis of recent allocation of vouchers demonstrates progress in this regard. [See here](#) for the data analysis.

HOME-ARP Planning: Roughly \$6million in HOME-ARP funds have been allocated to Springfield. The City is moving into the planning period that is required before the funds are actually distributed. The first planning meeting will take place on January 19, 2-4 pm, where there will be discussion of housing needs and priorities. Stay tuned for additional information on this meeting. Funding is also available to the Holyoke-Chicopee- Westfield Consortium - planning will be scheduled there as well.

Rental assistance update: [See this blog post](#) for an important update on impending reductions in rental assistance and advocacy efforts to stop the cuts from happening.

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 18, 2-3 pm.