

**SUMMARY FOR THE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE  
CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS**

**February 5, 2024**

**Via videoconference and telephone**

**I. Call to Order, Tribal Land Acknowledgment, and Roll Call**

Cody Zeger, Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy, called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

*Advisory Committee Members Present:*

- **Ludmilla Bade**, Homelessness Advocate
- **Al Ballesteros**, Chief Executive Officer, JWCH Institute
- **Doug Bond**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Amity Foundation
- **Carolyn Coleman**, Executive Director, League of California Cities
- **Charlene Dimas-Peinado**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Wellnest Emotional Health & Wellness
- **Vitka Eisen**, President & Chief Executive Officer, HealthRIGHT 360
- **Dora Gallo**, President & Chief Executive Officer, A Community of Friends
- **Jennifer Hark Dietz**, Chief Executive Officer, PATH
- **Charles Helget**, Executive Director, California Association of Veteran Service Agencies
- **Janet Kelly**, Founder & Executive Director, Sanctuary of Hope
- **Jody Ketcheside**, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Turning Point of Central CA
- **Margot Kushel**, Director, UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative
- **Chris Martin**, Policy Director, Housing California
- **Moriah McGill**, Housing Development Construction Manager, Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority
- **Luana Murphy**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Exodus Recovery
- **Alisa Orduña**, Founder & Executive Director, Florence Aliese Advancement Network
- **Sharon Rapport**, Director of California State Policy, Corporation for Supportive Housing
- **Janey Rountree**, Executive Director, California Policy Lab at UCLA
- **Sean Spear**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Community HousingWorks
- **Reba Stevens**, Homelessness Advocate
- **Jevon Wilkes**, Executive Director, California Coalition for Youth
- **Roxanne Wilson**, Homeless Services Director, County of Monterey

*Advisory Committee Members Arrived later in the meeting, not present at initial Roll Call:*

- **Samantha Batko**, Principal Research Associate, Urban Institute
- **Joe Colletti**, Chief Executive Officer, Hub for Urban Initiatives
- **Emilio Salas**, Executive Director, Los Angeles County Development Authority
- **Doug Shoemaker**, President, Mercy Housing

*Advisory Committee Members Not Present:*

- **Eric Harris**, Director of Public Policy, Disability Rights California
- **Philip Mangano**, President & Chief Executive Officer, American Round Table to Abolish Homelessness

- **Miguel Santana**, Chief Executive Officer, Weingart Foundation
- **Megan Van Sant**, Senior Program Manager, County of Mendocino
- **Alex Visotzky**, Senior California Policy Fellow, National Alliance to End Homelessness

## II. Consent Calendar

There was one item on the Consent Calendar: *Adoption of the [Meeting Summary from the November 6, 2023 Council Meeting](#)*

- No Committee Members made comments on this item.

*Public Comment:* No comments were made on the item

**Vote:** The Committee voted to approve the Consent Calendar with 17 members voting Yes, 4 members abstaining, and 9 members absent during the vote.

## III. Advisory Committee Facilitation and Connection to Council

The Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy, Cody Zeger, introduced new facilitation partner, Malka Kopell from CSU Sacramento. Malka Kopell encouraged that Advisory Committee members reach out to Cal ICH team to share any thoughts or ideas about future processes.

- No Committee Members made comments on this item.

## IV. Follow-up on Committee Recommendations to Council

Director Cody Zeger summarized the development of the recommendations and a subsequent [memo](#) that will be presented at the next Council meeting for adoption after incorporating feedback from the Advisory Committee.

**Ludmilla Bade:** Asked for clarification regarding the purpose of the action items directed towards the Council member departments in the memo, specifically if these action items differ from strategies in the Cal ICH Action Plan on Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California.

- **Cody Zeger:** Clarified that the actionable items included in the memo are specific to the recommendations made by this Committee and could potentially be included in the Action Plan in the future, however the items in the new Action Plan are not fully developed and this Committee will have the chance to provide additional input when the development happens.

**Moriah Gill:** Requested that the number of Federally recognized Tribes referenced in the memo should be updated to all 110.

## V. Draft Structure and Goals for the New Action Plan

Director Cody Zeger presented an overview of the proposed structure of the new Cal ICH Action Plan on Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California. This includes tools that will be used

to organize the new plan, possible equity frameworks, and proposed high-level goals that will be measured. Cal ICH Director of Research Sydney Bennet presented the directional goals that will be included in the Action Plan and how California System Performance Measures (SPMs) and how the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS) will be used to define and measure each goal.

**Sharon Rapport:** Expressed satisfaction with the presented goals since they are consistent with HUD goals and they reflect what most Continuums of Care are working towards. Sharon suggested that an additional goal be created to explicitly address racial equity (decreasing disproportionate impact on communities of color) and that goals are measured numerically or by a percentage.

**Charlene Dimas-Peinado:** Asked if the Transitional Age Youth (TAY) population will be specifically identified when measuring goals due to the vulnerability and unique needs of the population.

- **Sydney Bennet:** Confirmed that the TAY population is included in the sub-populations that are identified when analyzing HDIS data.

**Jennifer Hark-Dietz:** Echoed Sharon Rapport's advocacy for defining and measuring goals using specific numbers and/or percentages to ensure that the goals are specific and to help local municipalities have a clear expectation. Jennifer added that the fourth goal presented, which mentions permanent housing placements from street outreach programs, can be difficult due to the nature of street outreach contracts and the scope of street outreach teams.

**Margot Kushel:** Stressed the importance of collecting and merging health data in HDIS, especially by leveraging CalAIM. Margot also asked if the term "permanent housing" as defined in the goals will be specified by housing situation (moved in with family, permanent supportive housing program, rental assistance program, etc.) so that risk of re-entry into homelessness can be assessed depending on the situation. Margot stated that it may be a high threshold for street outreach programs to place individuals into permanent housing, considering the last CASPEH study showed that many unsheltered individuals do not even have contact with any service providers due to isolation and short staffing in programs.

- **Sydney Bennet:** Acknowledged that the strategies will only account for individuals that engage with the system of care and clarified that the housing destination is typically self-reported when individuals move into permanent housing unless the individual is moved into another housing program in HMIS.

**Roxanne Wilson:** Advocated for the examination of the aging adult population when determining subpopulations in housing programs. Roxanne also commented on HMIS data quality and how sometimes data can be missed, suggesting that the State could possibly ask HMIS vendors to create a more in-depth assessment, and ultimately volunteered to serve on a working group that focuses on HMIS best practices.

- **Sydney Bennet:** Confirmed that Cal ICH staff is interested in collecting and examining data around subpopulations, such as the aging adult population.

**Samantha Batko:** Contended that a goal regarding homelessness prevention is essential and suggested that reducing entries into homelessness directly reflects the impact of interagency work, even though this can be difficult to measure. Samantha proposed the use of emergency

resources and risk screening to accomplish these suggested goals and stressed the importance of ensuring the participants physical safety in programs (particularly women in emergency shelters).

- **Cody Zeger:** Announced that Cal ICH staff and the Council itself are interested in having conversations regarding homelessness prevention.

**Ludmilla Bade:** Agreed with suggested goals and conversation around them, but emphasized the systemic, legal, and other barriers that prevent a large percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness to move into permanent housing. Ludmilla advocated for increased services around education and strategies to integrate individuals experiencing or with lived experience of homelessness into their communities. Lastly, Ludmilla stated that the system to file grievances is flawed regarding homeless service programs and would like to see work to fix this.

- **Sydney Bennet:** Acknowledged the difficulty in examining data and the story that it tells about people who are not accessing services or transition into permanent housing.

**Chuck Helget:** Asked for clarification regarding the types of services referenced by the goals, specifically if the goals were strictly housing-related or included wrap-around, supported services.

- **Cody Zeger:** Stated that these services referenced include any within the housing response system due to the broad spectrum of services provided by Council member departments.

**Luana Murphy:** Expressed concerns around providing housing first services without additional supportive services and advocated for collecting and analyzing data relating to the reasons that individuals fall out of housing.

**Reba Stevens:** Echoed the need for utilizing data to determine progress towards goals and showing progress in percentages. Reba asked how ground-level implementation, funding sources, workforce services, and education will be used to support efforts towards these goals. Reba urged the consideration of substance abuse disorder in individuals experiencing homelessness and how to address these disorders via harm reduction. Reba urged the consideration of mortality rates around individuals experiencing homelessness as well and the specific populations that experience mortality at a higher rate.

- **Cody Zeger:** Thanked Reba for the stark reminder of the humanity of the people that are affected by this work and how this should be considered even when having conversations around high-level plans.

**Vitka Eisen:** Urged for analyzing data regarding the demographics of people who return to homelessness from housing and the reasons for this. Vitka stated this data is important because it could lead to a solution to be suggested via policy. Vitka also shared thoughts about Proposition 1 and the effects this may have for housing stock and services for people with mental health/substance abuse disorders and urged consideration of the effectiveness of treatments that are used.

## **VI. Housing First Introduction**

Cal ICH Policy Specialist, Giselle Sanchez and Corporation for Supporting Housing Director of California State Policy, Sharon Rapport shared a [presentation about Housing First policy](#). Cody Zeger opened floor for discussion and asked members to consider the role that Cal ICH staff can play to pursue the State's Housing First vision, the opportunities that the Advisory Committee could have to develop or uplift Housing First practices, and any barriers to implementing Housing First that should be addressed.

**Margot Kushel:** Stated that she has witnessed denial of Housing First principals despite evidence that shows the policy works and urged Cal ICH to clearly promote this evidence. Margot contended that push back to Housing First is received because it has not been implemented well and it is Cal ICH's responsibility to see that supportive services are included in Housing First programs, while ensuring that these programs are low barrier, culturally appropriate, and voluntary.

**Vitka Eisen:** Recalled an experience of working at a safe-injection site in San Francisco and stated that individuals used this service frequently to inquire about housing resources. Vitka advocated for policy and services that prioritize the safety needs of individuals experiencing homelessness to prevent death, while also providing a wide variety of programs that align with the unique needs of the people seeking services.

- **Cody Zeger:** Asked the Committee to think about how Cal ICH can uplift best practices and overcome barriers to care with the resources available.

**Reba Stevens:** Shared perspective as a person with lived experience and stated that harm reduction models should aim to address the circumstances in a person's life that led to substance use and addiction, provide a structure of rules/guidelines, and intervene at opportune moments. Reba stated that individuals experiencing addiction may not even be fully aware of what their needs are due to substance use, so services should be tailored to have these conversations.

**Doug Shoemaker:** When having conversations about Housing First and permanent housing programs, include the provision of supportive services to address barriers and gaps in programs and obligations to ensure that program staff are safe from violence. Doug warned against discourse that ask if people are either "for" or "against" Housing First policy, but instead ask what supports are needed for Housing First to be successful. Doug also advocated for a variety of programs that are scaled to the unique needs of all individuals experiencing homelessness.

**Ludmilla Bade:** Stated that individuals experiencing homelessness are not encountering a Housing First model where they are immediately transitioned from homelessness into permanent housing, but instead are put on a program wait-list that is seemingly indefinite and lacks clarity around the expectations of the individual. Ludmilla felt it would be better if programs could provide a warm hand-off to a variety of voluntary options (safe parking lot, drop-in center, etc.) or ideally assigned a social worker that could assist with navigating the system.

## VII. General Public Comment

**Alice Lynn:** Shared their history of lived experience of homelessness and current work with local lived experience and planning boards in Sonoma County. Alice declared support for Housing First policies but expressed concern regarding the messaging and general

understanding around Housing First definitions and programs, citing experience of people thinking that the term advocates strictly for permanent housing and not shelter beds as well.

**Gregory Ferin:** Championed the presentation and conversation around Housing First and asked that the recording of this meeting is posted as soon as possible.

**Ruth:** Stated they are currently unsheltered in Los Angeles and shared experience of friends that were enrolled into a program via Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) and discharged from the program. Ruth shared worries around safety, legality, and grievance policies of this program.

**Teddy Pierce:** Advocated for ways that Cal ICH could help the general public's understanding around Housing First by developing a toolkit or providing learning sessions where members of the public are provided a forum to ask questions and gather information about Housing First.

### **VIII. Final Remarks and Adjournment**

Cody Zeger adjourned the meeting at 3:23pm.