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

February 4th, 2026

Via videoconference and telephone

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

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 pm.

Advisory Committee Members Present:

- **Semaj Algere** – Lived Experience Advocate
- **Songhai Armstead** – Director, Justice Care and Opportunities Department
- **Lauren Carden** – Director, California Housing Advocacy, Justice in Aging
- **Dachelle Kendrick** – Director, Survivor Empowerment Services
- **Kevin Klahn** – Lived Experience Advocate
- **Graham Knaus** – Chief Executive Officer, California State Association of Counties
- **James Mackey** – Program Manager, Community Medical Centers
- **Mary Maldonado** – Cal ICH Lived Experience Advisory Board Support
- **Alejandro Martinez** – President, CRCD Partners
- **Novalie McDarment** – Director, Tule River Indian Housing Authority
- **Lisa O'Connell** – Director, Enhanced Health Services
- **Tunisia Owens** – Policy and Advocacy Manager, Family Violence Law Center
- **Carolina Reid** – Faculty Research Advisor, Terner Center for Housing Innovation
- **Alex Sanchez** – Cal ICH Lived Experience Advisory Board Support
- **Alicia Sebastian** – Executive Director, California Coalition for Rural Housing
- **Adrienne Shilton** – Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Strategy, California Alliance of Child and Family Services
- **Alex Visotzky** – Senior California Policy Fellow, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- **Jevon Wilkes** – Executive Director, California Coalition for Youth
- **Roxanne Wilson** – Homeless Services Director, County of Monterey

II. Advisory Committee Co-Chair Updates

Advisory Committee (AC) Co-Chair, Alex Visotzky: Framed the conversation on the state response to federal circumstances and how to sustain progress. Noted congressional appropriations bill that set benchmarks for HUD funding to immediately renew CoC contracts expiring in the first quarter of 2026, extending to contracts expiring in future quarters if funding has not been awarded by April 1st and July 1st. HUD's allocation of additional money for tenant protections will mitigate some of the loss of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV); however, federal instability continues to negatively impact efforts to keep people from entering into homelessness. In terms of the State's response, HHAP grantees have seen flexibilities that can offset some of the federal instability. HHAP-6 has faced delays in releasing funds and contains benchmarks and requirements which ultimately could result in negative impacts for people experiencing homelessness that aren't able to get those resources HHAP is also facing a possible funding reduction over the next two years through the proposed budget. The Point-in-

Time (PIT) Count has projected a nine percent reduction in homelessness in California, in contrast with. increases reflected in other states, which indicates money should continue to flow towards evidence-based programs and solutions such as HHAP and PSH. Warned against pulling resources away from successful investments.

III. Executive Officer Updates

Cal ICH (Director of Policy and Innovation), Courtney Tacker: Provided opening comments on behalf of Cal ICH Executive Officer, Meghan Marshall. Expressed appreciation for the AC committee members and co-chairs. Addressed federal budget appropriations through September 30th, 2026, as it pertains to HUD funding, including expedited renewal of 2025 grants, reducing the risk of sudden program interruptions. The current state budget does not include an eighth round of HHAP, but existing HHAP rounds are multi-year and remain active through 2029. Noted a projected nine percent reduction in unsheltered homelessness captured in PIT trends, pending HUD certification through the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). Celebrated Cal ICH's release of the HEART toolkit and associated webinars, offering evidence-based information and resources to help local governments coordinate together to support people with lived experience of homelessness during emergency and disaster. Identified additional statewide initiatives including the transition into the new California Housing and Homeless Agency in 2026. Acknowledged Cal ICH's release of the HELP Act dashboard with a new version intended to be released in the fall, in addition to beginning work on new dashboards that track state programs outcome data pursuant to AB 799.

IV. California Homelessness and Housing Agency: Status of Implementation

BCSH Deputy Secretary of Homelessness, Dhakshike Wickrema: Provided an overview of the reorganization of BCSH into two separate agencies: the Business and Consumer Services Agency (BCSA) focused on regulation and consumer protection and the California Housing and Homeless Agency (CHHA) to address the full spectrum of California's housing needs from prevention to affordable rental housing to home ownership. CHHA and BCSA will become operational July 1, 2026. Additional details can be found in the meeting presentation materials.

Advisory Committee Member Discussion:

Alex Visotzky: Asked if for more information about Cal ICH's role as a policymaking body and if Cal ICH's authority or responsibilities will change as it transitions into a new department

- **Dhakshike Wickrema**: Noted Cal ICH's role will remain the same. Cal ICH will become its own department and business unit which can increase autonomy, but the Council and AC will remain unchanged. Cal ICH emails will be updated to reflect the new agency.

Graham Knaus: Recognized the intention of CHHA to have a more focused strategy around housing and homelessness, and expressed hope that a gap analysis will be done to see what needs to be put in place to address homelessness on an ongoing basis as opposed to being reactionary when new funding is allocated. Noted the length of time since HHAP 6 was approved by the legislature and enacted by the Governor and that only 40 percent of funding has been distributed in 19 months. Compared the relative quickness with which CHHA is being developed with the length of time it has taken to distribute funding that would help people

access housing and supportive services. Encouraged prioritizing efforts that will aid providers in serving people. Noted increased requirements to access dollars that are not related directly to addressing homelessness. Pro-housing counties are struggling to be recognized with that designation and requests support in HCDs ability to expedite.

Caroline Reid: What kind of support does Cal ICH feel would be helpful as new changes are implemented, and will the AC play a role in integration and feedback? Different providers with different funding streams might have unique and distinct feedback.

- **Dhakshike Wickrema**: Will take these ideas back to Executive Officer Meghan Marshall for consideration. Identified the big picture to keep learning, improving and refining what it means to be CHHA.

Dachelle Kendrick: Have there been any listening sessions in public formats to inform the transition?

- **Dhakshike Wickrema**: This has been a multi-year process that went through the Little Hoover Commission and there have been listening sessions, including one with Tribal governments later this month, as well as Public Housing Authorities, local government and other stakeholders such as academic researchers, advocates, and service providers. There will be additional opportunities to connect in the future once we have more details.

V. Medi-Cal Interventions and Innovations

DHCS Policy Advisor for Homelessness and Housing, Glenn Tsang, presented housing initiatives through Medi-Cal, including the introduction to Transitional Rent, the newest Community Support, which provides six months of rental assistance to eligible members. Framed the conversation around a 'housing for health' lens and provided a brief overview of homelessness in California through a health care framework. Please see the presentation materials for additional detail.

Advisory Committee Member Discussion:

Tunisia Owens: Asked if families who unhoused family members may be able to receive transitional rent so they can support their relative, and inquired who qualifies for behavioral health intervention, particularly for domestic violence survivors and those facing gender-based violence noting that these populations are often not qualifying under behavioral health

- **Glenn Tsang:** Transitional Rent needs to be used in an allowable setting where rent is charged and paid for. Moving in with family can be a viable solution for a housing support plan. Addressed clinical criteria to meet a behavioral health focus which include members who meet specified access criteria. Eligible participants do not necessarily need to be receiving direct services from the county, but additional clarity and guidance will be provided in referral standards.

Graham Knaus: Asked about opportunities for California to leverage Medi-Cal and mitigating harmful impacts of HR-1. Expressed interest in finding a way to work together to preserve the most critical services for those most in need.

- **Glenn Tsang**: DHCS will be holding an All-Comer webinar to go over plans for H.R. 1 on February 5, 2026 and shared DHCS is looking at different data sources and evaluating on the ground needs and responses.

VI. General Public Comment

No comments.

VII. Advisory Committee Co-Chair Final Remarks and Adjournment

No final comments.

The next Advisory Committee will be May 6th, 2026, at 2:00pm. The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 pm.