



MICHIGAN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS AGENDA

September 14, 2020

9:00 a.m., Zoom Webinar

Registration Link: <https://michigan-host.zoom.us/join/j0kcu9vrvjkvEte13oI0wOpgvzmnoJ3X7tf4>

Attendees: Kelly Rose, Jason Weller, Mercedes Brown, Rachel Eldridge, Paula Kaiser Van Dam, Patrick Patterson, Crissa Blankenburg, Michelle Williams, Kris Brady, Lynn Hedges

Members of the public: Laurel Burchfield, Luke Forrest

- 1. Approval of Agenda – Patrick moved to approve and seconded by Rachel. Motion was approved.**
- 2. Approval of May Minutes – Rachel moved to approve the minutes and seconded by Patrick. Motion was approved.**
- 3. Public Comment – there was no public comment**
- 4. State Action Plan next steps – Kelly stated that at the end of August we held a Virtual Kickoff event for the State Action Plan. The event provided an update about the plan, and there some components of the plan that we are implementing now. One element of the plan that has started now is a racial equity workgroup. We have identified funding from ESG-CV to fund TA work. Group is focused on circulating RFP by the end of the year so that we can have a contractor identified to begin the work by the beginning of the year. The group is identifying tasks that the TA providers would be undertaking. Mercedes provided an update on the need to engage with folks in the field an identifying training related needs and creating a plan to provide a training calendar. Jason provided an update that there is a survey and focus groups planned to get a better sense of the structure that would be ideal, and how we could get more participation and support. He also added that we've heard Detroit is looking at the Action Plan and discussing how to incorporate it into their work as a COC and that we might be able to use this as a model for other communities to replicate. Lastly, we are looking at how to get folks to engage more broadly with the strategies in the plan. Historically, there have been work groups and convenings, but the feedback has been suggesting that we need to put something new in place such as an online learning**

collaborative or a peer-to-peer networking session. We are going to use the time at the Virtual Summit on Oct 28 & 29 to provide an update on where things are at, as well as explore engaging with folks in the field.

5. **Eviction Diversion Program update** – Kelly provided an update on the EDP. There is \$60 million in CRF funds available. \$4 million for Legal Aid, \$4 million for Case Management, \$2 million for Admin, and \$50 million for Assistance. There was a recognition that the eviction moratoria were going to expire and there was a need to implement a program to provide assistance. Landlords are required to forgive 1/9 of rental assistance that is owed. Program is broken up into 3 income brackets. So far very few people in the upper income bracket have applied. Vast majority have been 50% AMI. The program has seen mixed response across the state. Overall the UP is doing very well. GO is already on 2nd allocation. More urban areas are experiencing high call volumes and navigating multiple court systems. Legal services are working with the HARA to identify folks with the highest need and get them the needed assistance. Data entry has been slow in some of these communities. So far there is about 2000 households in the HMIS system, but MSHDA staff are working with HARAs to get data updated so that we can get a better sense of how much funding has been spent and how much we will likely spend by the end of year when the CRF funds expire. Congress would have to extend the CRF fund timetable in order for us to go beyond Dec 31st of this year. Looking at updating the data within the next 2-3 weeks. On average folks are 4 months in arrears, receiving about \$3000, and have a household size of 2.5 people. Paula asked if the full \$50 million would be spent down by the end of the year. Kelly shared that there are some HARAs that don't have any data in the HMIS system and that information should hopefully be in the system by the end of this week. If nothing else we can increase the payment caps to insure that the funding is spent in a timely manner. Paula added that DHHS is dealing with similar issues and understands the need to have providers input data so that we get a better sense of how it is doing. Kelly added that many programs are still in the process of staffing up and that ramping up a new program takes time. Kris added that NW CAA is ramping up the program and they are seeing a high demand and there is an interest in seeing the CRF funds extended beyond this year. Kelly responded that this would essentially be engaging with our congressional delegation and we could circulate a form letter that ICH members could use. Kris also said that perhaps there is an opportunity to coordinate with USICH. Crissa asked if program recipients are still working or if the focus is on folks who are not back to work? Kelly replied that this program is for anybody below the AMI (under 50%) there is funding available for arrears as well as paying rent forward. There is hope that case managers are proactively encouraging folks to consider moving to a more affordable rental if needed. There are so many other new and expanded programs that folks could be utilizing. Kris replied that if you have some case management for 3 months that there is some confusion about working with new clients in December. Mercedes also asked if EDP leadership were given any guidance about the CDC eviction moratorium? Kelly stated that the guidance is proceed with assisting folks as per usual. We don't see the

new moratorium changing things. If landlords receive the CDC letter from a tenant they are encouraged to reach out to the HARA/Legal Aid to get connected to assistance. Mercedes asked if Legal Aid will also be more proactive about connecting folks with the EDP assistance. Kelly confirmed that MPLP and Legal Aid have agreed to continue funneling folks to EDP, and that there is an opportunity to use EDP and the CDC moratorium if needed. Kris added that they have not seen a decrease in calls since the CDC moratorium, and they don't want folks waiting until the end of the year to reach out.

6. **COVID testing plans** – Lynn stated that this past weekend we had the first large scale public testing events in Detroit. Adult, family, youth, and DV shelters were encouraged to offer testing. So far many shelters have requested routine testing be established (every 2 weeks or once a month). Started with Detroit because there was already a testing cadence in place. Detroit shelters will be tested at least once a week. They are on a rolling cadence so that they can respond appropriately without affecting bed capacity. DHHS is going to continue this process for the foreseeable future. There is capacity to do 100-150 tests/event. Testing is both saliva and nasal. Testing process normally takes about 3 minutes/person. Test results typically come back within 24 hours and go to the individual, shelter, and the health department to ensure that there is a quick response in case there is a need to quarantine. Any child or youth who is tested needs a parent to consent. The same protocol is in place with the DV shelters to ensure the privacy. Patrick asked how quickly the results are provided and what is the mean response time. Lynn said that typically 1-3 days, but it's too soon to know what the response time is for these test sites.
7. **FEMA Non Congregate Sheltering** – Lynn stated that local health departments are reporting on how much they've spent, or project to spend. MDHHS is likely to reimburse \$1 – 1.3 million in match. MDHHS does have a small portion of CRF funds that can be used through December 31st, 2020. This will allow local health departments to tap into match funding through the end of the year. We wanted to ensure that there something in place in case there was surge in the fall. Kelly asked if there will be any access to match funding in 2021? Lynn said that the only option would be an extension of the CRF funds beyond December 31st. Kelly added that there is a hope that communities will continue to use FEMA funds for offsite sheltering as opposed to ESG funds. Some communities used significant amount of ESG in April-May for hoteling. Lynn added that we should encourage COCs to work through their local health department and set up a MOU/MOA to facilitate that process. She also added that as long as the national state of emergency we are fine, but if the state of emergency would sunset that would mean there would be a window of 60-90 days to utilize the program and then it would wind down.
8. **HUD Equal Access response** – Kelly stated that HUD has circulated a proposed rule change around the equal access rule that shelters need to serve folks dependent on how they identify and not their biological gender. The proposed change gives more

latitude to shelter providers to identify who/how they serve clients. HUD is currently taking public comment, and MSHDA is working on drafting a comment. Kelly would like to see a comment from ICH and would like to see HUD not create additional barriers for folks seeking shelter. MSHDA is going to use the prior rule and is not planning to make any changes. Paula added that DHHS would like to align with MSHDA on using the prior rule and is supportive of ICH making a statement. Rachel asked if we need a motion of support? Kelly asked if ICH wanted to see MSHDA's final statement or have input on the draft version? Paula asked if Kelly could circulate the draft for review. Kelly said we will circulate the draft and solicit comments. Michelle asked how the comments will be collected from the group? Kelly said that Jason can collect comments/edits and compile them and recirculate.

9. Roundtable - Crissa asked if we should discuss extensions on any of the non-congregate housing programs or the EDP? Kelly said that we would likely know more in November. Cylenthia said that she would check in with the courts. Kelly added that the high volume of funding will be winding down, but there may be additional opportunities going into next year. She also added that CDBG funds could potentially be used to eviction diversion/homelessness prevention and this could possibly extend the program into next year just not at current funding level. Cylenthia added that Legal Aid is also bringing additional resources to the table, and that Detroit is working with landlords pre-court hearing date to stop evictions from occurring.

Kris – asked about the CDBG funds if MSHDA would administer them if they are used toward eviction prevention. Kelly said it is currently too early to tell, and that conversations are underway with MEDC.

Mercedes – asked about the access to State IDs as folks across the state are really struggling to schedule timely appointments to ensure that folks are able to secure housing. She asked if other communities are also seeing these issues? Laurel Burchfield from MCAH added that the State ID Taskforce has reconvened, and is in conversation with the MISOS. Next meeting is scheduled for September 23rd. Paula added that DHHS is also reengaging with the State ID Taskforce. Cylenthia added that MISOS has extended IDs/Licences through Sept 30th per the Executive Order, but that doesn't address the technology or funding issues. Laurel added that the homeless population is not eligible to utilize the extended hours, and that there has been mixed feedback from folks in the field about accessing the fast appointments. Cylenthia asked if there was a training that we could offer to providers about using the MISOS website? Mercedes said that she's not sure of training, but that it's something the Taskforce should explore this. Cylenthia asked if there was any legal representation on the Taskforce. Laurel added that there is at least one legal aid group currently on the Taskforce, and that one of the barriers we are running into is that there is some inability to offer the fee waiver for the State ID due to technology constraints.

Cylenthia asked about resources for families in an abuse/neglect case. Lynn responded by saying that they've been working with Children's Services and they have recently become acutely aware how much of an issue housing has become. DHHS is working with CAM in Detroit to make referrals and handoffs for families in the system. They are also working with the Housing Authority for the city which has been historically used for youth aging out of foster care, but looking at how some of the vouchers could be used for reunification. Also exploring a data match between HMIS and the Children's Services data system so that we can identify folks from either side. Hoping that this will give a better sense of scale of the issue, as well as ensuring that folks are getting connected with resources. Lynn also added that DHHS has been working with Michelle at MDOE to identify homeless families. Cylenthia shared that she is seeing a lot of parents in Wayne County who are struggling with navigating this system. Paula said that MDHHS will reach out to Cylenthia to continue the conversation.

Paula said that Jan from Children's Services has retired and we will need to reach out to them to identify a new representative. Kelly said that she will reach out to the appointments group, but in the meantime Children's Services should identify a new person.

Topics for the November meeting? State ID Taskforce update, EDP. Kelly asked folks to reach out to herself and Jason if they had any additional topics for the next meeting. Cylenthia asked if we could explore looking at afternoon times, and Kelly said that we will send out some afternoon time slots via a Doodle poll to select a day and time for the November meeting.

10. Adjourn – Cylenthia moved to adjourn the meeting. Paula seconded. The motion was approved.