

**Minutes for Meeting of the HCCSC's  
Coordinated Entry System Committee  
May 25, 2021**

**VIA ZOOM**

**Members Present:**

Natalie McCleskey	Amy Dornack
Kim Stanley	Marcie Bragg
Jackie McDougle	Melissa Terrell
Lisa Waikem	Amanda Burdette
Diane Waite	Jennifer Keaton
Amy Dornack	Joy Brubach
Shirene Starn-Tapyrik	

**I. Call to Order**

Natalie called the meeting to order at 8:36am.

**II. Approval of Minutes from April Meeting**

Natalie opened discussion for any edits or corrections to the April meeting minutes. Marcie made a motion to approve the April Meeting Minutes. Melissa seconded the motion. All voted in favor of approving the minutes. Motion passed.

**III. Emergency Housing Vouchers**

Marcie provided an overview of the Emergency Housing Vouchers, which are new vouchers being provided by HUD to Public Housing Authorities. She thanked SMHA for accepting the 61 vouchers allotted to Stark County and specifically thanked Lisa for her role in the acceptance of the vouchers.

Marcie explained that the vouchers are for those experiencing homelessness and/or those at risk of becoming homeless. An MOU is required between SMHA and the CoC and all participant referrals must come from the CoC's Coordinated Entry System

There have been several Technical Assistance webinars that Marcie, Melissa, Jennifer, Amanda and Lisa have participated in. They have discussed eligibility and prioritization. At this time Marcie opened the floor to Lisa to provide more details about the vouchers.

Lisa shared that the emergency housing vouchers (EHV) would abide by Section 8 rules which include a restriction on those with a lifetime sex offender status as well

as on those who have a criminal charge of manufacturing or distributing methamphetamine on a HUD-funded property. She also shared that households referred and provided with a voucher will have up to 120 days to find a unit (with a private market landlord) but that no extensions can be given after that timeframe. Tenants will pay 30% of their income towards rent. All vouchers must be issued by Sept 30, 2023. The earliest the vouchers could begin to be utilized would be July 1, 2021. Lisa also shared that SMHA will be required to notify everyone on the Section 8 waiting list of the vouchers. There was a recommendation given that eligibility and clear guidelines on how to be referred for the EHV (through Homeless Navigation) would need to be distributed when those on current waiting lists are provided information regarding the vouchers. Lisa shared that SMHA must either notify via the newspaper or on their website and that eligibility must be clearly listed.

The vouchers can assist tenants through 2030. There was discussion around not wanting the vouchers to be used as a revolving door and recognition that seven – nine years of stable housing can have a drastic impact on someone who is exiting homelessness. Many in current homeless housing programs do not stay that long, though certainly some do. There was discussion on Moving On Strategies and if the EHV's could be used to assist with that effort as well as the notion about using the vouchers in conjunction with the ESG-CV RRH programs when/if participants are needing to exit RRH to a longer term subsidized permanent housing in light of those programs being created with Dynamic Prioritization in mind.

There will be further conversations between the CoC and SMHA regarding eligibility and prioritization. Current programs, such as ESG-CV RRH and regular PSH projects, as well as participant choice, will all be considered as the discussions move forward with determining how best to prioritize the EHV's.

Jackie asked whether the EHV's could target families. It was also shared that there are currently 67 of the PSH prioritization list and the majority of those are singles. Melissa asked Diane if she was aware of how other communities plan to utilize and prioritize their EHV's. Diane shared that she has not heard any discussion about the EHV's so far but was drawing parallels related to how the VA programs are in the midst of possibly opening up their eligibility to more veterans who have previously been denied. Diane shared that she is confident that our system will develop the protocols and procedures needed to make this opportunity successful.

This led to a robust discussion regarding our local pool of landlords. One requirement of the EHV's is that there is a "Housing Navigator" to assist participants with their housing search. SMHA is not intending to hire someone to fill this role so part of the MOU will be establishing how that role will be fulfilled. There is a \$3,500 per voucher, one-time, allowance to cover housing assistance. During the TA webinars it has been advised that communities tap into local medicaid billable agencies to provide this type of assistance as well as ongoing services as the EHV's do not come with funding for supportive services. Jackie mentioned the recent

conversations between Coleman and the CoC around a Housing Liaison who could possibly be expanded to include activities that the Housing Navigator would provide. Again, related to networking and building relationships with landlords, Jackie asked if there is a way to provide more advertisement to landlords and for us to make a coordinated and concerted effort to network and build our local pool of landlords. Melissa shared that Legal Aid has indicated a willingness to assist with this type of effort. One suggestion was to hold a few webinars targeted at landlord recruitment. Marcie and Melissa shared that they feel strongly that those actually running the programs would need to be available to share with the potential landlords in order to provide more details on their programs, services they will be able to offer, and to build that personal connection with the prospective landlords. Marcie offered the Stark Housing Network's assistance in creating a power point presentation if providers would like to send over information and if providers would be available to present during the proposed webinars. Providers would also need to provide listings of landlord to invite.

There was acknowledgement of the challenges we have had in the past with recruiting landlords through the Stark County Real Estate and Investors Association (SCREIA). Lisa also shared that many in that group have a very negative view of our homeless programs from various experiences they have had. The group also acknowledged that there are a lot of voucher programs currently available in the community including 120 Section 8 vouchers, the new ESG-CV RRH projects soon to be available, current PSH and RRH voucher programs, Homelessness Prevention programs and the Rental Assistance programs in the community (i.e. SCDJFS, SCCAA, etc.). All of these programs are striving to connect to and work with private landlords. There are currently conversations taking place with these other entities also regarding how to better partner with serving those across our programs.

Marcie again thanked Lisa for her involvement in helping Stark County secure the 61 EHV's for our system.

#### IV. CoC Updates

##### a.) ESG-CV RRH Policy – HCCSC Board Update

Marcie reminded the committee about the ESG-CV RRH policy, which the CE Committee had approved at the March meeting. The policy was then presented to the HCCSC Board in April. There was some further discussion around the City of Canton residency requirement and agreement from the Board to seek guidance from HUD prior to approving the policy. This guidance was obtained by the City and the HCCSC Board agreed to broaden the requirement to "Must be residents of Stark County with funding targeting toward the City of Canton residents." This change was distributed by Melissa in April, providing the opportunity for any committee members to withdraw their vote of approval but not requiring that everyone vote again since the change was very minor. The HCCSC Board voted for approval of the policy, with this change, at their May meeting.

### b.) Homelessness Prevention Evaluation Project

The Homelessness Prevention Evaluation Project is continuing to review Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) and Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) Homelessness Prevention projects to provide feedback on how the system has served households in these projects. The system is doing a test run for a systematic shift to serve non-leaseholder households versus leaseholder households. The idea is that the homeless system should focus on serving households that are more likely to enter the homeless system and allow other community rental assistance projects to serve households that are considered eviction prevention (leaseholder households). There is a call today with Stark Community Action Agency and the Department of Jobs and Family services about how all rental assistance project are operating and serving households. There is also discussion regarding the expansion of Emergency Rental Assistance eligible activities and how the systems can collaborate.

### V. QA Updates

There were no formal recommendations or updates from the QA Workgroup.

### VI. Old Business / New Business

There was no old or new business to discuss.

### VII. Adjournment

Natalie adjourned the meeting at 9:39am.

## **Coordinated Entry System Committee**

### **2021 Meeting Schedule**

June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	8:30am
July 27 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am
August 24 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am
September 28 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am
October 26 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am
November 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8:30am
December 28 <sup>th</sup>	8:30am