



Building bridges to prevent incarceration

Listening Session

Responding to the Request for Input from the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) to Inform the Development of their Strategic Plan

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Quick Notes:

**** This meeting is being recorded ****

- **Use the “raise hand” feature to make a comment**
- *You will be placed in line to comment in the order in which requests are received by the host.*
- **When it is your turn to comment, the meeting host will unmute your line and announce your name.**
- *Members of the public should be prepared to complete their comments within 3 minutes or less if a different time allotment is needed and announced by the Executive Officer.*

Email: CCJBH@cdcr.ca.gov



Agenda

Time	Topic
11:00 AM	Welcome – CCJBH Executive Officer Brenda Grealish
11:05 AM	USICH Background
11:10 AM	Overview of the Six USICH Questions
11:15 – 11:50 AM	Discussion/Feedback on Each Questions
11:50 PM	Next Steps



USICH - Background

- The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) is the only federal agency with the sole mission of preventing and ending homelessness in America.
- USICH works across 19 federal agencies, with partners in both the public and private sectors, to create partnerships, use resources in the most efficient and effective ways, and implement evidence-based practices to achieve the goals of the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.
- USICH launched the first Federal Strategic Plan in 2010, with amendments published in 2015 and 2018.



USICH – Background (Continued)

- USICH recently started the process to create a new Federal Strategic Plan to prevent and end homelessness.
- USICH is requesting input from people who are part of the response to homelessness, people who have a vested interest in ending homelessness, and people with lived experience.
- To prepare a comprehensive response, CCJBH is hosting this listening session to gather input from a broad range of perspectives regarding barriers and best practices to combat homelessness for the behavioral health and justice involved (BH/JI) populations.



USICH Questions 1-6



Overview of USICH Questions

1. What should the federal government's top priorities be as they relate to preventing and ending homelessness?
2. What are the biggest barriers to ending homelessness in the community your agency/organization serves?
3. How can the federal government more effectively center racial equity and support equitable access and outcomes at a local level?
4. What lessons have you learned during the COVID-19 pandemic about how housing, health and supportive service systems can best respond to people experiencing homelessness?



Overview of USICH Questions

5. Both *Opening Doors* and *Home, Together* included a goal to end homelessness for all Americans, as well as goals to end homelessness among specific subpopulations. For the next plan: Would it be helpful to have similar goals? If so, should there be subpopulation-specific goals or just one goal to end all homelessness? Should the goals include target dates?
6. Is there anything else you wish to add?



Question 1

What should the federal government's top priorities be as they relate to preventing and ending homelessness?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- Expand the current definition of homelessness developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to include "at risk" of homelessness.
- Incentivize the prioritization of housing for the BH/JI population in future housing funding opportunities and build off the success of California's Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool.
- Increase the availability of affordable housing units by converting underutilized infrastructure and land, and by scaling up "Pay for Success" models to allocate available funds.



Question 1 (Continued)

What should the federal government's top priorities be as they relate to preventing and ending homelessness?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts (continued):

- Fund research to better understand how and why individuals become homelessness.
- Offer training to the housing workforce to do more outreach and engagement of the homeless population and link efforts with system counterparts (e.g., primary care, behavioral health, criminal justice).
- Fund scholarships for peers to achieve necessary training to support the efforts of local Continuums of Care (CoCs).



Question 1 (Continued)

What should the federal government's top priorities be as they relate to preventing and ending homelessness?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts (continued):

- The federal government could provide guidance on prioritizing the BH/JI population in existing housing policy documents (e.g., Coordinated Entry Standards and Public Housing Agency Plans).
- Health and housing can be more closely integrated by evaluating / considering the CA Department of Health Care Services' CalAIM Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports benefits for national implementation.
- Establish and implement training and technical assistance specific to housing the BH/JI population.



Question 2

What are the biggest barriers to ending homelessness in the community your agency/organization serves?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- HUD's current definition of chronic homelessness, which does not include those "at risk" of homelessness.
- Stigma/fear from members of the community and community providers.
- Policy barriers by housing providers, such as criminal record restrictions.
- The high up-front cost for and lack of permanent supportive housing.
- The criminalization of behaviors associated with behavioral health conditions and homelessness.



Question 2 (continued)

What are the biggest barriers to ending homelessness in the community your agency/organization serves?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts (continued):

- Silos across the multiple systems that serve the BH/JI population, which includes a lack of understanding of each other's purpose, processes, and operations.
- Lack of available / accessible data to inform the development of policies and programs. In particular, data on the housing needs of people who are incarcerated.



Question 3

How can the federal government more effectively center racial equity and support equitable access and outcomes at a local level?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- Publicly recognize that individuals of color are overrepresented in both the criminal justice system and among those people experiencing homelessness in California.
- Invest in efforts to perform psychometric research on the screening instruments used to determine housing eligibility to ensure they are free of racial and ethnic bias.
- Prohibit government funding for agencies that apply biased screening criteria that prevent access to housing for any group in need of such services.



Question 3 (continued)

How can the federal government more effectively center racial equity and support equitable access and outcomes at a local level?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts (continued):

- Invest in uniform quality data collection and analyses to fully understand service needs and gaps for the BH/JI population in order to inform the development of strategies and investments to optimize their life and community outcomes, and use these data to ensure local CoCs are using funding in an effective and equitable manner.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of current regulations to ensure that licensing requirements are not impeding service to vulnerable populations or preventing providers from establishing and maintaining needed housing.



Question 4

What lessons have you learned during the COVID pandemic about how housing, health and supportive service systems can best respond to people experiencing homelessness?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- The housing services needed to support the BH/JI population (and other vulnerable populations) can be quickly provided and mobilized.
- Support services, such as behavioral health treatment and criminogenic needs interventions, are also necessary to optimize successful housing placements.
- There is a necessity for adequately scaled permanent supportive housing for vulnerable populations.



Question 4 (continued)

What lessons have you learned during the COVID pandemic about how housing, health and supportive service systems can best respond to people experiencing homelessness?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts (continued):

- As demonstrated in California Returning Home Well program, the criminal justice system needs to be linked to the homeless crisis response system to facilitate coordination, collaboration, and commitment among systems and services partners.
- Without strong guidance against criminal record restrictions, local communities often exclude people with criminal records, even from larger increases in funding during emergency situations.



Question 5

Both *Opening Doors* and *Home, Together* included a goal to end homelessness for all Americans, as well as goals to end homelessness among specific subpopulations. For the next plan: Would it be helpful to have similar goals? If so, should there be subpopulation-specific goals or just one goal to end all homelessness? Should the goals include target dates?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- Expand the goals in *Opening Doors* and *Home, Together* to explicitly include the BH/JI population.
- Realistic target dates should be set for each of the established goals, with the understanding that they will fit into short-, medium-, or long-term goals with appropriate implementation strategies clearly outlined.



Question 6:

Is there anything else you wish to add?

Draft CCJBH Response Concepts:

- The creation of a clear entity dedicated to bridging the gaps in collaboration between system partners and ensuring a robust housing workforce is developed to provide all essential services to those in need.
- The established entity would be tasked with training peers to be experts on the services offered by each system, identifying areas where clinical workforce is lacking, and ensure local CoCs are using funding in an effective and equitable manner.



Next Steps:

- Interested participants are invited to provide additional feedback via email at ccjbh@cdcr.ca.gov by **Friday, November 5, 2021, at 5:00 PM** to be considered for inclusion in the response sent by CCJBH.
- Feedback compiled past that date should be provided to USICH directly on their [website](#).



Upcoming CCJBH Meetings

Juvenile Justice Workgroup

**This workgroup will not convene in November and will announce 2022 meeting dates at the December 10th Full Council Meeting.*

Diversion/Reentry Workgroup

Friday, November 19, 2021 1:00-3:00PM

Full Council Meeting

Friday, December 10, 2021 2:00-4:30PM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

