



## Strategies to Address the Unique Needs of Individuals in the Intersection of Criminal Justice, Behavioral Health and Homelessness

From chronic homelessness to housing insecurity, the lack of safe and affordable housing impacts the delivery of much needed mental health and substance use treatment services. From individuals who slipped into incarceration due to crimes of poverty, substance use and untreated mental illness to those whose reentry is compromised because there is no place to call home, the deficiency of housing options is putting individuals at great risk of health care emergencies, recidivism or more likely both.

Strategies	Local Action	State Action
<p><b><i>Link the Criminal Justice System to the Homeless Crisis Response System</i></b></p>	<p>Establish a CES access point to assess the individuals exiting state and local incarceration. Partners included in CES should include criminal justice – probation, parole, sheriffs/jail administrators, and the courts.</p> <p>Provide resources to criminal justice partners to support individuals under their jurisdiction achieve a successful transition home. Consider how additional resources can help prioritize housing for the most vulnerable, high risk and high need individuals with mental illness, substance use and justice involvement.</p> <p>Counties who use the Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Tool (VI-SPDAT) or other assessment tool should include justice status as part of this tool.</p>	<p>Provide resources to develop a reentry diversion program for those individuals who were experiencing homelessness prior to entering the institution and provide resources when they engage with the local CES.</p> <p>Identify and disseminate best practices in the application of CES with criminal justice referral entities. Provide guidance to criminal justice partners on how to define homelessness and align definitions</p> <p>The Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) should expand the homelessness definition beyond CFR 24 Section 578.3 for all programs that receive state funding.</p> <p>The expanded definition should include an individual or family that is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for more than 90 days and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering the institution.</p> <p>Study strategies to improve the vulnerability assessment of individuals who are justice-involved and living mental illness and substance use disorders so that they are more sensitive and relevant to the circumstances of someone who has been in an institution.</p>

**Strategies to Address the Unique Needs of Individuals in the Intersection of Criminal Justice, Behavioral Health and Homelessness**  
**September 18, 2019**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Local Action</b>	<b>State Action</b>
<p><b><i>Support the Expansion of Housing and Housing Assistance Options</i></b></p>	<p>If viable, counties and cities can go directly to the voters to get more resources to develop affordable housing and to address homelessness either through additional local taxes or bond measures.</p> <p>Local Continuums of Care (CoCs) should work with housing developers to use state homelessness funding to address the complex housing needs of justice involved individuals (youth and adults) with behavioral health challenges.</p> <p>Counties can apply for capital development funding to develop permanent supportive housing for people with mental illness who are homeless or at risk of chronic homelessness. Funding sources could include programs administered by the California Housing and Community Development (HCD), California Veteran Affairs (CalVet), California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC), and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Place Like Home Program / HCD</li> <li>• Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program / HCD, CalVet, CalHFA</li> <li>• Multifamily Housing Program-Supportive Housing / HCD</li> <li>• Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program / TCAC</li> <li>• Whole Person Care Pilots / DHCS</li> </ul>	<p>CCJBH can provide guidance to maximize the use of Medi-Cal so that resources saved on healthcare, including by parole and probation, can be directed towards housing for the reentry population ranging from rental assistance to transitional and permanent supportive housing. This can be based on guidance provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2015.</p> <p>CCBJH in collaboration with other state departments can provide guidance on how funding sources like Public Safety Realignment, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), Proposition 47 and other non-Medi-Cal resources can be used for housing options for the justice-involved with behavioral health challenges.</p> <p>Support housing and service providers to explore opportunities to expand group housing options as an alternative to single family units.</p>
<p><b><i>Support Housing Best Practices</i></b></p>	<p>The first step in achieving the implementation of best practices is for local system partners from the homelessness and criminal justice systems is to have a better understanding of each other.</p>	<p>Provide resources to strengthen CoCs including for infrastructure and capacity-building such as training and technical assistance, data collection, cross-system collaborations, program and policy development, and strategic planning.</p>

**Strategies to Address the Unique Needs of Individuals in the Intersection of Criminal Justice, Behavioral Health and Homelessness**  
**September 18, 2019**

Strategies	Local Action	State Action
	<p>Criminal Justice partners can reach out to CoCs to learn more about how various housing first models (i.e. emergency shelters, rapid rehousing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and residential treatment) are including equal opportunities for those being released from institutions like jails, prisons and state hospitals.</p> <p>CoCs and housing partners can collaborate with criminal justice partners to understand the role of community supervision and court-ordered treatment and supervision.</p>	<p>CCJBH can work with the HCFC to ensure that required conditions of parole and probation can co-exists with <i>Housing First</i> requirements and best practices.</p> <p>California’s <i>Housing Frist</i> requirements should be inclusive of recovery housing as long as it is the individual’s choice. In addition, <i>Housing First</i> requirements should take into consideration the reality of limited housing options, which often limits available choices.</p> <p>CCJBH can identify, in collaboration with CoCs, what additional guidance or training and technical assistance can support the adoption of <i>Housing First</i> practices for individuals who have to comply with supervision requirements.</p>
<p><b><i>Create Equitable Housing Assistance Opportunities and Combat Housing Discrimination</i></b></p>	<p>Without understanding who is homeless and why, communities cannot prioritize limited resources. Local CoCs need guidance and support to collect appropriate information about justice status (i.e. probation vs parole, recently released from jail vs prison, etc.) to equitably plan and provide assistance.</p> <p>Communities must be adequately resourced to coordinate a comprehensive set of strategies that collect information and data from places who work with people who are homeless including jails, prisons, state hospitals and juvenile detention facilities.</p> <p>Homeless Management Information Systems and other data sources should build and maintain information about people experiencing homelessness and their outcomes.</p>	<p>CCJBH will participate in the development of the Statewide Homeless Information Management System to ensure that justice status is being collected with appropriate specificity so that it can be considered as a variable in increased access to housing and housing assistance.</p> <p>CCBJH can review local policies and ensure they are consistent with federal and state law, and consider ways to support Californians to know their housing rights and how to file grievances when they are denied. Widely disseminate available resources from the CA Department of Fair Employment and Housing at <a href="https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/Housing/">https://www.dfeh.ca.gov/Housing/</a></p> <p>CCJBH can monitor local and state efforts that reduce the criminalization of homelessness for people with behavioral health issues, report on trends and identify best practices.</p> <p>HCD should incentivize permanent supportive housing projects that are granted by right streamlining approval.</p>

**Strategies to Address the Unique Needs of Individuals in the Intersection of Criminal Justice, Behavioral Health and Homelessness**  
**September 18, 2019**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Local Action</b>	<b>State Action</b>
	<p>Local jurisdictions should encourage developers to site permanent supportive housing in by-right zones where multifamily and mixed-use development is permitted.</p> <p>Improve access to local Public Housing Authority (PHA) resources for individuals who have convictions by modifying standards of admission/screening – e.g. shorten the length of time in which a review of a conviction or public safety concern can be considered, use individualized assessments and allow explanations for special circumstances, eliminating all provisions screening applicants out of the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) and Public Housing programs due to probation or parole status, and direct the PHA to prioritize people who are justice involved and have a behavioral health or serious health need for Section 8 or other public housing.</p>	<p>Strengthen state-level efforts to combat Not in My Backyard community responses for housing for individuals with behavioral health needs and/or individuals who have been formerly incarcerated.</p> <p>Explore how the Housing Accountability Act can enforce actions taken by local jurisdictions to curb the development of housing for special need populations.</p>