



THE HUDSON COUNTY ALLIANCE  
TO END HOMELESSNESS

## **HCAEH Meeting Minutes**

**October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

**2:00 p.m.**

**\*Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting was held over Zoom.**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Katelyn Ravensbergen of the Hudson County Division of Housing and Community Development called the meeting to order. Introductions were made of anyone who had called in to the meeting.

### **County Update – New Department of Housing and Community Reintegration**

Randi Moore introduced the formation of the newly inaugurated Department of Housing and Community Reintegration. She explained that the new Department will house all relevant parties in Hudson County doing housing and homelessness work, and will streamline funding and relevant collaboration. Separately, she announced that she will be leaving the County at the end of the month for a new position in Monmouth County.

### **CoC Business**

- *FY2020 CoC Funding* - Katelyn reported that there are still no updates from the federal government for next year's funding. She promised to keep providers updated as soon as she has further information, but is hoping for a simplified application/competition process from HUD. She will work with Monarch to decide what type of monitoring is needed in the meantime.
- *CoC Data Work* – Kevin Llangari from the Hudson County Division of Housing & Community Development updated the group on LSA, a reminder that it still has not been finalized, but to keep up to date on annual assessments. Names of clients in need of annual assessments have been sent to providers, please reach out to Kevin if you did not receive that. Candy Brewster from NJ HMFA updated the group on a call she had with HUD concerning LSA, and how to troubleshoot with system errors. This week HUD should be putting out a guide to the LSA submission process, along with office hours. Stella will not be available until after all LSA submissions.

### **CEAS Business**

- *SSH Updates* – Katelyn reported that she will now be working on SSH. She is currently making sure all agencies will be able to expend all of their funds by the end of the year. The RFP for SSH should be out next week. This year the RFP includes the Homeless Trust Fund money as well, there will be less available this year, it will be cut almost in half.

- *Resource Guide* – Jaclyn Cherubini from Hoboken Shelter announced that she has updated all phone numbers from the 2020 Resource Guide during COVID-19 to make sure that they were all working and up to date. She asked that if any organizations listed in the Guide have any changes to please reach out to her at: [resources@hobokenshelter.org](mailto:resources@hobokenshelter.org). She is hoping to have a draft out for the next CoC meeting and the final version ready for the end of the year. Katelyn echoed Jaclyn’s sentiment imploring organizations to send in edits to avoid any discrepancies in the final version.

## **2021 Point In Time Count**

- Katelyn has not yet started working on the 2021 PIT Count, but a new staff member will be joining the team next week and her first task will be working on this. Katelyn will set up a Zoom call for the providers who have worked most closely on the PIT Count in years past. There is still a lack of clarity on what the PIT Count will look like in the COVID-19 context (i.e. volunteers), we are currently waiting on guidance from HUD. We will still be collecting donations. Carmel Galasso from the United Way of Hudson County asked Katelyn if she will need to use the conference room at United Way, Katelyn said that she thinks she will to organize donations, and will follow up with Carmel via email.

## **2020-2021 Winter/Warming Center Season**

- Katelyn announced that there will be a new provider in charge of the warming center this season: Collaborative Support Programs of NJ (CSP). The overall structure will remain the same, but there may be a slight change to pick-ups. Pamela Baker from CSP announced a change in location for their new drop-in center to MLK Ave., where there will be an additional pick-up location for the warming center. Katelyn explained that CSP will be moving pick-up times earlier and drop-off times a bit later, so that there is further time for engagement with clients. Katelyn is aware that due to COVID-19, not all shelters are operating at 100% capacity, so hopes that the warming center will help support clients during the winter months.

## **COVID-19/ Ongoing Updates**

- *COVID-19 Updates* – Katelyn announced that the County is still working through the CARES applications for rental assistance funding. The State also put out an application for rental assistance, which was closed after four days. Katelyn encouraged providers to refer clients who are looking for assistance with back rent or prevention to the CARES.HCNJ.US website, where all updates are being listed. Additionally, programs are sent out via the mailing list. New programs continue to come out as funding is made available. Carmel from United Way announced that they still have HPP money to help out for three-month periods. Katelyn said that additional providers (BEOF, Catholic Charities, NHCAC) still have SSH funds available as well.
- *Foreclosure Prevention Counseling Program* – Bill Page from the Waterfront Project announced a new program serving home owners who have traditionally been referred out to other agencies in the State. This program will be able to keep clients in the County. Bill has experience doing this work with various Urban Leagues in NJ, and is excited about this new program. He encouraged other agencies to refer any clients who are homeowners in fear of losing their homes or seniors having problems with reverse mortgages. They are a HUD-certified housing agency. Katelyn will include Bill’s brochure in the follow-up email.

- *Family Stability Committee* – Anne Christensen from WomenRising updated the group that the committee met in September. They are excited to see how the housing navigator program works, showing a path to see how we can work more effectively and more efficiently. The next meeting is on November 16<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM on Zoom. If you are interested in being at this meeting please contact Katelyn. Katelyn will look to have the housing monitor give an update at the next CoC meeting.
- *Food and Shelter Coalition* – No update.
- *Veterans Committee* – Kelly McGuinness from Soldier On announced that the subcommittee just met prior to this meeting. Scott Sussman from the VA presented to the group, he is a liaison to the emergency housing programs at the VA. He spoke about the Valor program, which is a 30-bed program at the VA facility in Essex County, but is open to all counties. Any eligible veteran must be homeless and VA-eligible. Kevin Llangari gave an update on the County veteran data and led the by-name list case conferencing with SSVF and Garden State. Finally, the meeting wrapped up with updates looking ahead to February to start thinking about engaging landlords for veterans-specific housing. Next meeting will be December 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **Announcements**

- Candy Brewster from HMIS updated Path Providers that there will be some changes to the Path annual report, and there will be a training in December. They have been working with DCA and DFD on COVID-19 projects. DCA's RRH project has had about 15 referrals, but only a couple have made it over to the project. Documentation is taking a while to gather in order to proceed. Agencies working with Garden State are encourage to provide any documentation available. DFD project just went online last week, 6,000 applications in one day. They shut down applications in order to be able to process them and determine if any funding will be left to open back up the application in the future. They have put a request to the State in for additional money, but nothing has been determined yet. HUD has been working to allow VAs to upload client-level data into HMIS. Joni Owen from NJ Veterans' Affairs commented that she also heard this, is afraid it will be a logistical nightmare. Would need to download a report from database to then upload into HMIS. From what she can tell, data would need to be broken down by CoC, but that geographical information is not currently available. Any information on fees is not currently available. Candy announced that regarding the PIT Count, HUD is still looking to see whether a street count will be required. HMIS continues to do weekly site administrator and general user trainings. Trainings are not on the website, but there is a mailing list that Kayla Phillips or Candy can add you to.
- Jaclyn announced that Krina Shah from United Way is working on FEMA funding - Phase 35 and 36 reports and working on release of money for Phase 37 and Phase CARES. Jaclyn asked if HHS and/or the new department has offered first aid for mental health or any similar trainings that could be provided. Kiyada Pittman from HHS said it would come from her department. She is not sure how it will be rolled out yet, but thinks that is in the works to do via Zoom. She will circle back. Kiyada reminded that there is a Food and Shelter meeting on October 28<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 via Zoom, all invited to attend. If you are interested, please email [Kpittman@hnj.us](mailto:Kpittman@hnj.us) or La'Trenda.

- Vivian Patino from Palisade Family Success Center announced that they are hosting Zumba fitness classes for kids via Zoom from 3:30-4:00 on Wednesdays. Creative Corner is on Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 on Facebook Live, but will change in November to Fridays. Updated flyer will be sent to Katelyn. The active parenting class for parents of children ages 5-12 via Zoom in Spanish will start soon. A vaping and substance abuse awareness class will also be offered with the Partnership for Maternal-Child Health.
- Eric Hughes from Northeast New Jersey Legal Services announced that there is a moratorium on evictions, but some landlords are doing shady things to tenants. If you have a low-income family facing eviction, they can provide legal help and do know your rights presentations for your organization.

The meeting was adjourned with the next meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

### Voting Member Attendance

Name	Agency
Samantha Howard	Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation
Angelo Hunt	Catholic Charities
Pilar Rodriguez	Community Hope
Pamela Baker	Collaborative Support Programs of NJ
Joanne Smith	Garden State Episcopal CDC
Donald Weinbaum	Helping Arms
Janis Pena	Helping Arms
Jaclyn Cherubini	Hoboken Shelter
Ana Prado	Hoboken Shelter
Katelyn Ravensbergen	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Kevin Llangari	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Randi Moore	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Kiyada Pittman	Hudson County Specialized Health & Housing Services
Monica Yeng	Hudson County Welfare
Jose Ortiz	Jersey City Community Development
Kimberly Blackwell	Jersey City Medical Center
Jacqueline Suarez	Jersey City Public Housing Authority
Angelique Williams	Let's Celebrate
Michele Musumici	North Hudson Community Action Corp
Vivian Patino	Palisades Family Success Center
Kelly McGuinness	Soldier On
Danielle Mineo	Soldier On
Jennifer Rejfir	The House of Faith
Rebecca Symes	The Waterfront Project
Kayla Zimmer	The Waterfront Project
Carmel Galasso	United Way Hudson County
Anne Christensen	Women Rising

### Non-Voting Member Attendance

Name	Agency
Ivette David	Catholic Charities

Yanil Mendoza	Catholic Charities
Meena Song	Community Health Law Project
Jeffrey Scheckner	Covenant House
Georgina DeRosa	DCP&P
Carmen Esquilin	Hudson County Housing Resource Center
JoAnn Northgrave	Hudson County Office of Veterans Affairs
Judith Lagani	Jersey City Board of Education
Angela Carela	Jersey City Medical Center
Sasha Rodriguez	Haven
Stephen Lipski	K.E.I.T.H.
Nadine Azari	Monarch Housing Associates
Candy Brewster	NJ HMFA
Joni Owen	NJ Veteran's Affairs
Eric Hughes	Northeast New Jersey Legal Services
William Paige	The Waterfront Project
Janet Aponte	The Waterfront Project
Amy Albert	The Waterfront Project