

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
GOVERNOR'S COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS

Report on the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness
pursuant to Section 346-381(b) (9), Hawai'i Revised Statutes

December 2016

Section 346-381(b)(9), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), requires the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) to submit a report to the Governor, the Legislature, and Mayor of each county on the progress of its activities, including formation and progress of the ten-year plan to address homelessness, no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session.

This reports highlights the following:

- Overview of the HICH, including its mission and responsibilities, historical background, and staffing and organizational structure;
- Current status of homelessness in Hawai'i;
- Ten-year plan and strategic framework to address homelessness; and
- 2016 HICH activities.

This report relies on two primary sources of data to describe the current situation in Hawai'i related to homeless persons and services – the 2016 statewide Point-In-Time Count (PIT), and the 2016 Homeless Service Utilization Report. The PIT provides an estimate of the number of homeless persons on a given night, and the utilization report provides information about the number of homeless persons utilizing homeless services as reported by service providers into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database.

A record of HICH meetings convened in 2016, including agendas and minutes, can be found online at the [Department of Human Services \(DHS\) website](#).

I. Overview of the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

A. Mission and Purpose

The mission of the HICH is to prevent and end homelessness in Hawai'i. The HICH achieves this mission through the coordination of governmental, private entities, community and homeless service providers, and persons experiencing homelessness statewide. Section 346-381, HRS, outlines the specific duties and responsibilities of the HICH.

B. Membership and Quorum

The HICH consists of 27 members, including a mixture of legislators, representatives from federal, state and county governments, homeless service providers, and the private faith-based and business sectors. Certain members of the HICH are designated by the mayor of their respective county, while others are either designated or requested to serve by the Governor. A majority of members on the HICH – 14 out of 27 members – constitute a quorum.

C. Historical Background

The HICH has existed in a variety of forms over the last decade. Its specific duties and organizational structure have evolved as the HICH transitioned from an informal and voluntary entity to a formal advisory council established in statute. In 2004, the HICH was an informal voluntary council. In 2011, Governor Neil Abercrombie signed Executive Order No. 11-21, formally establishing the HICH, designating the Governor as chair and the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness as vice chair. In 2012, the legislature passed Act 105, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2012, and established the HICH in statute, designating the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness (Coordinator) as Chair. In 2013, the legislature passed Act 76 (SLH 2013), expanding the council membership to include a representative from the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA), and members from the House of Representatives and the Senate. The inclusion of federal, state, and county government representatives as HICH council members is unique when compared to interagency councils on homelessness across the nation.

D. Organizational Structure and Staffing

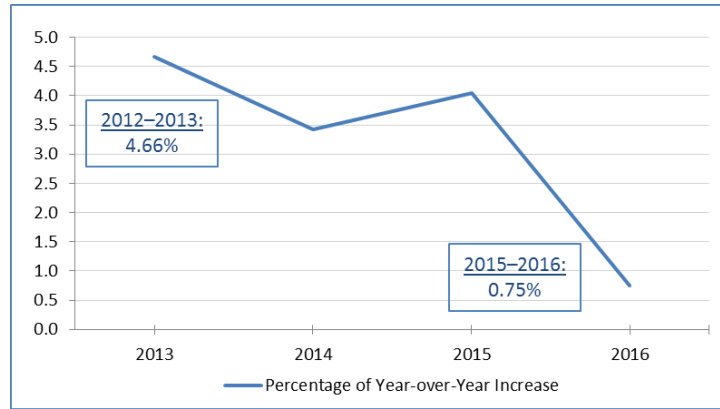
The HICH is established within DHS for administrative purposes. Staff support for the HICH is provided by the Coordinator's staff. Scott Morishige currently serves as the Coordinator and Chair of the HICH. The Coordinator's staff includes Homelessness Assistant Julie Haruki, Administrative Assistant on Homelessness Lanaytte Paia, Special Assistant Julie Ford, and Community Engagement Specialist Tamah-Lani Noh. While physically located within the Office of the Governor, the Coordinator and staff are employees of DHS.

II. Current Status of Homelessness in Hawai'i

A. Homeless Population Trends

When it comes to homelessness in Hawai'i, there is good news and bad news. The bad news is that over the past five years, the number of homeless persons in Hawai'i increased. The good news is that the rate of increase dropped significantly between 2015 and 2016 – from 9% and 10% rate of increase in 2014 and 2015, respectively, to a 4% increase in 2016. On O'ahu, this rate of increase actually declined to less than 1%.

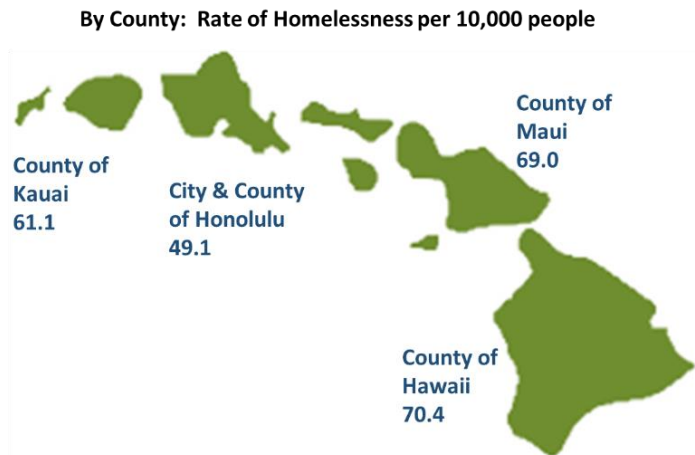
Percentage of year-over-year increase in homelessness on O'ahu



Despite the slowing growth rate, Hawai'i continues to have one of the highest per capita rates of homelessness amongst the 50 states, second only to the District of Columbia.¹ The statewide rate of homelessness in Hawai'i is 54.9 homeless persons per 10,000 people. When taking into account the population size of a county, the rate of homelessness in the City and County of Honolulu was the lowest across all four counties at 49.1 homeless persons per 10,000 people. The highest estimated rate was found in Hawai'i County at 70.4 homeless persons per 10,000 people.²

According to the 2016 PIT, there were about 7,921 people experiencing homelessness in Hawai'i. Nearly two thirds of the homeless population (62.4%) reside in the City and County of Honolulu, about one-third live in Hawai'i County (17.6%) and Maui County (14.6%), and a small proportion (5.6%) reside in Kauai County.

Of the total number of estimated homeless persons, over half (54.4% or 4,308 people) are unsheltered – living on the streets or in parks, beaches, or other places not meant for human habitation. Nearly a quarter of the total number of estimated homeless persons (24.6%, or 1,949 people) are identified as “chronically homeless.” Both the number of unsheltered and chronically homeless persons have risen over prior years – between 2015 and 2016, unsheltered homelessness increased by 12.1% (465 people) and chronic homelessness increased by 27.1% (415 people).



¹ The State of Homelessness in America 2016, Table 1.1: Change in Overall Homelessness, 2014–2015. Retrieved from <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/2016%20State%20Of%20Homelessness.pdf>

² The 2016 county rates of homelessness were calculated based on the estimated county populations derived from 2015 county population estimates and the state's estimated rate of change for population. (Source: The latest data available from the U.S. Census Bureau, retrieved from http://files.Hawaii.gov/dbedt/census/poestimate/2015-county-population-Hawaii/PEP_2015_PEPANNRES.pdf)

Between 2015 and 2016, the number of homeless persons identified as experiencing “chronic substance abuse” increased by 9.6% (135 people). In 2016, nearly one-fifth (19.3% or 1,531 people) of the homeless population experienced “chronic substance abuse.” In addition, 21.1% (1,674 people) of the homeless population identified as “severely mentally ill.”

B. Overview of Current Services to Address Homelessness³

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015, DHS – Homeless Programs Office (HPO) administered \$19,753,752 in state general funds, including \$2,431,724 to provide “maintenance of effort” (MOE) for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

The HPO contracts for a variety of services: Shelter, Outreach, State Homeless Emergency Grant, Housing Placement Program, and Housing First (also known as Permanent Supportive Housing). In addition to state funded services, the federal and local governments fund other homeless programs, including the Continuum of Care (CoC) Permanent Supportive Housing programs, Veterans Assisted Supportive Housing (VASH), and Rapid Rehousing. Client level data for homeless services is maintained in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a system required by HUD. HMIS has the capability to track client level data, demographic information and outcomes data entered by government funded homeless services programs.

The following is a brief description of the major types of homeless services:

- **Outreach Programs** target unsheltered individuals in order to provide resources and referrals for shelter and other services. Over 90% of outreach services are state funded. In SFY 2015, the outreach program served 8,030 homeless people statewide.
- **Shelter Programs** provide a safe place for individuals and families to sleep at night and often include many additional services and resources. The service duration of the emergency shelter program tends to be shorter than that of transitional housing program. The latter program is designed to provide more intensive



HICH staff work join homeless outreach workers to connect homeless individuals to housing resources at a recent outreach effort in downtown Honolulu. Photo: J. Ford

³ Data and analysis presented in this section are largely based on the Homeless Service Utilization Report: Hawai'i, 2015 (Yuan, Vo, Gleason, & Azuma, 2016), and its Statistical Supplement (Yuan, Vo, & Azuma, 2016). Retrieved from <http://uhfamily.Hawai'i.edu/publications/list.aspx>

services to help individuals and families transition gradually into more stable housing situations. The majority of shelter services are funded by the state, including over 95.0% of emergency shelter services and about 85.0% of transitional housing services. During SFY 2015, 8,844 people accessed the shelter program: 56.0% of them received emergency shelter services, slightly more (56.9%) received transitional housing services, and 12.9% received both.



Information regarding available services is shared at community meetings and at housing resource fairs, such as one held recently on Oahu's Leeward Coast in September 2016. Photo. D. Dennison

- **State Homeless Emergency Grant (SHEG)** provides one-time grants to assist persons and families at-risk of homelessness and focuses primarily on homelessness prevention. The grant is used to pay utility bills, medical bills, back rent, or other types of emergency financial obligations that threaten housing stability. Between August 2014 and July 2015, SHEG served a total of 503 households statewide, with the majority of them at-risk of becoming homeless (82.1%) and slightly less than one-fifth residing in transitional housing, emergency shelter, or an unsheltered homeless situation (17.8%).
- **Housing Placement Programs (HPP)** serve TANF-eligible households with minor children by helping them search for, secure, and retain permanent housing. Housing placement services include pre- and post- housing counseling, employment assistance, housing search, landlord engagement, and assistance with initial move-in costs, such as rent, security deposit, utility, and utility deposit payments. In SFY15, HPP provided housing placement services to a total of 845 TANF-eligible families, including 1,375 adults and 2,003 children.
- **Rapid Rehousing (RR)** is part of a newer strategy designed to provide targeted support to those who have recently become homeless to enable their return to stable housing as quickly as possible. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) along with Veterans Affairs (VA) provide funding for RR services, with HUD providing 43.0% and VA providing 57.0% of RR funding. In SFY 2015, this program served a total of 981 clients statewide.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** provides housing and ongoing support to homeless persons and families who might otherwise be unable to sustain housing on their own. Services aimed at helping those with disabling conditions, including mental health or substance abuse issues, by pairing housing with case management and other

support services to increase the likelihood these clients will remain housed.⁴ In SFY15, HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) funding served the majority of people (786, or 64.0%) enrolled in PSH.

C. Service Gaps and Opportunities

Based on the homeless population trends and current services described above, the following are gaps in services and opportunities to pursue:

- **Sustain funding for Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing** – For chronically homeless persons, we know what works. The State and City's Housing First (HF) programs – part of the PSH programs – have an overall housing retention rate of 98.1% in SFY16. The drawback is that the programs are expensive and are currently only serving a fraction of the “chronically homeless” population. Ongoing investment for housing and supportive services are required to maintain housing stability. Due to the many complexities facing the chronically homeless, they are the most difficult segment of the homeless population to house.



Outreach workers assess an individual's acuity using the VI-SPDAT and connect individuals to the appropriate program. Photo: J. Ford

- **Expand Rapid Rehousing services statewide** – For the segment of the homeless population just below the chronic level, RR programs result in permanent housing. The program had a 73.4% success rate, the highest rate of exit to permanent housing. Again, continued funding is required. The number of people served was limited to 981 in SFY15 due to limited funding.
- **Expand substance abuse and mental health services for the unsheltered population** – The majority of homeless persons experiencing “chronic substance abuse” and the “severely mentally ill” are unsheltered, 72.8% (1,114 people) and 71.1% (1,190 people), respectively. There is a need to link homeless outreach services with targeted substance abuse treatment and mental health services to address the needs of this growing population. When combined with outreach and housing services, substance abuse treatment and mental health services provide the necessary supports to transition unsheltered persons from the streets to permanent and stable housing.

⁴ Excerpts from the Homeless Service Utilization Report: Hawai'i, 2015 (Yuan, Vo, Gleason, & Azuma, 2016).

The data regarding the current state of homelessness suggests an opportunity to “double down” on housing retention with the following strategies:

- **Continue momentum** - Maintain the State’s Housing First program on O’ahu, which has a high rate of housing retention.
- **Expand Housing First** - Roll out the State’s Housing First program to the neighbor islands to mitigate the growing number of chronically homeless persons in those communities.
- **Bolster funding** - Expand the level of funding for Rapid Rehousing services statewide.
- **Cast a wider net** - Expand outreach services, including specific funding for substance abuse treatment and mental health services.

The HICH and the Coordinator will address all of the above through the State Framework to Address Homelessness, and the implementation of the State’s strategic plan.

III. Ten-Year Plan and Strategic Framework to Address Homelessness

A. Statutory Mandate

Section 346-381(a), HRS, tasks the HICH to “formulate, and advise the governor on the implementation of, a unified ten-year statewide plan to address homelessness in all Hawai’i Counties.” Additionally, the HICH is required to “report annually to the governor, the legislature, and the mayor of each county on the progress of its activities, including formulation and progress of the ten-year plan.” Section 346-381(b) (9).



Chair Morishige and the HICH review the Ten-Year Strategic Plan and formally adopt the Hawai’i State Framework to Address Homelessness at a council meeting in August 2016. Photo: J. Ford

B. Ten-Year Strategic Plan to End Homelessness

The HICH formally adopted the Ten-Year Strategic Plan to End Homelessness (“Ten-Year Plan”) on September 10, 2012. The plan was developed following a twelve-month strategic planning process with input from service providers and key stakeholders in all four counties.

The Ten-Year Plan identifies four specific goals, outlines objectives and strategies to achieve each goal. The four goals are:

- **Goal 1: Retool the Homeless Crisis Response System**

This includes refocusing homeless services into a crisis response system that prevents homelessness and rapidly returns people experiencing homelessness to stable housing. A retooled homeless crisis response system also prioritizes critical services for funding, and ensures that information systems are integrated to improve effectiveness and efficiency of service provision.

- **Goal 2: Increase Access to Stable and Affordable Housing**

This includes the production and preservation of affordable housing, as well as the specific creation and preservation of permanent supportive housing options. This goal aims to improve access to government-funded affordable housing, including public housing and the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

- **Goal 3: Increase Economic Stability and Self-sufficiency**

This includes increasing meaningful and sustainable employment for people experiencing homelessness, and improving access to appropriate mainstream programs and services that reduce financial vulnerability.

- **Goal 4: Improve Health and Stability**

This includes integrating primary and behavioral health care services with homeless and housing assistance programs. In addition, there is a focus on health and stability for youth aging out of foster care and juvenile systems, and attention for people experiencing homelessness who have frequent contact with hospitals and the criminal justice system.

The full text of the Ten-Year Plan is found at the [DHS website](#).

C. Hawai'i State Framework to Address Homelessness

In August 2016, building upon the strong foundation of the Ten-Year Plan and other previous plans, the HICH adopted a formal Hawai'i State Framework to Address Homelessness ("State Framework") to move Hawai'i forward in a way that is *pono* (Hawaiian for good, upright, righteous, correct, or proper). The State Framework was developed based on input received from federal, state, and local governments, service providers and other representatives from the



An example of retooling the homeless crisis response system is the Coordinated Statewide Homeless Initiative (CSHI) partnership with Aloha United Way (AUW). The CSHI strengthened AUW's 2-1-1 system and prevented or ended homelessness for over 3,000 individuals. At a meeting in July 2016, Governor David Ige meets with AUW and DHS leadership to discuss CSHI efforts. Photo: J. Ford

private sector.

The State Framework embraces 'Ohana Nui, a multigenerational approach that invests early and concurrently in children and families to improve health, education, employment and other outcomes to improve well-being. DHS in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH), leads the 'Ohana Nui effort to improve the delivery of government services from an individual to a multigenerational approach.

The State Framework strategically presses on three levers to address homelessness:



Service providers, funders, and other stakeholders provided comments and feedback on the proposed Stated Framework at a listening session held in June 2016. Photo: J. Ford

- **Affordable Housing** – Hawai'i must build more affordable housing and maximize the use of existing inventory.
- **Health and Human Services** – Hawai'i will implement best practice approaches for services that are evidence-based and move homeless persons quickly into permanent housing, including close monitoring of the results of these services.
- **Public Safety** – Hawai'i will coordinate public safety efforts alongside homeless outreach, so that homeless persons are not simply asked to vacate a specific area; rather they are approached with respect and given personalized options to quickly connect to appropriate services and housing.

The State Framework establishes that by 2020 the homeless response system will complete the transition to a Housing First system that connects people experiencing homelessness with the opportunity to move quickly into permanent housing. The State Framework establishes the benchmark of reaching "functional zero" – the point where Hawai'i has sufficient housing for the number of homeless people statewide, and has appropriate services to transition the homeless population to permanent housing, regardless of level of need. Functional zero is not a measure of ending homelessness, but instead means that Hawai'i has the full capacity and resources needed to connect people to shelter or permanent housing.

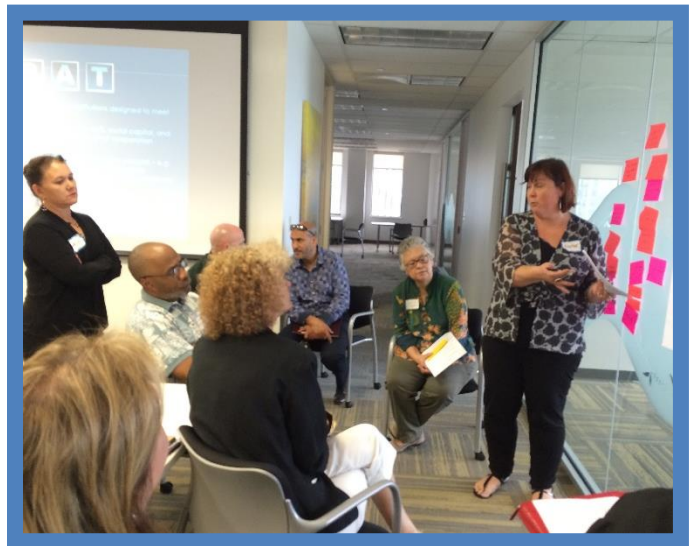
An executive summary of the State Framework can be found on the [Office of the Governor](#) website.

D. Implementation of the Ten-Year Plan and State Framework

In 2016, HICH staff and its membership moved forward with implementation of the Ten-Year Plan and State Framework with the following key achievements:

- **Goal 1: Retool the Homeless Crisis Response System**

- **New RFPs reflect a Housing-focused approach** – In response to changes in federal policy and directives included in Act 124 (SLH 2016), DHS-HPO issued new Requests for Proposals for homeless services (e.g. Housing Placement, SHEG, Shelter, and Outreach, etc.) that focused on housing, and included specific performance benchmarks for permanent housing placement and reduced length of stay in shelter.
- **Expanded Rapid Rehousing and Prevention Resources** – The Coordinated Statewide Homeless Initiative (CSHI) with Aloha United Way (AUW) prevented or ended homelessness for over-1,000 households (3,471 people), and exceeded initial performance targets by over 15%. By utilizing a “master contract” with AUW, CSHI brought immediate relief to at-risk and homeless households in every county.
- **Changed the paradigm of homeless shelter** – The City and County of Honolulu opened the Hale Mauiola housing navigation center at Sand Island, and the State funded the Family Assessment Center (FAC) in Kaka’ako. These new programs emphasize rapid placement to housing. The FAC moved its first family into housing in 21 days, and Hale Mauiola linked over 100 chronically homeless persons to housing, including 2 individuals who became homeowners.
- **Alignment of multiple funding efforts** – The Coordinator established a funders' collaborative consisting of representatives from the State, City and County of Honolulu, Partners In Care (PIC), Bridging The Gap (BTG), Hawai’i Community Foundation, and AUW. The group is working to align federal, state, local and philanthropic funding efforts, and to increase communication and collaboration.



Throughout 2016, HICH staff and members participated in a series of systems mapping and technical assistance sessions aimed at strengthening the homeless service system and identifying opportunities for innovation. Photo: J. Ford

- **Goal 2: Increase Access to Stable and Affordable Housing**

- **Increased overall housing production** - The housing supply in Kaka’ako increased by 2,260 units (44% affordable, with more units planned).
- **Reduced turnaround time for public housing renovations** – Public housing units are being renovated in record time, using a multi-skilled team approach. In some

cases, what used to take 200 days now takes only 7 days. The result is vacant public housing units quickly become available for occupancy.

- **Expanded housing inventory and resources for Native Hawaiian families** – This year 284 lots were prepared for house construction by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL).



Landlord summits were convened throughout the state. The summits provided an opportunity for interested landlords to connect with social service providers to learn more about programs such as Housing First and the Housing Placement Program for homeless families. Photo: B. Matson

- **Partnered with local landlords to maximize inventory** – Landlord summits were convened on several islands to expand the number of landlords, property managers, and rental supply of homes. The State, Counties of Honolulu, Hawai'i, and Maui, PIC and BTG teamed up with the Hawai'i Association of Realtors to expand the inventory of rentals available to the homeless population.

- **Opened Section 8 wait list for the first time in a decade** – The Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA) opened the Section 8 wait list, and awarded 120 vouchers to homeless individuals and families. In addition, HPHA established a

Special Rent Supplement program that served nearly 100 additional homeless families.

- **Goal 3: Increase Economic Stability and Self-Sufficiency**
 - **Connect homeless families to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and critical lifeline services** - CSHI connected homeless families and individuals to SNAP benefits and free lifeline telephone services. Additionally, CSHI provided 3,005 referrals to 1,184 callers through AUW's 2-1-1 homeless help line.
 - **Address the needs of children and families early and concurrently** – DHS and DOH are developing the state's 'Ohana Nui multi-generational approach to streamline and improve the delivery government services to individuals and families.
- **Goal 4: Improve Health and Stability**
 - **Strengthened intersection between healthcare and housing** – DHS received technical assistance from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicaid Innovation Accelerator Program (IAP), Community Partnership track, to use Medicaid benefits for support services to assist homeless persons in maintaining tenancy following housing placement. The IAP included participation by HICH members from DHS, DOH, HPHA, and the Coordinator's office.

- **Piloted new models for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** – The State and City and County of Honolulu partnered to place chronically homeless persons from the Hawai'i Pathways Project (HPP) into housing at various city-owned properties. In this model, the state provides funding for supportive services and case management, while the City provides funding for housing units and housing vouchers. Governor David Ige's emergency proclamations to address homelessness allowed County governments to accelerate the development of permanent housing projects that will specifically benefit homeless persons and brought at least 392 additional units online over the past year.



The State and the City and County of Honolulu are partnering to pilot new models of Permanent Supportive Housing. In September 2016, Chair Morishige joined Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell at a public announcement of the City's new Kuwili Street housing project in Iwilei. Photo: J. Ford

- **Addressed discharge planning and transition of inmates exiting from incarceration** – The Department of Public Safety (PSD) established a formal Re-Entry Coordination Office (RCO), and revitalized PSD's comprehensive re-entry plan. The plan includes streamlining access to services for offenders by partnering with DHS, and working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) and counties to streamline the process for offenders to obtain state identification.
- **Aligned efforts to address the needs of homeless youth** – PIC submitted an application for federal funding for a Youth Homeless Demonstration Program. The application aligned efforts between state and county agencies and non-profit providers. Participating HICH members were DHS, Department of Education (DOE), and PIC. Even if the application is not selected for funding, it provides a blueprint for stakeholders to address youth homelessness in a coordinated manner.

IV. 2016 Activities of the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

A. Regular Meeting Schedule

The HICH convened four times in calendar year 2016. Meetings were held on the following dates: July 11, 2016; August 29, 2016; October 17, 2016; and December 12, 2016. Quorum was established at all four meetings. Agendas and minutes for HICH meetings are available online on the [DHS website](#).

B. Presentations to the HICH

The HICH provides a unique opportunity to connect with local and national experts addressing homelessness, and to share information and resources with HICH members and the public. Meetings convened in 2016 included presentations by the following organizations and individuals:

- **Hawai'i Leadership Forum** – Project Design Coach Aubrey Yee and Systems and Complexity Associate Sam Dorios presented on systems;
- **United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)** – Regional Coordinator Ms. Katy Miller presented on the national activities and framework related to homelessness;
- **Hawai'i DOH, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD)** – Deputy Director Lynn Fallin and ADAD Division Chief Edward Mersereau presented on the status of the Hawai'i Pathways Project (HPP);
- **Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and DHS MQD** – CSH Senior Program Manager Ms. Sue Augustus and MQD Administrator Judy Mohr Peterson presented on the Innovation Accelerator Program;
- **HomeBase and OrgCode Consulting, Inc.** – Ms. Piper Ehlen from HomeBase and Mr. Iain DeJong from OrgCode presented on the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and the intersection with the State Framework to Address Homelessness;
- **HomeAid Hawai'i** – Executive Director Ms. Nani Medeiros presented on private sector efforts to address homelessness; and
- **Partners in Care (PIC) and Bridging the Gap (BTG)** – PIC Director Ms. Jennifer Stasch and BTG representative Ms. Maude Cumming presented on the 2016 Continuum of Care program competition and priorities. Additionally, Ms. Stasch and BTG representative Ms. Brandee Menino presented on the plans for the 2017 PIT.

C. Actions of the HICH

The HICH has the authority to make recommendations regarding policy and programming to address homelessness. In 2016, the HICH voted and took action on the following items:

- **Adopted the State Framework to Address Homelessness** – The State Framework was formally adopted at the August 29, 2016 regular meeting. The motion passed with 20 members voting in the affirmative, and one member abstaining;
- **Established a PIG to review HICH structure and make recommendations** – At the August 29, 2016 meeting, pursuant to section 92-2.5, HRS, HICH established a permitted interaction group (PIG) to investigate specific matters relating to the official business of the council. The PIG members are: the Chair and representatives from DHS, PIC, BTG, County of Maui, the Senate, and a member of the House of Representatives;
- **Established a PIG to review and develop a sustainability plan for the Hawai'i Pathways Project** – Another PIG was established at the August 29, 2016 regular meeting. The PIG consists of the Chair and representatives from DHS, DOH, PIC, BTG, and the City and County of Honolulu;
- **Adopted a resolution requesting the Hawai'i State Legislature, City and County Councils, and the Continua of Care (CoCs) to utilize the Hawai'i State Framework to Address Homelessness to guide the formulation of policies and programming to address homelessness** – This resolution was formally adopted at the October 17, 2016 regular meeting. The resolution was subsequently transmitted to the Hawai'i State Legislature, City and County Councils, and the CoCs; and
- **Established a PIG to review and provide support for the 2017 statewide homeless PIT** – A third PIG was formally established at the December 12, 2016 regular meeting. The PIG consists of the Chair and representatives from DHS, PIC, and the BTG.



HICH meetings include the opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the council's actions and other issues related to homelessness. A member of the public provides testimony above at the July 2016 meeting of the council. Photo: J. Ford

V. Conclusion

The HICH and the community has made tremendous progress implementing the Ten-Year Plan and moving the three levers of the State Framework. The homeless response system has embraced the broader philosophy Housing First. Key indicators of progress include: high retention rates in the Housing First programs, consistent use of the VI-SPDAT for coordinated access to services, performance based contracting, and significantly, a decreasing growth rate of the homeless population. Beyond numbers, the new paradigm has changed lives by moving individuals and families experiencing homelessness into housing.

Homelessness in Hawai'i remains the foremost challenge that requires a complete system approach, a significant commitment of time, resources, and a high level of resiliency by all involved. For more information on state efforts to address homelessness, please contact the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness at (808) 586-0193 or gov.homelessness@Hawai'i.gov.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Affordable Housing—In general, housing is considered “affordable” when the cost is less than 30% of a household’s income. When housing costs exceed this amount, a household is considered to be housing-cost burdened. With an estimated 57.5% of renters paying more than one-third of their income to rent, Hawai’i has the second highest number of cost-burdened renters in the nation.⁵ The households who face the most severe lack of affordable housing are the extremely low income, who earn less than 30% Area Median Income (AMI), or less than \$28,750 per year for a household of four in Honolulu.

Chronically Homeless—A person who is chronically homeless is a homeless person with a disability who has been homeless continuously for at least 12 months, or has been homeless on at least four separate occasions over the past three years. The combined length of time in those four or more occasions must be twelve months or more, as specified in the Final Rule on the definition of “chronically homeless” issued by HUD in December 2015.⁶ A chronically homeless family is a family with an adult head of household who meets the definition for a chronically homeless person.

Continuum of Care (CoC)—A CoC is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding from HUD for homeless families and persons. In Hawai’i there are two CoCs – Partners in Care for the island of O’ahu, and Bridging the Gap for the balance of the state. Each CoC includes membership from government agencies, homeless service providers, funders, and other interested members of the community. Each CoC is responsible for submitting an annual application for federal homeless assistance funds. The federal funding for homeless services are sometimes also referred to as “CoC funds.” In addition to applying for funding, the CoC is also tasked with administering the annual PIT Count of the homeless population and the annual Housing Inventory Count. These counts provide an overview of the state of homelessness in a CoC.

Coordinated Entry System—Coordinated entry is a process to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. A coordinated entry system helps communities to prioritize housing and homeless assistance based on a homeless person’s vulnerability and the severity of their needs, so that people who need assistance the most can receive it in a timely manner. Federal law requires that CoCs establish a coordinated entry system.

Emergency Shelter—An emergency shelter generally is a facility with overnight sleeping accommodations that provides short-term, temporary shelter for homeless persons and does not require occupants to sign a lease or occupancy agreement. Emergency shelters differ from

⁵ Corporation for Enterprise Development. *Assets & Opportunity Score Card, Housing Cost Burden – Renters*. Available at: <http://scorecard.assetsandopportunity.org/latest/measure/housing-cost-burden-renters>. Accessed April 25, 2016.

⁶ Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Defining “Chronically homeless.” 80 Fed. Reg. 75791. (December 4, 2015).

transitional housings (also known as transitional housing) that typically allows a maximum stay of up to 24 months.

Functional Zero—This is a point where a community has both sufficient and appropriate housing resources to assist homeless persons encountered in their community. Functional zero does not mean that there is zero homelessness, but instead means that a community has the full capacity and resources needed to connect people to shelter or permanent housing.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)—The HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data, and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless persons and families, as well as persons at immediate risk of homelessness. The HMIS system is owned and administered by the CoC—Partners in Care and Bridging the Gap.

Homeless Service Utilization Report—The utilization report is an annual report produced by the University of Hawai'i Center on the Family and the HPO. The report provides an analysis of homeless service programs that input data into the HMIS. The utilization report typically focuses on data captured within a state fiscal year.

Homeless Outreach—The work of homeless outreach includes meeting homeless persons on streets or sidewalks, or in remote rural areas that includes beaches and valleys. Outreach providers assist with the completion of program applications, the determination of program eligibility, housing search and placement, and work with the person to obtain identification and other vital documents (e.g., birth certificate or social security card).

Housing First—Housing First is a philosophy that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed. In a Housing First approach, there is an immediate and primary focus on accessing and sustaining permanent housing for all homeless populations. In addition to the Housing First philosophy, the term is used to refer to specific permanent supportive housing programs operated by the state and the city and county of Honolulu. The state and city Housing First programs adopt the philosophy, but also specifically target chronically homeless households for services.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC)—The HIC is a PIT inventory of programs within a CoC that provide beds and units dedicated to serve persons who are homeless. The HIC includes beds for emergency shelter and transitional housing, as well as permanent housing beds.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE)—The provision of federal funds usually includes provisions that require a state to expend state revenue at a specified level that meet the purpose of the federal funds. Each federal program (TANF, Medicaid, Child care, etc.) has its own MOE requirements. Thus, the expenditure of state funds is the measurement used to assess a state's success in meeting the MOE requirements. The failure to meet the MOE requirements may result in a reduction of federal funds. For example, failure to meet the specified MOE for TANF may result in a reduction of the TANF Block Grant.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)—PSH is a service delivery model that combines low-barrier affordable housing, health care, and supportive services to enable homeless persons to attain and maintain permanent housing. PSH programs typically target chronically homeless persons, or homeless persons who experience multiple barriers to housing and are unable to maintain housing stability without supportive services. PSH programs have been shown to not only impact housing status, but also result in cost savings to various public service systems, including health care. The state and city Housing First programs that target chronically homeless persons are both examples of a PSH program.

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count—A PIT Count is an unduplicated count on a single night of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness, and includes both the sheltered and unsheltered populations. HUD requires that communities receiving federal funds for homeless services conduct a PIT Count at least every other year. During these counts, communities are required to identify whether a person is an individual, a member of a family unit, or an unaccompanied youth under the age of 18. In addition, communities must identify if a person is chronically homeless.

Rapid Rehousing (RR)—RR places a priority on moving a family or individual experiencing homelessness into permanent housing as quickly as possible. The duration of financial assistance provided in a RR program can include either short-term (up to 3-months) or medium-term (6-months to 24-months) support. In general, the core components of RR are housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program—“Section 8” refers to Section 8 of the Housing Act, which authorizes the payment of rental housing assistance to private landlords for low-income households. A common form of Section 8 assistance is the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program, also known as the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which provides direct rental payment to the landlord. Typically, a Section 8 voucher recipient will pay one-third of their income toward rent, with the remaining balance of rent provided by the Section 8 voucher payment. A Section 8 voucher typically provides a full rental subsidy, as opposed to a shallow rental subsidy.

Shallow Rental Subsidy—Shallow rental subsidy or shallow subsidy refers to financial assistance for housing costs that cover only a fixed portion of the rent for a period of time, as opposed to the full cost of the entire rent on an ongoing basis. The RR program and the special rent supplement program are two different examples of a shallow rental subsidy.

Transitional Housing—Transitional housing, also referred to as transitional housing, is designed to provide homeless persons and families with temporary stability and support, so that they are able to eventually move to and maintain permanent housing. Transitional housing is generally for a period of up to 24 months of housing with accompanying supportive services.

Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)—The VI-SPDAT is a common tool used to assess the level of need for homeless persons seeking housing

assistance. There are different versions of the VI-SPDAT for use with individuals, families with minor children, and for youth. The tool is used to triage homeless persons into three levels of need—permanent supportive housing, RR, and diversion. The CoC in Hawai'i —both on O'ahu and the neighbor islands have adopted the VI-SPDAT as a common assessment tool for the state's homeless service system.