



California Interagency Council on Homelessness

Gavin Newsom, Governor
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, MA, Co-Chair | Dr. Mark Ghaly, MD, MPH, Co-Chair

To: Members of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness
From: Julie Lo, Executive Officer, Cal ICH
Subject: Update of the Cal ICH Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California
Date: May 20, 2022

Purpose

This memo provides background information and preview of actions Cal ICH staff have taken towards the planned updates of the *Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California*. In advance of the upcoming California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) meeting, included below are our recommended next steps and timeframe for completing and adopting the updated Action Plan which the Council will be asked to consider and take action on.

Background

The [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#) was adopted by the Council in March 2021. The Action Plan orients the state's efforts to drive purposeful, meaningful, and measurable progress toward preventing and ending homelessness in California, motivated by a vision of a future in which homelessness in California is rare, brief, and one-time. The Council adopted the Plan with the explicit understanding that it would be updated to reflect additional, more specific Activities for FY 22-23 than could be projected at that time. These efforts come at a critical time to ensure the Plan reflects activities for departments and agencies new to the Council.

The development of the Action Plan was deeply informed by input from and collaboration with over 60 community entities, public agencies, nonprofits, and other experts. Cal ICH staff, supported by independent consultant Matthew Doherty, drafted the Plan's content, in coordination with all member agencies and departments, including five Action Areas, fifteen Objectives, and 89 Activities that detail work to prevent and end homelessness across 13 different state departments or agencies. Each of these Activities include progress measures to set goals for Fiscal Years 20-21, 21-22, and 22-23. At the end of 2021, we released our first annual [Action Plan Implementation Progress Report](#) to understand the progress the state had made toward these goals.

Council Co-Chairs have provided guidance to Cal ICH staff that the Plan's five Action Areas should remain the same within the updated Plan, but that Objectives may be refined and that the process should ensure that the identified Activities are fully up to date for FY 22-23.

Current Update Process

Cal ICH staff, again supported by consultant Matthew Doherty, began this update process in February 2022, including conversations with every Council member department and agency, external stakeholder groups, and public input sessions. This Cal ICH team first met with every Council member department to go over the intention for this update, the structure of the Action Plan, and start to identify new or updated Activities for the Plan. The Cal ICH team is now working with each member department and agency to reach agreement on Activities to be included within the updated Plan.

The Cal ICH team will continue to meet with external stakeholder groups to solicit input and recommendations for strengthening the Plan, including its focus on particular sub-populations of people experiencing homelessness. Additionally, staff held two public input sessions in April and May 2022 among a total of 150 attendees to further input from Cal ICH's broader stakeholder community.

Input received to date has been wide-ranging and diverse. An initial set of emerging topics from these discussions are included below:

- Permanent housing supply for the success of investments into any elements of homelessness response systems;
- Streamlining requirements and processes to help address the challenges communities are facing in aligning capital resources, rental assistance, operating funding, and services resources, to support strong outcomes from the wide range of state investments;
- Guidance and support to realize the potential of aligning housing strategies with health and behavioral health strategies to reach vulnerable populations and increase impact;
- Tailoring policies, data analyses, funding, programs, and practices for specific populations, including: youth, survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence, older adults, LGBTQ+ people, and others;
- Flexible resources to be able to support a range of program models that meet the range of people's needs;
- Creating and sustaining alternate models for providing shelter and interim housing options;

- Strengthening efforts to prevent homelessness among people re-entering communities from jails, prisons, and other institutional settings;
- State support for non-punitive, non-criminalizing approaches to addressing unsheltered homelessness and the presence of encampments in communities; and
- Investing in the skills, wages, and capacity of the workforce within homelessness response and housing programs.

The feedback received includes an interest in the state engaging in expanded communications and educational efforts to help support effective solutions in local communities, including efforts that would impact:

- Understanding and awareness of Housing First, Harm Reduction, Trauma-Informed Care, and other best practices;
- Reducing stigma surrounding issues of homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders;
- Ability of communities to counter NIMBY advocacy and arguments;
- Awareness of successes at the individual, program, and community level;
- Understanding of the fundamental role that the lack of housing affordability plays in creating and sustaining homelessness; and
- Support for range of investments needed to create and operate effective homelessness response systems.

Cal ICH will explore opportunities to address feedback within the updated Action Plan document for FY 22-23, to factor the input into implementation actions, and to address within the preparation of future versions of the Action Plan.

Council Meeting Discussion Questions

At the Council meeting on May 31, 2022, Council members will be asked to participate in a high-level discussion regarding the updating of the Action Plan, focused on the following discussion questions:

- What is one highly impactful activity that your agency/department is identifying for inclusion in the updated Action Plan?
- What issues need greater inter-agency or inter-departmental collaboration to help drive progress?

Recommended Next Steps and Timeframe for Action Plan Update

Finally, the Council will be asked to consider and take action on recommended next steps and timeframe for completing the Action Plan update process, which will require close coordination and effort from all Council member agencies and departments.

Recommended next steps:

- Cal ICH team to continue to refine Activities, in partnership with Council member agencies and departments **through early July 2022.**
- Cal ICH team and Council member agencies and departments to add Activities, as needed, to reflect final budget and new statutes, **through August 2022.**
- Refinement of introductory and framing content within the Action Plan document to be completed **by mid-August 2022.**
- Council to engage in further discussion, and consider recommendation for adoption of updated Plan, **at September 1, 2022 Council meeting.**