

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

**September 3, 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 (BCSH)
- **Corrin Buchanan, designee for Kim Johnson (Co-Chair)** – Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS)
- **Michelle Baass** – State Medicaid Director and Chief Deputy Director of Health Care Programs, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- **Stephanie Clendenin** – Director, Department of State Hospitals (DSH)
- **Susan DeMarois** – Director, Department of Aging (CDA)
- **Dina El-Tawansy** – Director, Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- **Margot Kushel** – Director, Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative
- **Veronica Lewis** – Director, Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS)
- **Heather Bowlds, designee for Jeff Macomber** – Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
- **Erica Pan** – State Public Health Officer and Director, Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- **Kim Rutledge** – Director, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- **Karmina Barrales, designee for William McGee** - Director of the Student Achievement Support Division, California Department of Education (CDE)
- **Lindsey Sin** – Secretary, Department Veterans Affairs (CalVet)
- **Christina Snider-Ashtari** – Secretary, Governor's Office of Tribal Affairs
- **Rowena Tomaneng** – Deputy Chancellor for the California Community Colleges (CCCCO)
- **Jennifer Troia** – Secretary, California Department Social Services (CDSS)
- **Gustavo Velasquez** – Director, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- **Ricki Hammett, designee for Nancy Ward** – Director, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES)
- **Marina Wiant** – Executive Director, Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC)

**II. Consent Calendar**

One item on the Consent Calendar: Adoption of the [Meeting Summary from the June 4, 2025 Council Meeting](#).

No Council Member or public comments on this item.

**Vote:** The Council voted to approve the Consent Calendar with fifteen (15) members voting yes and four (4) members abstaining.

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

**Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Introduced Dina El-Tawansy, the newly appointed Caltrans director. Explained that the governor had submitted a reorganization plan to reorganize the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency (BCSH) into two standalone agencies: one dedicated to housing and homelessness and the other to business and consumer services. Effective July 2026, the reorganization will establish Cal ICH as a standalone department and create a Housing Development Finance Committee (HDFC) to better coordinate housing finance programs across the state. Announced the launch of the new State Action for Facilitation on Encampments (SAFE) Task Force to address unsheltered homelessness and encampments through collaboration among Cal ICH, BCSH, Caltrans, Cal OES, CalHHS, and other partners. Noted the importance of applying best practices to resolve encampments quickly, effectively, and with dignity.

**Corrin Buchanan for Co-Chair Secretary Kim Johnson:** Introduced Brian Kaplan as the new Deputy Secretary for Policy and Strategic Planning at CalHHS. Highlighted the impacts of HR1 signed into law on July 4<sup>th</sup>, noting harmful and wide-ranging impacts on public benefits in California and noted collaborative efforts to mitigate effects. Discussed a federal executive order shifting away from Housing First and harm reduction and noted that this executive order does not direct any non-federal actors to take any immediate action. Will closely monitor federal guidance developed to assess the implications of any future actions. Highlighted the SAFE Task Force, stressing best practices, local coordination, and resources like University of California San Francisco's (UCSF) guide to ensure dignified encampment responses and long-term housing stability.

- **Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Inquired about the SAFE Task Force's specific goals and intended outcomes. Expressed concern about potential undue burdens on local jurisdictions given the limited resources.
- **Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** The SAFE Task Force is in its early stages but will emphasize a collaborative approach that considers local needs and budget constraints to leverage resources for those most in need.
- **Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Shared an interest in early assessment of past encampment initiatives to build on successful pilot programs rather than creating new systems that require additional infrastructure.
- **Councilmember Dr. Margot Kushel:** Emphasized that effective outcomes require adequate funding, time, and adherence to best practices. Cautioned against imposing strict timelines, which could undermine trust with people experiencing homelessness, and stressed the importance of tracking meaningful outcomes that ensure people are not simply moved between locations or jailed but are on a path to permanent housing. Urged building on lessons from previous ERF initiatives to guide the work.

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

**Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Shared updates on the five working groups identified in the Action Plan, explaining that they were pausing the groups to conduct a strategic analysis and would return in December with recommendations on areas of focus, including potential staff support and alignment with existing state partnerships. Highlighted the Council department quarterly updates documented and lifted up Cal ICH communications efforts including months of acknowledgments highlighting October's Bullying Prevention Month as example. Noted the Council's move toward a standardized agenda, which would regularly include updates from Advisory Committee co-chairs, members of the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB), and standing business items.

#### **V. Advisory Committee (AC) Updates**

**Advisory Committee Co-Chair Alex Visotzky:** Highlighted the Advisory Committee's expanded inclusivity, incorporating voices from lived-experience, tribal and rural communities. Noted that members now have more input into agenda setting for AC discussion. Emphasized the Committee's interest in discussing implementation of the Action Plan, evaluating what has worked in California and preparing for potential federal policy changes while maintaining the state's Housing First approach.

**Advisory Committee Co-Chair Roxanne Wilson:** Highlighted the importance of aligning priorities across all levels of government and cited a successful collaborative effort to execute a Homekey project in Monterey County as an example of the benefits of collaboration. Stressed that conditions on the ground are worsening, with agencies closing and services rolling back. Urged the Council to consider these local challenges and to draw on the expertise of practitioners when implementing the task force, highlighting lessons learned from successful encampment resolution grants.

#### **VI. Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) Updates**

**LEAB Representative Monique Guerra:** Brought forward urgent concerns raised by LEAB members who are witnessing firsthand the harmful effects of current homelessness response practices in their communities. Described abrupt encampment removals conducted without planning, shelter options, or respect for people's belongings, in violation of Cal ICH's guidelines that call for humane treatment. Stressed that these sweeps can be costly, ineffective, and lack oversight, and called for integrating lived experience and data into policymaking. Urged leaders to step up to end punitive approaches, invest in affordable housing, ensure humane treatment, and act now to address the crisis.

**LEAB Representative Melanie Robledo:** Emphasized that criminalizing homelessness undermines California's goal of making it rare, brief, and one-time. Highlighted national data showing people leaving jail are far more likely to experience homelessness and described how low-level arrests push people back into the same conditions. Noted that stable housing reduces recidivism and improves safety, yet policies and collateral consequences erect barriers to housing and employment. Called for leaders to go beyond just hearing the voices of people with lived

experience, and to replace punitive and harmful responses with accountability and compassion in state level policy and decision making.

**Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Reminded Council members that they can directly engage the LEAB for input on policies, initiatives, and projects. The LEAB has an established request process that allows agencies to present proposals and receive feedback. Emphasized that both the Advisory Committee and LEAB serve and support the Council and Council staff, encouraging members to actively use these resources.

## VII. Council Charter

Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall reviewed key updates recommended adoption to its charter to strengthen governance, accountability, and alignment between the Council and Advisory Committee. Key changes included establishing appointed co-chairs for the Advisory Committee, creating a unified charter for both bodies, assigning the executive officer responsibility for compliance, and defining rules for member designations and participation. This information can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials.

No Council Member or public comments on this item.

**Vote:** The Council voted to approve the Council Charter with fifteen (15) members voting yes and three (3) members abstaining.

## VIII. Standing Business

**Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Stated that the Council's key strength is its ability to collect and coordinate data from local jurisdictions to improve housing and homelessness outcomes. Highlighted that data should drive program and policy decisions to ensure effectiveness and announced the release of new public dashboards.

### Quarterly Data Report and SB 914: HELP Act

**Director of Research Sydney Bennet:** Presented an updated [quarterly data report](#) and the new [Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations \(HELP\) Act Dashboard](#). The expanded quarterly data report now provides detailed demographic and project data with examples provided. Demonstrated new dashboards developed by Cal ICH to measure progress towards preventing and ending homelessness for survivors of domestic violence, their children, and unaccompanied women. Emphasized that these tools are designed to help local communities build more inclusive, effective homelessness plans. The full presentation can be found in the [meeting presentation](#) materials.

**Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Highlighted that this is the first dashboard developed independently by Cal ICH staff, marking it a major step in data management and coordination. Emphasized how member departments can use the dashboard to identify service gaps, apply equity indicators, track progress, and align program goals with the HELP Act for more coordinated and data-driven outcomes.

**Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Suggested that Cal ICH's data team provide training and technical assistance to Council members and their data teams on how to leverage this data and

use this data with their own datasets. Noted this could help members better respond to legislative and administrative data requests and ensure they can navigate and apply the dashboards in meaningful, practical ways.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Noted departments interested in a deeper dive into the data can reach out to Cal ICH.

**Ricki Hammett for Councilmember Nancy Ward:** Noted that some progress reports her team collects have been longstanding and discussed exploring updates to include questions that better identify domestic violence survivors, their children, and related homelessness. Stated that Housing First requirements have been explicitly included in CalOES notices of funding opportunities.

**Councilmember Kim Rutledge:** Commented that current data does not include disability, despite women with disabilities being disproportionately affected by domestic violence and suggested adding this information to the dashboard.

**Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Highlighted gaps in coordination between individuals cycling in and out of incarceration and homelessness and inquired if consideration had been given to reviewing data to inform cross-system coordination for this population, considering overlaps with domestic violence survivors.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Shared a data sharing agreement with CDCR has recently been finalized and look forward to exploring potential opportunities. Noted a few discussions have taken place on exits from state facilities and entering into homelessness as a way to measure prevention, with more details expected as data sharing begins.

**Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Noted an additional subpopulation of college age students in looking at the goals and inquired about plans to look at that data as well.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Shared that age filters are available at this time within the dashboards, and as sophistication increases in data coordination with Council member departments there may be opportunity to analyze specific subgroups, such as students.

**Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Asked Council departments that don't report to HDIS to consider how they might capture data on HELP Act populations outside of HDIS and support this initiative.

**Karmina Barrales for Councilmember William McGee:** Confirmed CDE does not report into HMIS, but does collect data on students who are unaccompanied and children and youth who are experiencing homelessness under the McKinney-Vento definition and welcomed opportunities to discuss data sharing opportunities.

**Corrin Buchanan for Co-Chair Secretary Kim Johnson:** Highlighted ongoing collaboration with Cal ICH on data integration and suggested exploring opportunities to combine data on survivors of domestic violence.

**Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Raised a question about overlapping populations, specifically how youth experiencing homelessness are captured within the HELP Act populations, and how that data is being tracked and analyzed.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Explained that there is currently an age filter in the dashboard, providing the available data at this time. Noted that as system connections expand, they can further analyze data specifically for students.

**Councilmember Margot Kushel:** Highlighted that many unaccompanied women are separated from their children due to homelessness and suggested exploring data-sharing approaches to identify unaccompanied parents and track outcomes related to family reintegration.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Shared Cal ICH has an established data sharing agreement with Cal HHS and are working at data matching with DHCS and CDSS.

**Karmina Barrales for Councilmember William McGee:** Noted the success of families with children in the data, acknowledging the support of federally funded homeless education liaisons at county and district levels who ensure students are enrolled and equipped for school, suggesting this likely contributes to positive outcomes for these families.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Highlighted investments by social services in serving families experiencing homelessness have been transformative. Agreed the Council can do more to identify and highlight successful programs supporting these populations.

**Councilmember Veronica Lewis:** Emphasized that many temporary housing focused victim service providers have high entry thresholds for safety reasons, so many individuals especially unaccompanied women end up in general shelters that may not meet their needs. Highlighted the need for departments funding Continuums of Care (CoC) and providers to ensure shelters are safe, affirming, and capable of supporting these populations. Stressed the use of the HELP Act to guide policies, practices, and funding decisions to improve outcomes.

- **Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall:** Shared that some victim service providers, especially in smaller communities, lack capacity to serve individuals who were experiencing homelessness during their experience of violence or do not have an immediate housing placement after a very short stay. This gap where survivors need housing within 7–14 days which some victim service providers may not have access to and therefore cannot serve the individual illustrates the damaging effects of siloed systems, which the HELP Act aims to address.

### **Action Plan Progress, Housing First, and Policy Implementation**

Cal ICH Executive Officer Meghan Marshall reviewed the three-year Action Plan dates which will term in 2027, with a goal of returning to the December meeting with a preview of the draft annual progress report with final adoption intended to take place at the March meeting. Discussed that Cal ICH is closely monitoring any impacts of the federal Executive Order and working closely with member departments to identify impacts and reiterated there are no changes to California's investments in housing and homelessness to abide by housing first law. Thanked member departments for their participation in the recent survey to assess state program compliance with

housing first statute and shared recommendations to assist identified departments in compliance achievement will be shared shortly.

- **Co-Chair Secretary Tomiquia Moss:** Praised the Action Plan as a major achievement but noted that public and stakeholder awareness remains low. Urged the Council to develop a communications strategy to promote the plan, highlight alignment with local initiatives, and ensure broader recognition and use of the plan's goals and data-driven framework.

## **IX. General Public Comment**

**Ken Houston:** Oakland Councilmember. Shared his personal and professional experience with homelessness and requested clarification on how the Grants Pass decision affects local authority and Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding, particularly when encampment residents refuse housing offers.

**Kim Lewis:** Representing the California Coalition for Youth. Encouraged the Council to fully implement SB 918 and establish distinct goals for ending youth homelessness, noting that current plans overlook their unique needs. Praised progress on the HELP Act and the Youth Empowerment Commission but called for renewed attention to youth engagement and a reactivation of the Youth and Young Adult Working Group to continue advancing this work.

**Ariane Dalla Dea:** Representing lived experience advisors in San Diego. Shared what San Diego is doing to create a fund to mitigate federal restrictions on Medicaid and CalFresh for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Highlighted the disproportionate funding toward incarceration compared to homelessness and advocated for reallocating resources to support people experiencing homelessness.

**Gregory Fearon:** Longtime professional in domestic violence and homelessness. Emphasized the importance of integrating behavioral health services with homelessness programs. Highlighted the Prop 1 mandate for collaborative planning and youth involvement, suggesting that local behavioral health boards and CoC boards work together to address clients' mental health, substance use, and homelessness needs, especially if federal funding declines.

**Rebecca Jackson:** Co-chair of the San Francisco Women's Housing Coalition. Highlighted the disproportionate impact of homelessness on women, noting that 40 percent of the unhoused identified as women and most are survivors of violence. Emphasized the need for intentional policy, funding, and data-driven tools to ensure programs effectively serve these women, particularly as they age and face chronic homelessness.

## **XI. Final Remarks and Adjournment**

The next Council meeting will be held on December 3, 2025. The meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.