

SUMMARY FOR THE CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS QUARTERLY COUNCIL MEETING

November 30, 2023
1:00pm – 4:00pm

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order on November 30, 2023, at 1:05 PM

Council Members Present:

- **Tad Egawa**, Acting Council Co-Chair and Acting Secretary of the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH)
- **Dr. Mark Ghaly**, Council Co-Chair and Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
- **Dr. Tomás J. Aragón**, State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- **Michelle Baass**, Director of the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- **Alisa Becerra**, as designee for Tony Tavares, Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- **Stephanie Clendenin**, Director of the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH)
- **Susan DeMarois**, Director of the California Department of Aging (CDA)
- **Sandra Hamameh**, as designee for the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB)
- **Ricki Hammett**, as designee for Nancee Robles, Executive Director of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC)
- **Kim Johnson**, Director of the California Department of Social Services (DSS)
- **Gail Tateyama**, as designee for Tiena Johnson Hall, Executive Director of the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA)
- **Veronica Lewis**, Director of Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS)
- **Jeff Macomber**, Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), (Not present at initial roll call)
- **Karmina Barrales**, as designee for William McGee, Director of the Student Achievement Support Division, California Department of Education (CDE)
- **Susannah Parsons**, as designee for Tomiquia Moss, Founder and Chief Executive of All Home
- **Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy**, Vice Chancellor for Educational Services, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO)
- **Lindsey Sin**, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet)
- **Gustavo F. Velasquez**, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- **Nancy Ward**, Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
- **Ana Acton**, as designee for Joe Xavier, Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

II. Consent Calendar

There was one item on the Consent Calendar: [Adoption of the Meeting Summary from the September 7, 2023 Council Meeting](#)

- No Council Members made comments on this item.

Public Comment: No comments were made on this item.

The council voted to approve the consent calendar.

III. Council Co-Chair Opening Remarks

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly informs the Council that Lourdes Castro Ramirez has accepted a position with the City of Los Angeles and will no longer co-chair the Council and that Council member Tomiquia Moss has been appointed by the Governor as the new BCSH Secretary. Co-Chair Ghaly also acknowledged that this is Director Michelle Baass' first meeting with the Council representing the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). The Secretary emphasized the importance of the identities and experiences of the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB). The Secretary stated he looked forward to the presentation from Susan DeMarois with the California Department on Aging, to highlight the work of Cal ICH and how it intersects with the department's future. The Secretary also stated that there will be a presentation regarding the CARE program and its implementation in several counties.

BCSH Acting Secretary Tad Egawa welcomed Tomiquia Moss in her transition to BCSH Secretary.

IV. Executive Officer Updates

Cal ICH Executive Officer, Megan Marshall welcomed Michelle Baass as a new Council Member and emphasized DHCS's role in the efforts to address homelessness. Executive Officer Marshall announced that the Interdepartmental Disaster Preparedness group is meeting in person next week in hopes of developing a toolkit to assist localities with a guide for best practices, resources, and information that can be used to update local emergency management plans to integrate persons experiencing homelessness into disaster response and recovery. Executive Officer Marshall reminded the Council and public that many communities are currently planning the annual homeless point in time count, which is made possible through volunteer efforts and encouraged everyone to participate.

Council Member Gustavo F. Velasquez: Highlighted Governor Newsom's updates on the Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF) grant program, and how crucial Cal ICH staff (particularly Executive Officer Meghan Marshall) was in the movement of these grants.

V. Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) Introduction

Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy Cody Zeger provided a brief overview of the LEAB and how the board fits into the larger Cal ICH committee structure including its' composition and purpose, the work of the Council and the Cal ICH staff that supports the implementation of the Council's work.

Cal ICH Director of Local Initiatives Courtney Tacker described the purpose of her team and provided background on the formation of the LEAB. Director Tracker explained that one of the six key principles and commitments of Cal ICH is to ensure that decisions are deeply informed and guided by people who have expertise grounded in lived experience of homelessness, so last year the Council agreed to prioritize the formation of the LEAB. Membership reflects representation from nine counties and one tribal nation with equal representation across rural, suburban, and urban areas. The LEAB includes diverse experience amongst age groups, communities of color, LGBTQIA+ identities, and those with system experience. Director Tracker concluded by announcing that the LEAB will have its first meeting on December 21, 2023.

Nicole Thomas, Homebase Senior Policy Analyst and Project Management Lead for LEAB, introduced the LEAB members. Member bios can be found [here](#).

Director Tacker opened the floor for discussion from Council members by asking where members see the most opportunity for impact from the LEAB in their respective department or work with the Council and how members think the council can best engage with the LEAB moving forward.

Council Member Kim Johnson: Stated she appreciates the LEAB and their willingness to share experiences and assured that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is committed to integrating guidance in program policy and funding components.

Council Member Dr. Tomás J. Aragón: Council Member Aragón stated his belief that everyone should have access to basic health services and acknowledges the California Department of Public Health must bring health services to where people are living and stated that the LEAB will be instrumental in providing insight and wisdom to help the department do so.

Council Member Designee Karmina Barrales: Thanked Cal ICH staff and the LEAB and stated that the insight provided during the LEAB members' introductions resonated with her.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: Shared appreciation for Cal ICH staff's robust search and thoughtfulness around the representation of the LEAB members and to the LEAB members themselves for sharing vulnerable experiences. Council Member Lewis stated that the LEAB will be instrumental by weighing in on policies and action plans throughout State, providing feedback on effectiveness of initiatives and ensuring racial equity, gender equity, and consideration of those involved in systems are adequately addressed. Council member Lewis concluded that integrating the LEABs advice can decrease undue burden on those who programs and policies are seeking to serve by reflecting upon their own experiences through the system.

Council Member Designee Ana Acton: Shared a phrase used by people with disabilities, "Nothing about us, without us," and stated this is a phrase that the California Department of Rehabilitation values as it helps make informed decisions.

Council Member Michelle Baass: Stated that The California Department of Healthcare Services has created a panel with a similar purpose, comprised of Medi-Cal members, acknowledging that listening directly to the consumers of the program is the only way to get the results and goals set out by the program. Council Member Bass emphasized the importance of all State departments working together to address barriers when individuals have to navigate each system concurrently.

Council Member Susan DeMarois: Thanked the LEAB members for taking the time to commit themselves to the work and sharing the very real experiences that they have had and have seen from those who access services.

Council Member Lindsey Sin: Stated that the California Department of Veterans Affairs works closely with local systems of care and administers services directly to individuals they serve. Council Member Sin requested veteran representation amongst the LEAB, if there is not already.

Council Member Jeff Macomber: Acknowledged that the key to success for those released on probation and parole is housing and employment and is looking forward to the LEAB's feedback.

Council Member Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy: Explained that California Community Colleges are an engine for economic opportunity through higher education and to succeed must foster a sense of unconditional belonging for students and address basic needs. Council Member Ruan-O'Shaughnessy continued that the perspective of LEAB members is important to ensure policies aren't just theoretical, but practical, while also rethinking systemic barriers to eliminate gaps in policy and ensure a whole-person approach.

Council Member Stephanie Clendenin: Shared their desire to design programs that would decrease incarceration rates of those who are simultaneously living with serious mental illness and experiencing homelessness

Council Member Nancy Ward: Stated that Cal-OES works with local governments to prepare, respond and recover from events and disasters and is excited to integrate methods to better serve individuals experiencing homelessness.

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly: Emphasized the importance of LEAB guidance and the willingness of Council Member departments for incorporating their advice, acknowledging that it is certain that each department wants to improve their programs and increase access.

VI. State Funding and Programs Working Group Memo: Aligning and Leveraging Racial Equity Data

Director Cody Zeger provided background on the State Funding and Programs (SFP) Working group, including the history of its formation, membership, purpose, and current work which includes five recommendations for the coordinated use of racial equity data to address Activity 1.1.3 of the State's Homeless Action Plan.

Hanna Azamati, SFP Working Group Co-Chair and Deputy Director of the Housing and Homelessness Division for CDSS and Sarah Poss, SFP Working Group Co-Chair and Policy and Program Support Chief for HCD presented the memo: [Recommendations for Aligning and Leveraging Racial Equity Data Across Housing and Homelessness Funding Applications](#).

Cal ICH Executive Officer Megan Marshall expressed gratitude to the SFP working group and the presenters and stated that she looked forward to the prioritization of this work.

Council Member Gustavo F. Velasquez: Thanked the SFP working group and Council, emphasized the need for this work, and noted current racial disparities in the population of individuals experiencing homelessness. Council Member Velasquez put an emphasis on improving outcomes and the measurement of outcomes, not only acknowledging issues by looking at data, but assessing the effectiveness of programs by using data.

Council Member Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy: Applauded the work of the group and echoed statements about performance measurement, highlighting the need to look beyond basic compliance and to focus on continued improvement in data collection by implementing evidence-based practices and removing systemic barriers.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: Urged the analysis of data to assess inadvertent ways that people of color are disadvantaged by determining which groups are accessing certain programs and which groups are not, which groups are taking a longer time to reach outcomes, and what the journey is like for certain racial groups. Council Member Lewis added that there should be thoughtful requirements from grantees involving data analysis, including the provision of strategies by local communities to address disparities and gaps in services when the data shows that these disparities exist.

- **Council Member Kim Johnson:** Echoed the need to have consistency and transparency in data to demonstrate progress over time, while also appreciating the participation of sovereign nations and tribes. Council Member Johnson-Hall advocated for further set asides in homeless funding programs and the increase of access to government funding programs to ensure that the programs are utilized by those who need them.
- **Executive Officer Marshall** shared that a tribal nation declined a funding contract with Cal ICH due to contract language and noted that CDSS had better language, which Cal ICH should model.

Council Member Dr. Tomás J. Aragón: Shared that through his epidemiology experience, data optimization is accomplished by incorporating data specifics that will be reflected by any person served. Having questions as specific as possible during the time of delivery to ensure that small groups who need services will not be overlooked, then data can then be grouped to make inferences on a program-level or demographic-level.

Director Cody Zeger stated that Cal ICH staff will further analyze the memo and recommendations and then bring the recommendations back to the Council at a future meeting for a formal adoption of next steps.

VII. Action Plan 2024 Report and Planning Discussion

Director Cody Zeger transitioned discussion to the State action plan to prevent and end homelessness that will be updated in fiscal year 2024 – 2025, sharing that the current action plan ends this fiscal year and Cal ICH staff is looking to implement a new action plan that will reflect work to better prevent and end homelessness. Director Cody Zeger provided a summary of input thus far and questions that will guide implementation and stated that Cal ICH staff is also encouraging recommendations to rename for the fiscal year 2024 -2025 Action Plan (currently referred to as AP '24) which can be submitted to Cal ICH for consideration.

Council Member DeMarois presents the CDA Master Plan for Aging and how it has incorporated input by the Council and other state departments. Council Member DeMarois shared the work of Cal State University Northridge work via personal stories that show current perspectives and experiences by the aging population experiencing homelessness. Executive Officer Marshall reminded the Council that Cal ICH staff is always willing to attend events like the Roundtable to provide input on efforts to prevent and end homelessness on behalf of the Council.

Cal ICH Action Plan Specialist Nykole Sakihara shared highlights of the fiscal year 2023-2024 Action Plan Implementation Progress Report. Sakihara included information about the updates to AP '24 and stated that there have been three discussions with Council Members and their respective departments and the Advisory Committee in the past quarter. Input provided during these meetings is shared, including: Clarity using common language and for the acknowledgement of the diverse experiences of individuals experiencing homelessness; Overarching vision to view the work through the recipients perspective and measure collective progress through the Council, shifting focus from what has been done to what should be done;

Equity and justice through a reimagining of how services and resources are delivered, looking into policy through an equity lens, and highlighting structural/systemic barriers; Types of goals to measure outcomes via a person-centered approach and prioritizing short-term and long-term goals; and information relevant for local partners which can include housing first guidance and expectations from State departments.

Director Cody Zeger stated a major focus is improving the planning and implementation process for the Council. Questions for discussion included ways the Council can best execute its vision through planning efforts and actions and identifying new and more purposeful strategies.

Executive Officer Megan Marshall: Expressed need for Council input and collaboration to build a new framework for the upcoming action plan.

Council Member Designee Karmina Barrales: Stated that the California Department of Education (CDE) has implemented several new strategies reflected in the current action plan, including the establishment of technical assistance centers, expanding training to educators to better identify students experiencing homelessness, and expanding resources among educators for the LGBTQIA+ population. Council Member Designee Barrales concluded by stating that sometimes implementing new initiatives can create administrative burden and that there shouldn't be missed opportunities to collaborate amongst State departments to streamline and coordinate services to meet all the needs of the population.

Council Member Susan DeMarois: Expressed appreciation to the Council for breaking down existing silos, but also fear that this may not be happening on the local level. Council Member DeMarois encouraged education and housing resources to be provided to local communities to bridge connections amongst agencies.

Council Member Veronica Lewis: Asked how Cal ICH will plan on holding conversations for input to AP '24 considering the amount of time it may take to have robust conversations on such an important topic.

- **Director Cody Zeger:** Acknowledged that Cal ICH is open to feedback from Council Members regarding the best way to receive input and process implementation.
- **Council Member Veronica Lewis:** Requested ample time to ensure conversation is fruitful, which could be done through break-out groups. Also encouraged the creation of measurable, categorical goals to best reflect the impacts resulting from these discussions on an annual basis.

Council Member Lindsey Sin: Advocated for additional education and information to be provided to the Council regarding the real barriers faced by individuals experiencing homelessness and to continue engaging with working groups to identify solutions.

Council Member Kim Johnson: Recommended utilizing the input of individuals with lived experience of homelessness to prioritize goals and demonstrating how each department is reaching set goals in the Action Plan.

Council Member Designee Ana Acton: Acknowledged the need for a simplification process to reduce barriers for individuals experiencing homelessness across all departments and ease navigation of these services on the local level.

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly: Reiterated Executive Officer Megan Marshall's comment that the current plan has not effectively ended or prevented homelessness and concluded that there should be a high bar for material that is included in AP '24. Co-Chair Secretary Ghaly contended

that simplifying and clarifying the goals and strategies while explicitly stating outcomes will improve the Action Plan.

- **Executive Officer Megan Marshall:** Agreed with Co-Chair Secretary Ghaly's statement and emphasized that local communities will have the ability to better coordinate services and resources if the State departments are working in tandem.

VIII. Public Comment

- **Rich Lynn:** Expressed concern about individuals experiencing homelessness in his area and as a result "adopted" several individuals to help them transition into permanent housing and work through barriers. These individuals typically distrust the system due to negative experiences. Rich encourages Council members to work directly with individuals and practice this method to better understand the struggles of individuals experiencing homelessness.
- **Kathleen Crowley, Executive Director of the Recovery Institute in Los Angeles:** Suggested that Council Members ask the LEAB how LEAB members can have the most impact and be engaged most effectively. Kathleen suggested the LEAB compile a report on the homeless service system, highlighting successes and failures, and providing suggestions on how to improve the system. Finally, Kathleen expresses hope that the LEAB take direct action by facilitating events across the state and hold listening sessions with other individuals experiencing homelessness, while being compensated appropriately.
- **Noah Whittaker, Homeless Initiative Program Coordinator:** Urged the Council to assess other strategic plans issued on the State and Federal level, including the suicide prevention strategic plan due to the number of suicides among people experiencing homelessness. Noah contends that the work of the Council will be more impactful if strategic plans are coordinated together and share language.
- **Ruth:** Stated she is currently experiencing homelessness and living in an encampment where several individuals were transported to after being exited from a motel program funded through Encampment Resolution Funds. Ruth advocated for the designation of a universal homeless resolution fund rather than funding specifically for encampments and stated she is working to have other individuals living in this encampment join these meetings to have their voices heard.
- **Ludmilla Bade:** Expressed excitement regarding the disaster preparedness group and advocates for improving activation standards around cold weather events, addressing sub-populations (students, individuals with disabilities, seniors, etc.) that are priced out of market rents, and rethinking permanent supportive or temporary housing services that are accessible only through interventions rather than incremental improvements. Ludmilla asked the Council to consider aligning green and renewable building standards to those of the United Nations.
- **Gerry La Londe-Berg:** Made points stating that shared housing should be further implemented and promoted due to its potential for success, hoping shared housing will be included in the AP '24. Jerry suggested the Council commissions a study regarding local Continuums of Care to assess their current effectiveness or if there are any governance issues.

IX. Final Remarks and Adjournment

Acting Council Co-Chair and Acting Secretary Tad Egawa provided expressed gratitude to Executive Officer Megan Marshall and Cal ICH staff for organizing Council Meetings and drafting the Action Plan, the LEAB for their input and dedication and Homebase for assisting with the facilitation of the LEAB, the SFP working group for recommendations, Council Member Susan DeMarois for the presentation on Master Plan on Aging, and all Council members for continued partnership and engagement.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.