

Somerville Arlington Homeless Providers Group Meeting

December 19, 2017

1. Introductions/Sign in

2. Update on Coordinated Entry (Heidi G.)

Meetings will be held with some of the CoC agencies in December and January regarding Coordinated Entry. HUD deadline for basic CoC process in final form is January 23, 2018.

Before the January 23rd deadline, there are Coordinated Entry policies, procedures and documents to update and finalize before the January 23rd deadline and will need approval by the CoC members. The CoC's existing Coordinated Entry intake form, consent form and vulnerability assessment tool that our CoC has developed and have been used by our participating CoC agencies to date were distributed in hard copy to meeting attendees. Using HMIS to assess vulnerability and prioritize people should be more objective than vulnerability tools. Heidi Gold distributed a document titled "Coordinated Entry in Somerville" that describes a basis for conducting assessment and a proposed process. The document also shows a sample screen for entry to a by-name list.

Tasks to be completed before January 23rd:

1. CE project meeting with all the participating providers
2. Coordinated Entry project participation form to be developed and circulated for signature.
3. Written Standards need to be updated
4. Policies and procedures need to be drafted to reflect this policy.
5. Additional items will be addressed in the CE meeting.

Assessment and referrals at all access points need to be standardized. A description of this requirement was distributed to meeting attendees (1.1.4 Standardized Access and Assessment). There can be multiple access points, but they all need to do intake the same way and have uniform criteria and decision-making process for referrals. There was discussion at the meeting of who will do referrals and how that process will work, as well as what type of verification is needed for some of the defining factors and how Respond will participate in the by-name list. This issue will be finalized in the CoC's written policies and procedures, which will be updated for approval by CoC members with the other CE documents.

Some CoC's use a mobile app for entering people from the street.

3. VOA letters of support requested for two grants (VOA and Heidi B)

Matt from VOAMA described a request that the CoC provide a letter of support for VOAMA's application for a SSVP grant. VOAMA provides supportive services for veterans and their families in Plymouth, Norfolk, Middlesex and Suffolk counties. Services include child care, transportation, assistance such as security deposits, mental health programs and addiction treatments, depending on needs. Each veteran is provided with case management (they have four case managers). Some services are provided in-house and some are referred to other agencies. Veterans they serve must have been honorably discharged. VOA operates this program across the country.

Matt will be attending CoC meetings in the future, as his schedule permits. The director of the program is Eileen Merisola.

Meeting attendees voted unanimously to approve a draft letter of support, contingent on edits to be made by Heidi Burbidge, that will be provided to VOAMA.

4. PIT COUNT (Heidi B.)

The PIT Count will take place on January 31st. Agencies are encouraged to supply volunteers who are familiar with Somerville. The PIT route for Somerville was reviewed. Volunteers will be meeting at around 11:30pm on the 31st and will each be part of a team of 4/5 volunteers who will canvass an assigned section of the route, finishing around 4am. The PIT and HIC count are completed on the same night.

5. AHAR update

Lisa Davidson has been working on the AHAR. Also, a cost-sharing agreement for HMIS will be available at the next CoC meeting.

6. 2018 youth count NOFA out

Heidi Burbidge will be submitting an application to DHCD for a grant to support local participation in the Massachusetts Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Count that will take place April 23rd – May 13th, 2018. Agencies will be given surveys to distribute to youth and young adults aged 24 years old and younger. Agencies are also invited and encouraged to participate in planning meetings.

7. Update on merger discussions – meetings begin in Jan with Cambridge and Balance of State

There was a discussion of pros and cons of a merger that included whether there were other CoCs that should be considered to merge with and whether a broader CoC could have multiple hubs.

8. Heading Home – Mayte

Mayte discussed a request that Heading Home is considering making to HUD to allow them to place people outside the Somerville-Arlington geographic area, because it is difficult to find affordable units in this area.

Announcements:

Applications are due December 28th for a lottery with preferences that include individuals and families that are chronically homeless and homeless for units at 52 Sydney and 293 Alewife. The units are part of the 100 Homes program administered by SCC and the City.

The SHA is accepting rolling applications for 25 one-bedroom units for young and disabled or households 62 and up at their Waterworks project.

Next meeting: January 22, 2018—Please note: this meeting date is one week later than the usual monthly meeting date due to meeting with agencies regarding coordinated entry.