

# SUMMARY FOR THE CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS QUARTERLY COUNCIL MEETING

**June 12, 2024**  
**1:00pm – 4:00pm**

## **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order on June 12, 2024, at 1:09 PM

*Council Members Present:*

- **Tomiquia Moss**, Council Co-Chair and 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)
- **Stephanie Clendenin**, Director of the California Department of State Hospitals (DSH)
- **Susan DeMarois**, Director of the California Department of Aging (CDA)
- **Hanna Azemati**, designee for Kim Johnson, Director of the California Department of Social Services (DSS)
- **Tiena Johnson Hall**, Executive Director of the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA)
- **Margot Kushel**, Director, UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative
- **Veronica Lewis**, Director of Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS)
- **Jeff Macomber**, Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
- **William McGee**, Director of the Student Achievement Support Division, California Department of Education (CDE)
- **Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy**, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Support, CA Community Colleges
- **Alisa Becerra**, designee for Tony Tavares, Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- **Lindsey Sin**, Secretary of the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet)
- **Zachary Olmstead**, designee for Gustavo F. Velasquez, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- **Gina Buccieri-Harrington**, designee for Nancy Ward, Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
- **Ricki Hammett**, designee for Marina Wiant, Executive Director of the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC)
- **Joe Xavier**, Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

## **II. Consent Calendar**

There were two items on the Consent Calendar:

- Adoption of the Meeting Summary from the March 27, 2024 Council Meeting.

No Council Members made comments on this item. There were no public comments. The Council voted to approve the consent calendar.

### **III. Council Co-Chair Opening Remarks**

Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss began by welcoming new Council member, Margot Kushel, Director of the UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative. Moss expressed excitement about the creation of a new three-year Action Plan on homelessness as an all-government approach to address the crisis in California that prioritizes human-centered design. Moss acknowledged commitment to serving the public as best as possible, which is the vision and mission of Cal ICH. She highlighted that access to housing is unequal and certain communities are disproportionately affected. The housing affordability challenge is one of California's biggest issues and timing to address it is urgent.

Co-Chair Secretary Mark Ghaly underscored the importance of discussions around the Action Plan and the capacity to deepen our ability to be active by bringing resources and vision to create action on homelessness in California. Ghaly addressed the need for a statewide lens to coordinate with the lens of geographic diversity. The role and the relevancy of the Council increases during difficult times which include budget challenges. Ghaly discussed work beginning on Proposition 1 in collaboration with other departments and the reformation of the Behavioral Services Act. Ghaly encouraged the Council to tap into the expertise of the Lived Experience Advisory Board during and beyond this meeting.

### **IV. Executive Officer Updates**

Cal ICH Executive Officer, Meghan Marshall discussed the recent audit of the State's homelessness funding and of the State's efforts to monitor its effectiveness. The report focused primarily on Cal ICH programs, including those that are still in-progress. The California State Auditor issued four recommendations for Cal ICH to consider: 1) Mandate reporting of the costs and outcomes of State homelessness programs; 2) Ensure that Cal ICH's 2024 Action Plan align with statutory goals; 3) Promote transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making toward the State's efforts to address homelessness by requiring all State agencies responsible for administering state funding to report outcomes and fiscal data; and 4) Work with CoCs to ensure consistent, accurate and comparable data for all State homelessness programs.

Cal ICH generally concurs with the auditors' recommendations, but some may require additional funding, resources, or legislative action to achieve. AB 977 satisfies some of these recommendations but does not yet collect fiscal information for which additional resources would be needed to fully actualize.

In addition, Cal ICH's Grants department is transitioning to Housing and Community Development and were acknowledged for their contributions to the work.

### **V. Cal ICH Mission, Vision, and Values**

Executive Officer Meghan Marshall provided a history of Cal ICH as well as an updated mission, vision, and values, which can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials. Two discussion questions were offered to the group: 1. How can Cal ICH support your agency or department's

mission? 2. Are there new services/initiatives your agency or department is planning to roll out that intersect with Cal ICH's work?

**First Discussion Question:**

**William McGee:** Asked about Cal ICH providing technical assistance on Housing First.

- **Meghan Marshall:** We'll be hosting communities of practice so those responsible for programs and are required to implement Housing First can hear directly from Cal ICH.

**Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy:** The Community colleges have a very small program, which is unique due to the academic setting. Challenges exist in Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Housing First, such as how does this play out in a time-limited setting? Meaningful partnership at the local level depends on the specific individuals, so how do we systemize that? An MOU or Toolkit would be very helpful for colleges. Learning more about the RRH program, which is still a pilot. We see some rural colleges have no partnerships in their proximity.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Counties must make themselves available to the entities in their area that are served or overseen by the members of this Council. There are opportunities to do that with available funding that is flexible, such as HHAP, Family Homeless Challenge and ERF. Legislation changed for college students to be eligible for CalWORKs. Making connections between agencies and departments and our local communities is critical.

**William McGee:** We have children and their families experiencing homelessness in the communities we serve. Will there be any data to include from our county offices on education? We support the technical advisory centers, which support the county offices and school districts. If we can get agencies to visit school districts with pilot programs, that could be replicated. For example, our staff visited a school in San Francisco where they have a stay-over program allowing families to sleep at the school site on evenings and weekends.

**Veronica Lewis:** One of the big gaps across the state is inconsistent administration of the McKinney-Vento Act, the rights and resources students are supposed to have. Our state should support local districts because homelessness is interrupting students' education. More broadly, when we get to measurable, actionable goals in the Action Plan, and identifying which departments are working on which goals.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Our division of Local Initiatives can work in partnership with CDE to find where liaisons and resource centers are and whether they're connected to CoCs and homeless service systems. If a particular county or CoC isn't making themselves available, Cal ICH has a role to make sure they do make those connections.

**Tomiquia Moss:** In uplifting technical assistance, our local partners want guidance from the state. It can assist them to move forward with homeless strategies where they may be getting local pushback. We want to think about braiding resources across Council Member departments and agencies because no one funding source or one program is going to solve the problem. In a down budget year, the efficiency and effectiveness of how we're organized is that much more important so we can hit the ground running when we do have resources.

**Dr. Mark Ghaly:** These are conversations we're starting to have with Oakland and Alameda. We can join conversations on sources of funding and reporting requirements. The vision doesn't always translate to the county or the city without additional technical assistance to ensure the vision and implementation. We should galvanize with technical assistance.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Issues are unique in Oakland and Alameda, the issue isn't related to state policy, but that does come up across the state, particularly in provider deserts. For example, the Inland Empire. Big cities and counties often have misunderstandings on role clarity. Codes often outlast local elected officials or appointed staff who may not always be familiar with what exists in the greater continuum.

**Zach Olmstead (HCD designee):** We need to hear from communities where they experience a duplication of reporting or other burdens that we as the state can ease. For technical assistance, CoCs have problems with Coordinated Entry Systems and inconsistency in application, getting the right person to the right intervention. This is an opportunity for state-wide technical assistance and guidance.

- **Meghan Marshall:** We're looking at communities of practice who are lifting up successes. One example is in behavioral health systems.

**Hanna Azemati (CDSS designee):** One suggestion is to work on strategic communications on what success looks like. Success stories about programs and services and community to facilitate replication, give credit, and so we aren't reinventing the wheel. We should look where communities have mastered and done good work.

**Second Discussion Question:**

**Councilmember DeMarois:** We have a save the date, on October 8th at the convention center, for the Master Plan on Aging Day of Action to prevent and end older adult homelessness to build out long-term support services. The Council will be invited and asked to support with coordination and facilitation. CDA is also starting our own LEAB and has been coordinating with Cal ICH.

- **Meghan Marshall:** I'd like to also recognize CDPH's LEAB. All departments need access to a lived experience advisory board, creating connections between them. Tribal liaisons are another example, which CDA has also implemented. We can lift that work up to the Council between Tribal Liaisons so we can coordinate rather than duplicate efforts.

**Zach Olmstead (HCD designee):** Let's acknowledge Proposition 1 implementation. We'll be looking for guidance from the Council on Tribal HHAP as well.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Our Tribal Liaison's position was originally to oversee Tribal HHAP and we've done a number of listening sessions across the state and identified best practices, which we will share later in the agenda.

**Veronica Lewis:** Over the last four years there has been deep investment in encampment related efforts, including ERF. There are opportunities for us to implement different strategies across the state due to flexible funding with ERF that we haven't seen before. I hope to see connections to behavioral health, but there is an opportunity to look at all strategies across the state to see what is working well. Prop 1 touches so many departments that are represented on the Council.

- **Meghan Marshall:** ERF is transitioning to HCD; however, Cal ICH will continue to support with data. Projects still need to report into HMIS, which is then rolled up to HDIS. HHAP is the state's most flexible investment in housing and homelessness that allows local jurisdictions decide what they need. With ERF, cities of any size can apply so we've seen incredibly small cities apply and be awarded. But these cities had no services outside of ERF to address further needs. We're looking forward to lifting up best practices alongside HCD. Encampment coordinators need to be added to the continuity of services that exist.

**Margot Kushel:** Can Cal ICH make recommendations of new areas of investment or coordination? Hearing about issues related to Community College, one of the biggest implementation challenges of Housing First is the workforce. There's the issue of the technical assistance to braid the funding streams to pay for it. Are we providing the right training, developing the workforce, and are there organizations that might not think of that about their intersection with homelessness?

- **Meghan Marshall:** Cal ICH has historically asked questions rather than make recommendations to help identify what could be done. We'll hear from the Lived Experience Advisory Board, the Advisory Committee to help explore these questions. Our recommendations ultimately reflect the needs. We should begin every meeting not just with Executive Officer updates, but also any nexus we see in the Department Updates.

**Rebecca Ruan-O'Shaughnessy:** We all agree on the vision and mission, but we can get more granular and aligned with our goals, like working on workforce issues for 2025. The Council should take the burden to help make those connections.

**Alisa Becerra (Caltrans designee):** There's not a whole lot that we can offer as a transportation department. We need to know what's out there to try to leverage assistance to offer to people experiencing homelessness on the state right of way. It's time to get creative.

**Veronica Lewis:** I'm encouraged by this conversation and the opportunity to strengthen existing and new relationships. Given the work of the Council, the Action Plan should lay out a clear picture of efforts made by the state government. This will help us identify connection points, streamline where possible and identify redundancy.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Our target audience for the state Action Plan is state departments. We have two Council members that are appointed and don't run state programs but are well-informed of resources available and new innovations.

## VI. Lived Experience Advisory Board

Cal ICH Director of Local Initiatives, Courtney Tracker provided an overview and purpose of the four priorities of the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB). LEAB members introduced themselves and provided information and experience regarding the importance of each priority area.

Cal ICH LEAB Liaison, Lisa Avron introduced the first LEAB Priority Area: Work to end criminalization of people experiencing homelessness.

**Caressa Smith:** Individuals experiencing homelessness frequently face repeated relocations from encampments, which can be incredibly traumatic. This constant disruption imposes challenges, including the loss of important documentation, medications, and contact with case managers. The criminalization of homelessness often results in missed court dates and warrants. Creating safe encampments with access to sanitation and housing navigation services is necessary to address these concerns.

**Marjorie Beazer:** Criminalizing behaviors associated with homelessness, like sleeping in public spaces, unfairly punishes individuals for basic human needs and conditions beyond their control. These behaviors often stem from issues like financial instability or mental health challenges, and

criminalization only exacerbates the problem. It is crucial to tackle the root causes of homelessness, such as high rent and inadequate wages, and promoting sustainable solutions. It's crucial to preserve humanity and understand the complexities of homelessness.

Lisa Avron introduced the second LEAB Priority Area: Promote a focus on prevention.

**Audrey Pearson:** California continues to face a severe homelessness crisis, with an estimated 171,521 individuals homeless in 2024, significantly more than other states. There is a need for a shift towards prevention, as it is crucial for reducing long-term economic and social costs and breaking the cycle of homelessness. Policies that require individuals to become homeless before receiving help are counterproductive and increase costs and community instability. The projected rise in older adults experiencing homelessness highlights this urgency. Pilot programs like the Homeless Prevention Unit (HPU) in LA County, which has successfully helped retain permanent housing for those at risk, can address this concern.

Lisa Avron introduced the third LEAB Priority Area: Advocate for more affordable, supportive, and sustainable permanent housing.

**Monique Guerra:** It is critically important to provide safe, affordable, and supportive housing, especially for vulnerable populations. Drawing from personal experience of homelessness during college and with family, it is apparent how essential stable housing is for rebuilding lives. Increasing affordable housing options, ensuring low-barrier access to transition from short-term to long-term housing, and securing more funding for new permanent housing is necessary. Secure housing is foundational for pursuing education, employment, and health. My experiences as a homeless youth coordinator and observations in Riverside County, where rising rents and limited supply exacerbate instability, demonstrate the transformative impact of stable housing.

**Annalee Trujillo:** With 120 tribes on a waiting list, there's a pressing need for better access to housing programs and resources on reservations. While non-profits can apply for state funding, tribal nations often struggle to secure affordable and sustainable housing due to limited access to these funds. There is a need for prevention services, wrap-around support, and facilities for substance abuse and mental health issues. Tribes are often excluded from state programs and funding, which affects their ability to provide safe and affordable housing. There's a critical need for direct support to address these gaps and ensure the safety and well-being of tribal members, including addressing issues like missing and murdered Indigenous people.

Lisa Avron introduced the fourth LEAB Priority Area: Center lived experience/expertise in decision making.

**Melanie Beazer:** Engaging people with lived experience in developing solutions gives us valuable real-time insights and feedback that data alone might miss. People experiencing homelessness need to stay vigilant to avoid sexual violence and addiction is often misunderstood as just a choice rather than a survival mechanism. Personal stories can create strong connections with professionals who have had similar experiences. These connections help build trust and lead to meaningful conversations and effective solutions.

A discussion question was posed to Council Members: Where does the Council see opportunities to work with the LEAB on these priorities?

**Tomiquia Moss:** There is a need to address the challenges outlined in the priority areas and to develop policies that address them. Incorporating successful community and agency models into the Action Plan and real-time progress reports.

- **Meghan Marshall:** In addition to the Cal ICH Action Plan, many agencies represented here have their own plans that could benefit from including perspectives from people with lived experience. Agencies without individual lived experience advisory boards are encouraged to use the insights from Cal ICH LEAB members, who bring a wide range of experiences and departmental perspectives. These insights should inform our action plans and strategic actions.

**Veronica Lewis:** While there are various models for LEABs, the real challenge is meaningfully incorporating their input. This requires significant transformation and a commitment to moving beyond tokenism. By prioritizing authentic engagement, we can ensure LEAB members' perspectives influence core decisions and drive meaningful change.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Cal ICH intends to be clear in demonstrating the ways that LEAB feedback is incorporated into plans and policy in a meaningful and actionable way.

**Mark Ghaly:** Input from the LEAB members should be embedded in the fabric of the Action Plan by highlighting the priorities presented. The Council should continue to consult the LEAB on metrics of progress and success to ensure an iterative exchange. Lived experience should not just inform policy but drive it.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Based on these comments, it sounds like the Council wants to take action on these LEAB priority areas. The Council should explore ways to uplift these priorities within their purview.

**Lindsay Sin:** All of the Action Plan goals should center around the four priorities proposed by the LEAB. Instead of focusing on creating intersectionality within our agencies, we should embed the LEAB's suggestions directly into our action plans. This approach would ensure a lived experience model, making LEAB's priorities the foundation of our planning efforts and reflecting our commitment as Council Members and agency leaders.

- **Meghan Marshall:** Based on this feedback so far, these recommendations will be included on the agenda for the next Council Meeting for consideration.

The second discussion question was posed to LEAB members: Where does the LEAB see opportunity to work with the council on these priorities?

**Annalee Trujillo:** Based on personal experience, it seems voices from Tribes have never been truly heard and needs have never been prioritized. It is crucial to have tribal representation at every meeting related to housing or tribal matters because no one can speak for us except us. Researching and understanding Tribal history will provide a clear understanding on the importance and urgent need of resources that are available to other populations but not to our tribal members.

**Marjorie Beazer:** People with lived experience need to be involved from the beginning, shaping and framing the conversation with an intersectional and multidisciplinary approach. Additionally, the LEAB can act as a valuable partner by providing feedback on how programs are implemented and where there is a need to move policy.

**Audrey Pearson:** By working together, being involved in prevention services, and actively participating in discussions, the LEAB can collaborate with the Council to break the cycle of homelessness.

**Caressa Smith:** Housing needs and challenges can be quite different from those in urban areas. Lake County was recently unable to utilize the full issuance of emergency housing vouchers from HUD since the type of housing typically available (modular homes and trailers) does not meet the required program standards. Experiences like this cause participants to grow distrustful of government programs and initiatives. Supportive services must be tailored to the actual needs of people rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

**Lisa Avron:** CAL ICH is officially launching the Cal ICH LEAB request process. Later this month, Council members will receive formal communication with resources and materials for submitting your requests to the LEAB for feedback. The LEAB has the discretion to accept or decline requests and will review them as they come in.

## **VII. Action Plan Public and Tribal Input**

Policy Director Cody Zeger transitioned discussion to the State Action Plan to prevent and end homelessness. Zeger presented feedback on the Action Plan from Council member partners including the Advisory Committee, LEAB meetings, working groups, conferences, and member departments that have occurred during over 20 listening sessions across the state. Highlights include focusing on racial disparities in homelessness, including the specific needs of tribal communities; increasing the supply of permanent housing; ongoing, flexible resources; inclusion of people with lived experience; and streamlining requirements and processes.

Executive Officer Meghan Marshall noted Governor Newsom's Executive Order recognizing the state sanctioning of prejudiced policy regarding Native Americans and request for meaningful Tribal inclusion in programs and policies that impact Native Americans.

Cal ICH's Tribal Liaison, Vevila Blossoming Bear, presented a summary of input from Tribal consultation on the Action Plan. Feedback was gathered during three regional listening sessions across California and by survey.

**Hanna Azemati:** CDSS has been on a journey to expand the way we can serve Tribal communities. CDSS has four housing programs for which Tribal entities are eligible and has expanded from three Tribal entities participating to 65 Tribal entities participating over the course of the year. CDD has engaged in intensive consultation with Tribes to ensure funding accessibility and make sure the development of critical technical assistance. CDSS is supporting Tribal success as programs are established, ensuring sustainability to reach highest need members and CDSS is learning along the way.

- **Meghan Marshall:** CDSS was championed among Tribal entities as a good standard for contract language. Tribal entities should be able to contract with the State, and not just individual departments.



**Michelle Baass:** One point was made about evidence-based practices and how that sometimes doesn't meet the needs of Tribal entities. DHCS incorporates "community-defined practices" to be inclusive of community needs while designing grants and programs.

**William McGee:** CDE has visited the Pala Band of Mission Indians twice. It would be helpful when Cal ICH is going on these listening sessions to let Council members know so we can reduce duplicative efforts. CDE sent information on the statewide homeless conference to Tribal entities and are embarking on listening sessions primarily focused on education, but now homelessness will likely also be discussed.

- **Meghan Marshall:** The Cal ICH Legislative Affairs division is currently working on incorporating the Secretary of Tribal Affairs into the Council in the next fiscal year.

### **VIII. General Public Comment**

**MaryAnne,** representing lived experience advisors in San Diego: San Diego is doing an outstanding job working with City Council and County, pushing for a budget to implement services for ending homelessness. Affordable housing is the goal. There is a plan for a thousand bed shelter that we are fighting to get erased because affordable housing is the number one issue that needs to be addressed.

**Kim Lewis,** California Coalition for Youth: Challenges regarding the McKinney-Vento definition is an issue at the federal level. How we define homelessness is particularly impactful for young people. CDE released some data regarding their unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, which included 8,500 youth identified through the school system, however HUD's point-in-time count only identified 654 minors experiencing homelessness due to HUD's limited definitions of youth. If the McKinney-Vento definition is not utilized, many young people experiencing homelessness will be overlooked.

**Iliana Chevez,** Director of Tribal Programs at California Coalition for Rural Housing (CCRH): CCRH is a Technical Assistance provider for Tribal HHAP who has partnered with Pala Band of Indians, Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority, as well as countless other Tribes over the years. Tribes have only had access to housing funding since 2019. There is an assumption that Tribes should expedite solving their own housing crisis and are given little funding, short timelines, and inadequate consultation. Harm is being done through program implementation with State guidelines that include unconscious bias.

**Marty Omoto:** The presentation from the Lived Experience Advisory Board was enjoyable. The Department of Developmental Services should be on the Council.

**Ludmilla Bade:** Despite budget challenges, this work and collaboration must persist. Providing a place where people experiencing homelessness can provide input is a low-cost but effective solution. There's no safe place to share data or experiences without the possibility of being targeted by a provider. If 211 could help people find resources and let people know they are welcome here, that could be a big help.

**Annalee Trujillo:** These best practices need to be passed along to HCD. Tribes should not have to waive sovereign immunity. It's important to understand the history of these Tribes. Lack of data

is a major issue. Tribes are not only a housing resource center, but also social services. Tribes may not be considered developers, but they are doing that work. These barriers prevent Tribes from applying for programs.

**Janelle Egger:** I sent an email to be forwarded to the LEAB regarding criminalization and lack of housing. I have lived experience and a background on tenants' rights and human rights. During the Occupy movement, we stayed to support the homeless residents that were staying there. We can do campgrounds with tenancy, which abides by Housing First and best practices. As a tenant advocate, tenants' rights are important. We can do better than encampments.

**Jevon Wilkes:** We need a spotlight on youth under the age of 18. To prevent adult chronic homelessness, we need to end youth homelessness. The numbers of young people identified having an experience of homelessness is continuing to rise.

## **IX. Final Remarks and Adjournment**

Meghan Marshall expressed gratitude to the Council for their discussion, underscored the desire for urgency around addressing homelessness, and noted that the Council's actionable work continues to move forward due to the thoughtful contributions made by its members. The next Council meeting will be September 5, 2024 at 1pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.