



CALIFORNIA HOMELESS COORDINATING AND FINANCING COUNCIL

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
Gavin Newsom, Governor | Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

Meeting Summary June 17, 2021 1:00PM – 4:00PM Teleconference

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Secretary Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez called the meeting to order at 1:04PM.

Council Members Present:

- Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Council Chair and Secretary of Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency;
- Emilio Ramirez, Council Vice Chair and Director of Housing, City of Oxnard;
- Amy Anderson, Senior Vice President, Housing Affordability Philanthropy, Wells Fargo;
- Russell Atterberry, Undersecretary of California Department of Veterans Affairs;
- Alexis Barries, Advocate;
- Gina Buccieri-Harrington, Assistant Director of Grants Management, Victim Services Program, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services;
- Corrin Buchanan, Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness, California Department of Social Services;
- Donald Cavier, Acting Executive Director of California Housing Finance Agency;
- Gail Gilman, Chief Strategy Officer, All Home California;
- Jody Ketcheside, Deputy Regional Director of Turning Point of Central California;
- Jennifer Loving, Chief Executive Officer, Destination: Home;
- Gary McCoy, Congressional Aide, Office of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi;
- Toks Omishakin, Director of California Department of Transportation;
- Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Support, California Community Colleges; and
- Lindsay Tornatore, Director of Student Achievement and Support Division, California Department of Education.

Absent:

- Jacey Cooper, Chief Deputy Director of Health Care Programs, California Department of Health Care Services;
- Joe Uchishiba, Former Police Officer, City of Fairfield; and
- Gustavo Velasquez, Director of California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Opening Remarks

Secretary Castro Ramírez gave opening remarks, noting California’s lifting of many COVID-19 restrictions. It is important to continue work to get vaccines to all communities, particularly those with challenges to access, Black and low-income communities, and people experiencing homelessness.

Today’s meeting is being held remotely thanks to executive orders by the Governor in 2020, and we expect the rest of this year’s meetings to stay remote.

II. Adoption of the meeting summary from March 23, 2021 Council meeting

The Council approved the [meeting summary](#) from the March 23, 2021 council meeting. Council Member Omishakin did not vote; all other members present voted to approve.

III. State’s Interagency Coordination on Homelessness

Executive Officer Julie Lo presented, focusing on HCFC’s [Action Plan](#). Staff are planning to collect data from council departments on activities in the Action Plan twice a year, which will be compiled into an annual report.

The first data request, for activities in fiscal year 20-21, will go out by August. Staff will report back to the Council in September and provide a draft annual report in November.

Staff are planning for the State Funding and Programs Working Group described in the Action Plan, which will be launched in the new fiscal year. Recruitment is on track to start in July.

Council Member Atterberry asked what “recruitment” refers to and if working group members have already been determined.

- Recruitment will include contacting State departments to find working group members and those outside the State who can be in an advisory group. Specific roles are not yet finalized.

Council Member Loving asked if the Council would have input on who gets named to the working group.

- Yes, input from the Council is welcomed.

Council Member Atterberry asked who will decide the measurables to be collected in August and September.

- They will be collected as listed in the Action Plan. HCFC will provide each department a reporting template that has this information included.

IV. HCFC Council Member Updates

Deputy Secretary for Homelessness Ali Sutton gave updates from HCFC. The HCFC team has grown from about seven to 26 staff in the last 18 months. More work and more staff are expected after the state's 2021-22 budget is finalized.

The Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program Round 2 (HHAP-2) grant team is finishing reviewing 100 applications for funding. HCFC have met all statutory deadlines for this program so far. Staff are working with applicants on racial equity and local partnership requirements included in HHAP-2.

With administrative funding from HHAP, HCFC has a technical assistance Request for Proposal open now around performance-based contracting for grantees. Proposals are due July 16.

The Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) ends on June 30 and HCFC is providing intensive technical assistance to grantees to ensure all funds are spent. As of the end of March, 87% of funds were spent. There will be a more formal HEAP update at the next council meeting.

HCFC is partnering with the California State University, Sacramento for case studies on the impact of HCFC funding across the state. Case studies focus on how unsheltered communities have been reached, permanent housing for transitional-aged youth, and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In April, the [Homeless Data Integration System](#) (HDIS) launched. HDIS contains de-duplicated service provider-level data from California's 44 homelessness Continuums of Care; this allows a view into homelessness services statewide, through research tools and public dashboards. HDIS will tie into the Action Plan by allowing HCFC to accurately measure progress. HDIS will be updated quarterly with new information and learnings.

The following departments provided [written updates](#) on their relevant homelessness programs:

- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
- California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA)
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet)

Council Member Ruan-O'Shaughnessy gave updates from California Community Colleges (CCC). CCC is looking at ways to better support students, including financial aid, basic needs programs, affordable housing, and reducing the total cost of attendance.

In February 2020, the Homeless and Housing Insecure Pilot Program (HHIP) was implemented to assist students with rapid rehousing and wraparound services. The program is currently at 14 CCC colleges and has about \$9 million in funding annually.

CCC is working with the California Community Colleges Foundation on advocacy efforts and potentially building student housing.

Included in the Governor's May Revise budget are basic needs programs through CCC: \$30 million in ongoing funding to support basic needs centers and coordinators and \$100 million in one-time funding to support students with food and housing insecurity. The budget proposal also includes \$4 billion over two years for student housing grants through the State Treasurer and California School Finance Authority.

CCC has reached an agreement with CDSS that all California Community Colleges students with a declared major, or who are in a career technical education program, will meet the exemptions for CalFresh student eligibility.

CCC is also involved with the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA), which is focusing on how to promote available resources and share best practices across all of state higher education. CHEBNA is planning a series of webinars to share information on food insecurity, mental health, housing, and federal updates.

Council Member Tornatore gave updates from the California Department of Education (CDE). On June 14, the Learning Policy Institute released a report on students experiencing homelessness on California. The report uses data from 2018-19 and will contribute to efforts to better understand the conditions that students experiencing homelessness face.

V. 2021-22 California State Budget and May Revision

Deputy Secretary Sutton presented. The Governor's *California Comeback Plan* May Revise budget includes over \$12 billion to address homelessness and housing instability in California. Negotiations are ongoing with the Legislature, whose plan differs on details but includes a similar amount for housing and homelessness.

HCFC is optimistic that the final budget will include investments to continue Project Roomkey and Homekey, with focus on collaborative efforts to make homelessness in California a rare, brief, and one-time experience.

Secretary Castro Ramírez added that current budget proposals include \$3.5 billion for continuing and scaling approaches such as Homekey.

Council Member Gilman asked for a letter to the Council with more information once the budget is finalized, for details of budget trailer bill language, and if staff have thought through city-county collaboration and accountability for funding that is likely to be in the budget.

- HCFC staff will send a budget letter to council members, which will come soon, and can provide budget trailer bill language once it is finalized. HCFC is in conversations now about accountability with new funding and how to balance with expediency in getting money out to grantees.

Council Member Loving commented that she would like to hear feedback from communities on what HCFC can do in the administrative process to make funding easier or more flexible.

- HCFC has not done formal listening sessions but does take feedback while working with grantees. The State Funding and Programs Working Group will also be a place for this work.

VI. Legislative Report

Legislative Specialist Jeannie McKendry presented. The three state bills covered today are still in process and may have amendments that change their effects.

AB 816 from Assemblymember Chiu is titled “State and Local Agencies: Homelessness Plan.” The bill intends to reduce homelessness by 90% and eliminate racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness by the end of this decade. It would require HCFC to do a statewide needs and gaps analysis and for HCD and local jurisdictions to set goals based on that analysis. The bill would also establish a Housing and Homelessness Inspector General within HCD.

AB 977 from Assemblymembers Gabriel and Petrie-Norris is titled “Homelessness Program Data Reporting: Homelessness Management Information Systems” and intends to improve statewide homelessness data. It would require certain programs to report into their Continuum of Care’s (CoC’s) Homeless Management Information System as a condition of receiving state funds and would also require CoCs to share data with HCFC for HDIS.

AB 1220 from Assemblymember Luz Rivas is titled “California Interagency Council on Homelessness” and would make administrative changes to this council. It would rename HCFC, add five departments to the Council’s membership, create an advisory committee of stakeholders, and mandate that State agencies and departments with homelessness programs give the Council information and participate in workgroups.

Federally, the American Rescue Plan was passed in March and included \$5 billion for Emergency Housing Voucher programs. Public Housing Authorities have applied for the first round of vouchers and allocations have been made.

The Biden Administration’s proposed 2022 budget includes \$68.7 billion for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is a \$9.1 billion (15%) increase from its 2021 funding level. The proposed budget would expand the Housing Choice Voucher program with \$30.4 billion dollars to serve approximately 200,000 individuals or families. The proposed budget also includes a \$500 million increase in

funding for Homelessness Assistance Grants, which total \$3.5 billion to support more than 100,000 households.

On May 27, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) selected its new leadership, which is done annually. HUD Secretary, Marcia Fudge was elected as Chair, and Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Dennis McDonough was elected as Vice Chair.

VII. California Department of Education (CDE) ARP Plan Stakeholder Input

Council Member Tornatore introduced this item and her CDE colleagues Mindi Parsons, Administrator of Integrated Student Support and Programs Office, and Joseph Saenz, Federal Policy Liaison.

Acronyms used in [this presentation](#) include:

- HCY – Homeless Children and Youth Program
- ARP – American Rescue Plan Act
- ESSER III – Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund III
- LEA – Local Educational Agency
- SEA – State Education Agency
- ED – U.S. Department of Education

Mindi Parsons gave background information, explaining that CDE receives \$12 million in annual, federal funding for the Educating Homeless Children and Youth Fund (EHCY) as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. CDE has selected 121 LEAs to receive funding to implement an EHCY program in their school district or county. CDE has more information and resources on its website.

In April 2021, ED reserved \$800 million of ESSER to support the ARP-HCY fund. CDE received \$98 million of these funds to allocate to LEAs. The program has two rounds of allocations, ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II, and CDE just received the first round of approximately \$24 million. CDE can reserve \$6 million of this funding for state-level activities, and the rest will go to LEAs for EHCY programs. CDE is waiting for more guidance from ED on how Homeless II funds should be allocated.

Council Member Tornatore explained that CDE needs to create a plan to describe to ED how CDE will meet specific goals with EHCY grants and ensure LEAs are well-prepared to use funds. While Homeless I was allocated only to prior McKinney-Vento recipients, ARP Homeless II will include LEAs that have not received McKinney-Vento funding.

CDE is asking council members and members of the public to join the department's listserv to be informed when the draft plan is released. CDE will ask for public input on this plan.

Joseph Saenz provided more information on CDE's work to put together its ARP State Education Plan for ESSER III funds. This funding, nearly \$122 billion, was enacted on March 11 through the American Rescue Plan Act. California's allocation was just over

\$15 billion, with over \$13.5 billion to go to LEAs through the Title 1A formula. This does not include the HCY funds mentioned earlier.

While CDE is working on its state plan, LEAs are also required to submit plans that include safe return to in-person instruction and a spending plan. Both state and local plans require public input and deal with how LEAs will serve students experiencing homelessness. Information is available on CDE's website or by email at relieffunds@cde.ca.gov.

Main themes in CDE's state plan are identifying needs of students and coordinating funds for students, both of which include students experiencing homelessness. The plan looks at new funds in coordination with prior federal funds, as well as any funding in reserves. The public will be able to comment live on the plan at the State Board of Education's meeting on July 14 and 15. Comments may also be emailed to sbe@cde.ca.gov in advance of the meeting.

Council Member Tornatore closed this item by announcing an upcoming conference CDE is hosting: "Education California's Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: From Identification to Implementation" on September 18, 2021.

VIII. Future meeting agendas

Council Member Atterberry asked to hear more information about accountability and coordination of funding between counties, as well as how Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act might relate to this council's work.

Secretary Castro Ramírez noted that Council Member Gilman had also asked to hear more about accountability.

IX. Public comments and final remarks

Public Comment

- Helene Schneider, Regional Coordinator for USICH: USICH is planning another meeting soon to work on updating its federal strategic plan and implementing the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities on housing and homelessness. Requests have come from local communities for information about how to leverage and braid state and federal funding. The [Guide to Strategic Uses](#) HCFC put out last summer including CARES Act funding was very well-received, by local communities and USICH colleagues in Washington, D.C., and could be a model for other states.
- Teddy Pierce, HMIS Consultant for Lake County: Thrilled with HDIS and looking forward to how it will develop over time. Thank you to the State for sponsorship of the Rapid Results Institute's 100-Day Challenge program. Lake County is part of cohort 3 and the program has been very helpful for them already.

- Joe Colletti, Southern California CoC Alliance: Commenting on agenda item three, about the Action Plan. Submitted a letter to the Council prior to the meeting, requesting that trauma-informed design and care be highlighted in the Action Plan as a key homelessness strategy. During 2020, nearly four persons a day died on the streets of Los Angeles County, and one person a day in Orange County. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has created a model for trauma-informed design and care that has been recognized as a best practice during the past decade. State communications should be expanded to create public awareness of trauma-informed design and care, and specific language should be added to pages 9, 21, and 34 of the Action Plan.
- Cathi Nye, McKinney-Vento Liaison for Ventura County Office of Education: Ventura County received the initial EHCY grant as well as the ARP Homeless I funding and supports 6,800 students experiencing homelessness. The county takes trauma-informed care seriously and has trained educators throughout the county on it over the last 2-3 years. Also, wants the slides from CDE's ARP presentation to share with upper administration in the County Office of Education.
- Denise Jacques: Has concerns with oversight and accountability, specifically in San Francisco. The director of the city's homelessness program earned almost \$1 million in three years, and a landlord-CEO made over \$300,000 in the last publicly available information. These are government-supported nonprofits and there may be issues with oversight on both the financial and services side. Subsidized housing tenants are often treated poorly, and property management has minimal contract monitoring. Wants to see funding designed, evaluated, and administered with a lens of justice for people in need, including children and families.

Secretary Castro Ramírez thanked everyone for joining this meeting. HCFC will follow up on items that came up in comments today. Meeting materials and a meeting summary will be posted on the HCFC website before the next council meeting.

During today's meeting, the President announced the signing of a bill making Juneteenth a national holiday beginning this Saturday, June 19. This is a chance to reflect on the history of slavery and struggle among the Black community, to acknowledge the importance of addressing racial inequities and disparities, and to ensure the economic recovery from COVID is focused on equity, inclusion, and investments in communities that were hit harder than others.

The next council meeting is September 22 from 1pm to 4pm.

X. Adjournment

Meeting is adjourned at 3:10PM.