

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

March 12, 2025

1:00pm – 4:00pm

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

Cal ICH Executive Officer, Meghan Marshall, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Council Members Present:

- **Tomiquia Moss (Co-Chair)** – Secretary, Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
- **Kim Johnson (Co-Chair)** – Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency
- **Emily Pereira, designee for Erica Pan** – State Public Health Officer and Director, Department of Public Health
- **Michelle Baass** – State Medicaid Director and Chief Deputy Director of Health Care Programs, Department of Health Care Services
- **Susan DeMarois** – Director, Department of Aging
- **Stephanie Clendenin** – Director, Department of State Hospitals
- **Margot Kushel** – Director, Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative
- **Veronica Lewis** – Director, Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS)
- **Jeffrey Macomber** – Secretary, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation California Department of Education
- **Kim Rutledge** – Director, Department of Rehabilitation
- **Sandee Nieves designee for Kaina Pereira** – Executive Director, Workforce Development Board
- **Lindsey Sin** – Secretary, Department Veterans Affairs
- **Christina Snider-Ashtari** – Secretary, Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs
- **Tony Tavares** – Director, Department of Transportation
- **Rowena Tomaneng** – Deputy Chancellor for the California Community Colleges
- **Marta Galan, designee for Jennifer Troia** – Secretary, California Department Social Services
- **Gustavo Velasquez** – Director, Department of Housing and Community Development
- **Gina Buccieri-Harrington, designee for Nancy Ward** – Director, Governor's Office of Emergency Services
- **Anthony Zeto, designee for Marina Wiant** – Executive Director, Tax Credit Allocation Committee

II. Consent Calendar

There was one item on the Consent Calendar: Adoption of the [Meeting Summary from the December 3, 2024 Council Meeting](#).

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

Vote: The Council voted to approve the Consent Calendar with 11 members voting yes and two members abstaining.

III. Council Co-Chair Opening Remarks

Co-Chair Secretary Kim Johnson: Acknowledged impact of the Southern California wildfires and what can be done for response and recovery to engage with community partners and administer funding and services. Efforts around affordable housing are even more meaningful and necessary as a result. Over 16,000 structures were destroyed including 11,500 residential settings. Millions of dollars of rental and housing assistance has been dispersed, as well as removing regulatory barriers to accelerate housing. The Action Plan is now even more relevant as our three-year road map in preventing and addressing homelessness and as an opportunity for accountability regarding behavioral health and housing. Also acknowledged Council member Margot Kushel and her recently released behavioral health and homelessness report.

Across Health and Human Services (HHS), Secretary Johnson appreciated the efforts of Director Baas and efforts on Transitional Rent program for managed care plans. Voters passed Proposition 1 to increase behavioral health services and housing interventions; she appreciated peoples input in the process as it will support implementation of \$1B in housing services annually for those with behavioral health needs. Highlighted support for transitional rent and Behavioral Health Services Act in federal funds and flex pools specifically. Technical Assistance sources can be found online.

Additional efforts across agencies can be found in the departmental updates as a part of the meeting materials posted.

IV. Executive Officer Updates

Cal ICH Executive Officer, Meghan Marshall: Introduced new Council members: Kim Rutledge, Director of the Department of Rehabilitation; Rowena Tomaneng, Deputy Chancellor for the California Community Colleges; and Christina Snider-Ashtari, Secretary, Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs. Acknowledged the devastation of the Los Angeles wildfires and noted that in the December Council meeting, Cal ICH's Director of Policy and Innovation, Courtney Tacker, introduced the Homeless Emergency Active Readiness Toolkit (HEART) for emergency preparedness. This included surveys from Counties that described the lack of inclusion of people experiencing pre-disaster homelessness in local plans, as well as discrimination particularly in shelters operated by the American Red Cross. Marshall participated in the state's pre-disaster workgroup to ensure that people experiencing pre-disaster homelessness received the same opportunities as those who were displaced due to natural disasters (STEP-UP). This workgroup helped house 86 people experiencing pre-disaster homelessness. Acknowledged multiple staff

and entities including leadership by Emilie Hill, HCD's Task force who coordinated city, county, and state staff during these emergencies; Nathaniel VerGow, LAHSA's Deputy Chief of Programs, Los Angeles' Continuum of Care in LA; Kelsey Madigan overseeing a dedicated team of case managers; and other staff at shelters every day assisting those who were pre-disaster unhoused, many of whom were also impacted by the fires. Los Angeles members of the Red Cross will also be joining Cal ICH's disaster preparedness work group.

V. AB 977 Updates

Cal ICH Director of Research, Sydney Bennet, presented updates on the implementation of Assembly Bill 977 and provided an overview of the technical assistance available for administering state departments and their grantees. AB 977 requires grantees of specified state-funded homelessness programs to enter specific data elements into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which then get reported into the state's Homeless Data Information System (HDIS) at Cal ICH. Additional detail can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) slides.

Questions & Discussion

Veronica Lewis: Asked about showing outcomes for people that have touched multiple programs/across departments to be able to coordinate data across programs.

Sydney Bennet: Each department has access to only their data. Cal ICH has data from all programs so we can look across programs, but other departments can't see each other's data. We're still working on developing standard outcomes across departments. Outcomes can look very different depending on the type of service. Cal ICH is responsible for looking at outcome data across all programs as part of AB 799. The biggest different is the types of service being provided i.e. housing versus street outreach.

Veronica Lewis: Expressed curiosity to Council members regarding additional Technical Assistance available to departments. Data outcome requirements are already tied to your contracts, but now this is providing an opportunity to better understand outcomes. Have there been shifts in setting expectations or updating guidelines to track things now in a way you weren't able to before?

CDSS designee, Marta Galan: This is something that we're working towards because we have more consolidated data than ever. We're using data-driven approaches to update CQI (continuous quality improvement). We're using this data to connect to Health and Human Services data, improve Technical Assistance, identify gaps in permanent housing outcomes and understand why there are gaps so we can utilize evidenced based practices. Requirements have not shifted yet.

Gustavo Velasquez: The short answer is yes. We're deep in budget hearing season, so we're getting a lot of questions about homeless funding and outcomes. Accountability goes both ways, so let's think about it starting with the State. These types of initiatives that we're providing, adequate Technical Assistance for grantees, to understand importance of data integrity. We then also need to shift accountability to our grantees to understand funding and outcomes and the ability to enter HMIS information and how that becomes integrated into HDIS. One way is through HHAP – the most robust funding sources for localities available. HHAP Round 6 requires data integrity to even begin receiving funding from grantees. Accountability is a two-way responsibility.

Kim Johnson: Uplifted the totality of interventions and resources individuals are receiving in terms of positive outcomes and greater stability. This is helpful context to understand program design and intervention. How can we prepare programs who are working with people with high complexity of care, compared to people who may only need rental assistance. Important to consider program design drivers and their origins.

Sydney Bennet: Yes, the dashboards have a ton of demographic fields so Cal ICH and departments can see if different populations are having different outcomes or service needs. There are many ways to dive deeper into the data. This will continue to improve as additional data is reported into HDIS over time.

Margot Kushel: We have to keep an eye on how we are looking at each person. Once we merge the data, we can have a fuller picture to look at who we are serving, who we are not, and what we can do to better serve the people falling through the cracks.

Tomiquia Moss: I think we should provide some access to these dashboards to the Council on a regular basis, possibly quarterly. There is a dashboard on the website, but it can be challenging to go seek out this information since we are constantly asked by legislature and/or administration, so it might help to have a regular cadence of updates.

Sydney Bennet: Agreed to consider providing certain data points as a part of the Council meeting materials.

Meghan Marshall: Celebrated Sydney's accomplishment in developing HDIS, a database that is the first of its kind in the nation. HDIS represents a high level of technical skill, expertise, and knowledge requiring innovation and leadership, supported by guidance from Abigail Aquino on technical aspects of the project. This skill is matched by passion and dedication to service.

Marta Galan: Stated being impressed by the efficiency of the implementation of AB 977 and technical assistance, expressing gratitude for the effort. The thought of implementing it with CDSS programs was intimidating but went seamlessly. Integrating so many new reporting requirements is difficult. What were the lessons learned while integrating all these projects, that made it go so well? It's tough to immediately comply, but what are any tips and tricks?

Sydney Bennet: I started at Cal ICH when AB 977 was implemented, so my first tasks were creating the project's structure. One benefit and challenge is building off the foundation of federal guidelines. However, local programs have long entered data into HMIS and have been great partners to Cal ICH. It was difficult to not be able to add or change any data fields, so we had to look at how we can use HUD data fields in a way to works for state funded programs. It means we must sometimes go to grantees to fix data quality issues, sometimes a typo can prevent all of the data from integrating. We've had to develop codes and use manual text fields to problem solve. But our grantees and localities have been great and flexible to help make this happen.

Meghan Marshall: I was in the County at this point, the benefit is that HDIS can produce reports on the locality or grantees behalf. Those who might not have the technical capacity to do so can now have help to produce records. This is a huge benefit to Counties, Cities, and CoCs.

VI. Housing First Update

Cal ICH Director of Statewide Policy, Cody Zeger, provided a brief overview of Housing First as a principle of the Action Plan. Director Zeger explained that Cal ICH's role is to oversee implementation of Housing First methodology at State level and providing guidance and resources to individuals administering state programs. Cal ICH Statewide Homelessness Policy Specialist, Giselle Sanchez, provided a presentation about the 11 core components of Housing First and ways in which Cal ICH has overseen the implementation of Housing First in state programs, which can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials.

Cal ICH Lived Experience Action Board (LEAB) members shared ways in which they have witnessed Housing First practiced through participation in state programs. LEAB members were asked:

1. Have you participated in Housing First programs? Did key elements of Housing First help you succeed in reaching your goals?
2. How can State programs better support communities to strengthen or expand Housing First?
3. What elements of Housing First would you like Cal ICH to emphasize and provide support on?

Recommendations from LEAB members included providing flexible funding, investing in long-term housing and wraparound services (including mental health and substance use support), strengthening re-entry housing options to address the unique needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, providing employment opportunities, and educating the public about Housing First to counter the narrative that people must prove they deserve housing. To hear the full statements from LEAB members, please see the [meeting recording](#).

Director Cody Zeger thanked LEAB members for sharing their experiences and shifted the discussion to hear feedback from Council members regarding Housing First policy. Council members were asked:

1. What guidance around Housing First would be helpful for your programs or grantees?
2. Where would you like to see Cal ICH play a bigger role in Housing First implementation?

Lindsay Sin: Explained that Cal ICH can play a role in defining Housing First by including supportive services to ensure that state programs are more robust. Secretary Sin cited feedback from partners and stakeholders who have said that programs can adhere to Housing First law without providing key supportive services that are critical for success in re-entry and recovery. Councilmember Sin advocated for Cal ICH to define supportive services needed to make Housing First successful, require the inclusion of these services in state programs, and provide resources and funding to do so.

Meghan Marshall: Shared that Cal ICH can also support through intervention by speaking at council and supervisor meetings, sending letters of support or feedback, making recommendations, or responding to pushback on programs.

Veronica Lewis: Reiterated the sentiment that Housing First is not housing only, but the way that programs have been established does not comply with this philosophy. Councilmember Lewis advocated for programs to foster housing stability by providing at least six months of supportive services, a plan to transition participants to the ability to afford their own rent, a path for these individuals to transition from one subsidy program to another, and to meaningfully integrate

healthcare. Councilmember Lewis stated that Cal ICH should encourage Council member departments to blend and compliment funding to make all programs more effective and promote stability-driven housing coordination for participants.

Margot Kushel: Advocated for the State to fund the needed supportive services through new opportunities provided by Proposition 1 and CalAIM. Cal ICH can play a major role by providing technical assistance and guiding social service providers to implement this funding. Councilmember Kushel also encouraged Cal ICH and state departments to “speak in one voice” about what Housing First is and what it is not. Kushel also encouraged consideration for expanded opportunities to provide technical assistance to ensure that Housing First is implemented correctly and all gaps in services are addressed.

Christina Snider-Ashtari: Emphasized incorporating trauma-informed care and culturally appropriate practices in Housing first programs, highlighting tribal programs in particular to reinforce connections with communities.

Veronica Lewis: Echoed Councilmember Snider-Ashtari’s points, citing disproportionate exit data conveying a need to incorporate appropriate services for marginalized communities. Councilmember Lewis further advocated for the use of HDIS data to show successful outcomes of well-designed programs that utilize Housing First principals and how successes can be used to emphasize the need for continued funding.

Cody Zeger: Summarized recurring themes from Council member feedback, including the need to “speak with one voice” by defining Housing First clearly and consistently, showing fidelity to Housing First by using data to reinforce positive outcomes and implement Housing First successfully, working with tribal communities to ensure Housing First programs are appropriately tailored.

Giselle Sanchez: Reviewed upcoming steps to continue Housing First work, including the availability of written guidance for Housing First principles and expanding direct work with local communities to address challenges and barriers in navigating Housing First implementation.

VII. Advisory Committee Membership

Executive Officer Meghan Marshall explained that the current members of the Cal ICH Advisory Committee will complete their term in June of 2025 and Cal ICH staff is working to quickly recruit new members. Marshall reviewed statute requirements of representatives that must be included in the Advisory Committee and recommendations for other areas of expertise that additional members would satisfy. This information can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials. Council members were asked for their feedback and formal approval of changes for new Advisory Committee member representation.

Veronica Lewis: Recommended incorporating representatives from continuums of care (CoCs) in both northern and southern California and an additional member with experience in the field of re-entry services.

CWDB designee, Sandee Nieves: Advocated for a representative of people with disabilities, considering that the Housing First model can be designed differently for people with disabilities and there are other unique needs of this population that should be considered.

Stephanie Clendenin: Recommended representation for people with serious mental illness experiencing homelessness, acknowledging that some statewide associations could fulfill this role.

Susan DeMarois: Supported the notion that representatives can be an individual or from an organization that serves the area of expertise for which they are recruited. Councilmember DeMarois added that a builder or developer that creates additional housing should be a part of the Advisory Committee.

Gina Buccieri-Harrington: Stated that it would be important to have representation for victims of crime forced into homelessness since CalOES has nine different programs that serve this population.

Meghan Marshall: Confirmed that statute does require the Advisory Committee to include representatives of gender-based violence.

Veronica Lewis: Asked if the Advisory Committee members should serve staggered terms to avoid the departure of the bulk of the members at one time and relieve burden on Cal ICH staff when filling roles.

Meghan Marshall: Expressed that it is a goal of Cal ICH to have retention amongst Advisory Committee members.

Public Comment on Agenda Item

MaryAnne: Asked the Council to consider two additional seats for the Advisory Committee for members who would represent elderly adults with lived experience of homelessness and advocacy groups.

Meghan Marshall: Explained that there is a reference to representation of older adult population in the existing recommendations and that advocacy groups are and will be represented within the Council and Advisory Committee.

Ludmilla Bade: Asked if existing Advisory Committee members would continue to serve if recruitment efforts do not yield full membership by the time existing Advisory Committee members complete their term.

Meghan Marshall: Confirmed that there will be three existing Advisory Committee members that will continue to serve for another term to ensure that there will not be zero members at any time.

Gregory Fearson: Informed the Council that there is a coalition of behavioral health program representatives called the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions who advocates for stronger bridges between behavioral health and substance use treatment services into homeless programs. Fearson suggested that Cal ICH attempt to recruit members of this coalition for the Advisory Committee.

Meghan Marshall: Stated that the California Behavioral Health Directors Associations will be one of many bodies that will assist with recruitment recommendations.

Council Member Vote

The Council unanimously approved the following motion: In addition to the statutory requirements and Cal ICH staff recommendations for Advisory Committee membership, seats will be added for

representatives of people with physical disabilities or serious mental illness, a housing builder or developer, and a CoC from both northern and southern California. Representatives may also represent an organization or be an individual that satisfies the given area of expertise.

VIII. Action Plan Implementation

Director Cody Zeger announced that the Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California has officially launched on the Cal ICH website after adoption by the Council in December. Cody explained that staff will describe plans for the implementation of this plan to ensure that the commitments outlined in the plan will be fulfilled. Council members will be asked if implementation activities are sufficient and if there are other ways in which Cal ICH can work with partners to ensure implementation is effective. Details can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials. Council Members were asked:

1. What work would you prioritize within/across departments and agencies to successfully implement the Action Plan?
2. What additional work is necessary in order to successfully implement the Action Plan?

Meghan Marshall: Highlighted that Cal ICH is working in collaboration with CDCR on the Re-entry 2030 initiative, while CDSS and HCD participating in a housing workgroup together. Executive Officer Marshall added that Cal ICH is taking into consideration baseline measurements to measure homelessness prevention efforts and populations that the state is responsible for serving, including people exiting the state prison system and foster care system.

Veronica Lewis: Lauded these efforts for tracking data and showing progress in a visual way, including new structure of the Cal ICH director's report and the quarterly departmental Council updates. Councilmember Lewis advocated for presenting data and analysis in a digestible way given the complex nature of intertwining work.

Susan DeMarois: Affirmed that the new reporting strategies reflects the maturing of the Council by emphasizing work and tremendous engagement efforts. Councilmember DeMarois encouraged focused efforts to measure goal number two of the Action Plan, centered around moving more people into housing, and preventing homelessness now that better baseline data has been established.

CDSS designee, Marta Galan: Encouraged the prioritization of cross-departmental planning and coordination to be proactive in housing efforts. Council member departments should look at each other's work and progress towards goals to find ways to replicate practices and weave efforts together, particularly through a Housing First lens and person-centered approaches.

Meghan Marshall: Explained that AB 799 requires reporting of coordination and commitments, and Cal ICH has analyzed the implementation of Housing First in Council department programs via expectations outlined in Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and contract language. Included in these efforts are the coordination of NOFA calendars, single-site technical assistance offers, and the publication of a newsletter to display transparency.

IX. Council Co-Chair Closing Remarks

BCSH Secretary Tomiquia Moss shared her excitement regarding the infrastructure established to ensure the success of the Action Plan to prevent and end homelessness. Secretary Moss described efforts to support local jurisdictions in delivering positive outcomes and showing accountability. As a result, the Council is establishing themselves as a leader in these efforts.

X. General Public Comment

Ludmilla Bade: Expressed interest in seeing reports from individuals served through Council department programs where success stories, issues and grievances, and suggestions can be communicated. Bade added that she has been thinking about low-cost ways to resolve homelessness, including efforts through implementing an empowerment triangle method in services. Bade advocated for building capacity at the community college level by added efforts that focus on social work, advocacy, addiction recovery, and skills for people experiencing homelessness.

XI. Final Remarks and Adjournment

Meghan Marshall: Meghan Marshall expressed gratitude to the Council for their thoughts and feedback on each agenda item, emphasizing that Cal ICH exists to support Council department efforts and are happy to be included where needed. The next Council meeting will be held on June 4, 2025. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.