

Western MA Task Force for Housing First Minutes - 3/26/26

In attendance: approximately 55 partners, including homelessness/housing providers, state legislators and aides and municipal staff

Western MA Family Homelessness Pilot

With thanks to our western MA delegation for their support, our region received a \$150,000 earmark to conduct two family homelessness pilots:

Way Finders: (thanks to Anni Zhu for presenting) is building on an ongoing HomeBASE pilot to determine the impact of smaller caseloads per case manager and more intensive support services, trainings and the availability of flexible funds. These funds will augment the pilot and offer additional evaluation of its impact. First impact evaluation is anticipated in 2027.

ServiceNet (thanks to Erin Forbush in absentia) is building out their diversion efforts in Berkshire and Franklin Counties through a dedicated case manager who will assist families in diverting from EA shelter. Temporary hotel/motel placements will be provided when necessary to keep families safe as they are navigating the diversion/EA application process. Data will also be collected on families seeking shelter in Greenfield and Pittsfield to analyze the time required to complete the application, duration of hotel/motel stays and application outcomes.

FY27 Budget Hearing: March 31, 12 pm - 5 pm, virtually or in Boston

[Register here!](#)

Senator Jo Comerford, Vice-Chair of Senate Ways and Means, shared with us the importance of being heard at this budget hearing of the Joint Ways and Means Committee. This is an important opportunity to weigh in on our priorities. See the [Network's FY27 budget priorities](#) for reference and for advocacy!

HUD Regulation Proposals - Our Call to Action

We welcomed special guest, Noëlle Porter of the National Housing Law Project, who presented a summary of HUD's new regulation proposals that would have a disastrous impact on tenants. Please see links below, stay tuned for Network blog updates, and let's get ready to weigh in and push back!

See NHLP's [Keeping Families Together Action Page](#) on the Mixed-Status Rule.
[Sign-on Letter \(by 4/20\) HERE.](#)

See the NHLP [factsheet on work requirements and time-limits here.](#)

See the [state by state impact here.](#)

[Register for NLIHC's April 6, 3:00 pm](#) ET office hours on the HUD 30-Day Notice and Time Limits/Work Requirements.

[CHAPA's Response Resource Guide is here.](#)

The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act

Additional special guests, Alia Fierro and Arya Prindiprolu of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee under Senator Elizabeth Warren, brought us important updates on the US Senate's passage of the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act.

See the press release summarizing the [Act's provisions here](#). See the National Low Income Housing Coalition [action alert here](#).

We will stay tuned on next steps for the bill (will the House pass a version or require it to go to Conference Committee - to be determined) and also advocate for inclusion of provisions in the Congressional appropriations bills.

Program Updates/Announcements

Craig's Doors: The Econo-Lodge is closing by April 1. Efforts continue to rehouse individuals (thank you to all for regional support!). **Valley Community Development Corporation** is starting in May on construction to convert the building to affordable housing - 50 units, 20 of which will be allocated to people leaving homelessness.

Three County CoC's invitation to participate in coordinated entry evaluation/revamp:

We are inviting community partners who use Coordinated Entry as part of the local homelessness response system to share their insights and experiences. Your perspective will help us better understand how Coordinated Entry is supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness and where improvements may be needed.

During this interactive session, participants will have the opportunity to share feedback on:

- How Coordinated Entry is currently working in the community
- Barriers or challenges encountered in accessing or navigating the system
- Opportunities to improve system coordination, transparency, and outcomes
- Insights gathered during these sessions will inform recommendations to strengthen the Coordinated Entry system and support the CoC's broader goals to prevent and end homelessness across the region.

[Register here](#) ASAP.

RAFT update: 809 applications in one week, the highest in the state; approx. 190 people walking in the door each day; homeowner cases increasing; anticipating end of utility moratorium at end of April. Note: this underscores the urgency of being heard at the Ways and Means Committee hearing noted above.

Next meeting date: Thursday, April 23, 9 am