



California Interagency Council on Homelessness

To: Members of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness
From: Meghan Marshall, Executive Officer, Cal ICH
Subject: Summary of Public Input to Inform the New Cal ICH Action Plan
Date: June 12, 2024

Purpose

This memo provides background information regarding public feedback received about the proposed changes to the [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#) (Action Plan). The development of the new Action Plan has been informed by feedback provided by a variety of stakeholders and their feedback is summarized here. It also lists discussion questions planned to be asked of Council members during the Cal ICH meeting on June 12, 2024.

Developing a new Action Plan

The Action Plan was originally adopted by the Council in March 2021 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The original Action Plan and its annual updates have focused primarily on communicating the full range of State activities related to housing and homelessness and organizing those activities into action areas and objectives. In response to Council guidance, the new Plan is intended to serve as a more ambitious and purposeful plan, including new and strengthened strategic activities, for a three-year time frame. Such a Plan requires the setting of bold and ambitious goals the state will strive to achieve and identifying specific, significant activities that Council departments and agencies will implement in pursuit of those goals and to drive collective progress on preventing and ending homelessness for all Californians.

Cal ICH staff, supported by consultant Matthew Doherty, launched processes for developing the new Plan in September 2023. To guide this development, staff have sought input from Tribal Communities, external partners, the Cal ICH Lived Experience Advisory Board, the Cal ICH Advisory Committee, and a number of Council department consumer groups. Additional external input will be collected through July, all of which can be used to inform the Council departments and agencies in determining what strategies and work they will prioritize over the next three years. Cal ICH staff are now working with each member department and agency to begin discussion on activities to be included within the updated Plan.

Next steps for updating the Action Plan include:

- Cal ICH staff will continue to collect public input from Council department and agency staff and consumer groups, individuals with lived experience, and people working within local, regional, and state-wide organizations.
- Council member department and agency staff will create and refine activities to include in the new plan, in partnership with Cal ICH staff, through early September 2024.
- The Council will hold a special meeting on July 2024 focused specifically on identifying strategies and activities for the new Plan.
- Cal ICH staff will refine introductory and framing content within the Action Plan, to be completed by mid-August 2024.
- Council will engage in further discussion and consider recommendation for adoption of the new Action Plan at the December 3, 2024 Council meeting.

Key Elements of Partner Input

To ensure the new Action Plan is developed to support the work of all Council member departments and agencies, Cal ICH staff reached out to Council members for connections to their consumer or advocacy partner groups to present and receive feedback about the Plan. Staff also presented at various conferences relevant to the Council's work. Additionally, staff conducted both formal and informal Tribal consultation with communities across the state to understand current and historic issues and to seek guidance regarding the state's efforts to support Tribal communities to address homelessness.

To date, Cal ICH staff have had 20 listening sessions with approximately 200 participants from the above audiences to get their input for the Action Plan and the State's work to address homelessness. Cal ICH staff have sought ongoing feedback from the Advisory Committee and LEAB regarding the structure, vision, and critical interventions needed to make a difference in the lives of Californians experiencing homelessness. Input received to date has been wide-ranging and diverse, and complements input received through engagement processes for the original Plan and its updates.

The table below summarizes themes and specific ideas that have been generated through all of those input processes, to support Council member departments to consider, assess, and determine if and how to take action on them.

| Themes from Input Provided | Ideas Generated through Input Discussions |
|--|--|
| <p>A consistent focus on addressing racial disparities in homelessness within State programs, including a focus on the specific needs of Tribal communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a Tribal representation on the Council and/or a Tribal working group • Include actionable tools to analyze the effectiveness of equity within programs • Create accountability measures to ensure overrepresented populations in homelessness are prioritized in service provision |
| <p>Urgently increasing permanent housing supply in order to provide pathways out of homelessness.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove barriers to rapidly deploy funding for the development of new housing • Consider funding non-traditional housing options |
| <p>Ongoing, flexible resources to be able to support a range of program models that meet the variety of needs of people experiencing homelessness.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use HHAP as a model for program flexibility • Allocate funding for historically un-funded work, such as HMIS licenses and data entry training • Re-examine the use of PIT data for funding allocations |
| <p>Significant and meaningful inclusion of people with lived experience in State-level decision</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunity to inform the utilization of Prop 1 funding • Require and/or incentivize inclusion of people with lived experience in program design within funding applications • Incorporate feedback opportunities while people are in programs. Including measures of success that assess a persons' overall well-being |
| <p>Streamlining requirements and processes to help address the administrative challenges communities are facing.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep funding applications and reports consistent across multiple years (e.g. HHAP) • Discourage use of HUD-ESG reporting requirements as best practice, considering the complexity and difficulty for providers to obtain payment through this program • Establish a uniform HMIS/data system or baseline system requirements across all counties • Strengthen reporting of employment services provided to, and employment outcomes achieved by, people experiencing homelessness and people participating within housing and services programs. |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Investing in the skills, wages, and capacity of the workforce within homelessness response and housing programs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require harm reduction and trauma-informed care training for all staff and measure utilization of these practices • Create more opportunities for peer support positions within programs • Create a workforce pipeline with education systems |
| <p>Guidance and support to align housing strategies with health and behavioral health strategies to reach vulnerable populations and increase impact.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate social support groups within programs to bolster social connections and healthy relationships • Increase communication between health, behavioral health, and social service programs to decrease barriers to access • Expansion of the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program within homeless services programs |
| <p>Preventing homelessness among people re-entering communities from hospitals, jails, prisons, and other institutional settings.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent people exiting state-systems into homelessness • Work with housing insecure students to connect to housing before graduation • Provide targeted funding for specific subpopulations that experience homelessness at disproportional rates (e.g. people exiting incarceration, child welfare, health care, etc.) • Ensure service and health care access of the above populations |
| <p>Interest in the state engaging in expanded communications and educational efforts to help support effective solutions in local communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate causes of homelessness and responsibility for preventing homelessness clearly and accurately ("People don't blame firefighters for the fires they put out.") • Create a group to coordinate all State housing and homelessness communications • Debunk myths surrounding homelessness and combat NIMBY-ism • Encourage legislators and the administration to engage with the communities they serve to understand what the needs are, what resources are available, and what interventions are effective |

Cal ICH also held three Tribal listening sessions and provided a survey through which a variety of Tribal Communities and partners could submit feedback. Through this

feedback it became clear that Tribal Communities throughout California face a unique set of challenges, specific to each Tribe and community, in addition to the barriers in common with other communities. Regarding Tribal Communities in particular, feedback revealed that historical state-tribal relationships, including a history of harmful policies and programs for Tribal Communities in California, require additional efforts to rebuild relationships, better understand, and partner with Tribal Communities in their efforts to address homelessness. A summary of this feedback is included in a separate memo prepared for the Council titled "Summary of Tribal Input to Inform the New Cal ICH Action Plan".

Council Meeting Discussion and Next Steps

Cal ICH staff will present this input to the Council at its meeting on June 12, 2024. During this discussion, Council members will be asked to reflect on the following questions:

- How does this feedback align with other feedback you have received about your department or agencies' work on homelessness and Tribal engagement?
- How can the Council, collectively and individually as departments and agencies, ensure that feedback is considered carefully in the shaping of activities for the new and bold Action Plan?

The Council's discussion will focus on identifying ways departments and agencies can incorporate this feedback in the work they commit to through the Action Plan, in order to make the plan as bold and effective as possible.

After the meeting, Cal ICH staff will send out a version of this input summary to all Council members and staff for their use in developing activities for the new Action Plan. Staff will also identify possible ways to address this feedback through the Action Plan and share with Council members. This summary will also be provided at future discussions with Council departments and agencies to ensure feedback is on hand as decisions about the Action Plan are being made.