

Iowa Council on Homelessness and CoC Peer to Peer Meeting
Wednesday, May 27, 2020
Minutes
Topic- Virtual Apartment/Housing Hunting

Attendance:

Alison Justice, Center for Siouland; Hollie Ohnesorge, City of Dubuque Housing; Dennis Lauterbach, BoS CoC; Patti Robinson, YWCA Clinton; Mark Sertterh, Shelter House; Marilieggh Fisher, CHI; Kim Motl, UDMO; Mary Ingham, Crisis Intervention Service; Dawn DeMaio, City of Dubuque Housing; Julie Eberbach, ICA; Tim Wilson, Home Forward Iowa; Jodi Royal-Goodwin, City of Muscatine; Ashley Odom, Family Resources; Dominique Mendoza, Family Resources; Kara Nutt, Family Crisis Centers; Linda Munden, ERP; Angie Williams, MICA House; Rachel Olson, Crisis Intervention Service; Cody Crawford, ASAC; Hope Metheny, YSS; Delaney Dixon, Domestic Violence Intervention Program; Malia Dunn, Salvation Army Davenport; Karin Ford, IDPH; Jess Bleile, ICA; Courtney Guntly, ICA, Sara DeLuna, ICA; Angie Arthur, Polk County CoC; Jan Zeleke, Home, Inc.; Kim Willis, Children & Families of Iowa; Allison Hannah, Iowa City VA; *Ryan; Abby*

Please note, we have created a shared google sheet for attendance-

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zPN74-CdNpgAv2Smc8eWip6h_116NBe4HMs_w2nM7UI/edit?usp=sharing

If you are unable to access the google sheet, email Jessica by 12pm the day of the meetings to be included in the posted minutes.

Jessica reported the reason for meetings is for ICA to connect with and support providers to create a networking and collaborating opportunity to ensure you have the support to provide the services to those in need in the balance of counties.

Introduction of Speaker: Jodi Royal-Goodwin, City of Muscatine Housing

When the pandemic first started, Jodi reported having a good network in place with local providers to ensure community members would know where to call when they were in need. Within the first two weeks of work, they were able to house 12 families with vouchers. As they were looking at their administrative plan, there were no stipulations regarding a pandemic like COVID-19. They created a category to focus on a pandemic crisis response by expanding one of their vouchers. This assisted in getting families and individuals out of shelter and into housing.

Jodi reported working with landlords previously, but continued communication with the housing navigator and landlords has increased matching clients with housing opportunities. They have allowed more flexibility on calls since the pandemic. They have used FaceTime for inspections, with their inspectors guiding the inspection process. CARES Act provided some leniency and allowed some flexibility with housing authority expectations.

The eviction moratorium is set to expire today for the state of Iowa, but the federal moratorium ends June 27 for HUD assisted families. HUD sending out fliers to all tenants, but staff are worried about the utilities, as the companies went straight from winter response to pandemic response. Muscatine has a workgroup that meets weekly to discuss families looking for assistance.

Notes that it is a violation for families on section 8 to get additional rental assistance. If their income changes, they should contact the Housing Authority to adjust rent.

Mortgage assistance may help some landlords to be more lenient in pursuing evictions, but that remains to be seen.

Any additional questions or concerns can be emailed directly to Jodi Royal-Goodwin jroyal-goodwin@muscatineiowa.gov

Discussion

Has there been a lot of families looking for housing or have most calls for assistance been focused on moratorium?

Patti—There are a lot of larger families looking for housing right now, but are struggling to find appropriate units for them. Haven't heard from a lot of other people due to the moratorium.

Have there been any meetings with landlords to educate around moratorium?

Angie—Polk County has a Prevention Workgroup. Doing a lot of education on renter's rights, including developing a flier with information from Iowa Legal Aid. Next focus is looking at landlords to talk about moratorium. Looking at education for magistrates or mediators as well.

Jodi—If your community has a rental registration group, you could mass mail information about assistance.

Do you anticipate a shortage of units in a few months?

Yes, it will likely get worse. There is already a shortage in rural Iowa.

HUD Office Hours provided some guidance.

Encouraged video chat with property owner/landlord, photographs or videos from property owner/landlord when seeking housing, make sure photographs/virtual documentation is date and time stamped. There are no regulations regarding having face to face inspections, so no waiver has been created.

Lead-paint inspections- You can do virtual opportunities for this as well- show paint is not chipping. If no pregnant or small child, then do not have to worry as much. If there is paint chipping and other red flags it is recommended to work with department of healthy homes to get more detailed guidance.

Would certification from landlord saying there is no lead in unit be certification? Currently no rights for self-certification by tenant or landlord. If the landlord provides proof that there is no lead with information and date of construction, newer than 1976. If you have multi apartment building, must also remember to cover common areas.

This is an example memorandum regarding inspections- <https://cceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-DOH-Guidance-RRH-Housing-Search-HQS-Inspections.pdf>

How can you grow relationships with property owners?

Angie—have housing navigator in community. There is an opportunity to bring resources together and build on that.

What is happening in your community around inspections?

Cece—They are happening virtually, or they are working with landlords to have them leave a key.

Who have you gotten support from? What barriers still exist? What can we do to build support?

If there is anything ICA can do in terms of support, please reach out to Courtney or Jess.

Other-

Earlier this year, the Iowa Council on Homelessness approved the plan to create a separate Continuum of Care Board for the Balance of State (the Balance of State covers 96 counties in Iowa, excluding Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury). The Institute for Community Alliances was selected as the lead agency of the BoS CoC and officially took over the work of the CoC lead agency from IFA on April 1, 2020. In conjunction with ICA, this new CoC board would do the work of preparing for the NOFA each year, as well as other strategic plans and priorities for the Balance of State, including Annual Meetings of Grantees and the annual Point in Time Count. As the new Balance of State CoC gets up and running, an interim board has been selected to assist in drafting the initial governance documents and creating a structure that will extend into the permanent board members.

Due to the requirement to have an individual with lived experience on the board, as well as some board member vacancies, we are opening up the application process for the BoS Interim Board to fill at least three vacancies. We are specifically focused on finding board members that fill the gaps of our Board and represent or are part of one of these populations: Homeless or Formerly Homeless Individual, Funding Agency, Criminal Justice, or Substance Abuse. However, we encourage any interested individuals to apply. To be part of the BoS CoC Board, you must live or work in the Balance of State.

Please share this notice to any interested parties.

Those that are interested in applying for the CoC Interim Board may fill out the attached application and return it to courtney.guntly@icalliances.org by 5:00pm on Wednesday, June 10. Please reach out to Courtney with any questions you may have about the process or requirements of the CoC Board.

Next meeting: June 10, 2020. Topic: What processes will continue after shutting down?