
HOMELESS SERVICES OVERSIGHT COUNCIL (HSOC)
Special Meeting Agenda

June 8th, 2021, 1 p.m.

Members and the public may participate by Zoom video call:
<https://zoom.us/j/97017510276?pwd=VWdrdmdaMVo3amNSa3UvdKJwS2tkdz09>

Or call in (audio only):
+1 669 900 9128
Meeting ID: 970 1751 0276
Passcode: 121739



San Luis Obispo
Countywide 10 Year
Plan to End
Homelessness

We envision a future in which the housing and comprehensive services necessary to remain housed are available for all, affording everyone maximum self-sufficiency, and the opportunity to be productive and participating members of our community

1. Call to Order and Introductions
 2. Public Comment
 3. Action/Information/Discussion
 - 3.1. Action Item: Vote to 1) authorize the HSOC Chair to sign a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo for the administration of the Emergency Housing Voucher program, and 2) authorize the HSOC Executive Committee to approve amendments to the MOU if needed at a later date and to report back to the HSOC on any amendments approved by the Executive Committee
 - 3.2. Action Item: Vote to use 1) a Census Methodology for the 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count of Sheltered Persons; 2) an Observational Count Combined with a Sampling Methodology for obtaining demographic and survey information for unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness; and 3) a contractor to plan and carry out the count in accordance with this methodology
 4. Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday 21st July at 1pm
 5. Adjournment
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**HOMELESS SERVICES OVERSIGHT COUNCIL (HSOC)
ACTION ITEM
June 8, 2021**

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3.1

ITEM: Vote to 1) authorize the HSOC Chair to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo for the administration of the Emergency Housing Voucher program, and 2) authorize the HSOC Executive Committee to approve amendments to the MOU if needed at a later date and to report back to the HSOC on any amendments approved by the Executive Committee

ACTION REQUIRED:

Vote to 1) authorize the HSOC Chair to sign an MOU with the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo for the administration of the Emergency Housing Voucher program, and 2) authorize the HSOC Executive Committee to approve amendments to the MOU if needed at a later date and to report back to the HSOC on any amendments approved by the Executive Committee.

SUMMARY NARRATIVE:

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 was signed into law on March 11, 2021. ARPA authorized a number of measures to address impacts of the pandemic across the nation. These measures included the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program, which will provide 70,000 specialized housing vouchers from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to selected local Housing Authorities (HA) around the country.

On May 5, 2021, HUD promulgated [Notice PIH 2021-15 \(HA\)](#) to set forth how the vouchers must be used and the conditions for use. In May 2021, HUD also notified the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO) that they had been authorized to receive 156 EHV's. The vouchers will function similarly to Housing Choice Vouchers, except that they may not be reissued after September 30, 2023 and funding for the vouchers may not be obligated after September 30, 2030.

Eligibility for EHV's is limited to individuals and families who are (1) homeless; (2) at risk of homelessness; (3) fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking; or (4) recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having high risk of housing instability. Referrals for the voucher may come only from the local Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry process or from agencies that are not part of the Continuum of Care (CoC) but who serve one or more of the specialized populations above and have a MOU with the local HA.

The program uses the definition of homelessness as set forth in section 103(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)). Persons are defined as at-risk of homelessness

if they meet the definition set forth in section 401(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(1)). Recently homeless is defined as individuals and families who have previously been classified by a member agency of the CoC as homeless but are not currently homeless as a result of homeless assistance (financial assistance or services), temporary rental assistance or some type of other assistance, and where the CoC or its designee determines that the loss of such assistance would result in a return to homelessness or the family having a high risk of housing instability. Examples of households that may be defined as recently homeless by the CoC include, but are not limited to, participants in rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing.

For a local CoC to make referrals to the EHV program, the CoC must first have an MOU in place with the local HA. This MOU must establish key responsibilities of the signers and the goals of the program. The MOU should include identification of roles of the partners, services to be provided, and the populations to be served. To facilitate the development of the MOU, HASLO met with staff from the Department of Social Services and local groups that administer the Coordinated Entry intake programs, along with key groups that participate in the Coordinated Entry Housing Master List process. Using input from these groups and a template from HUD for the EHV program MOU, HASLO has developed a draft MOU. A copy of this MOU is attached as Attachment 3.1 (2). The HSOC is being asked to authorize the Chair of the HSOC to sign the attached MOU with HASLO.

The MOU proposes the following priority for processing applicants:

1. To assist those that are fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.
2. To assist those that have a high risk of housing instability and to ensure that their housing is immediately stabilized through the implementation of an EHV.
3. Those who have been identified by the CoC Recipient agencies as having a high risk of complications from COVID-19 and who are literally homeless or who are exiting a medical or other care facility.
4. All other applicants will be processed in the date/time order of receipt of the referral from the member agency.

Should the HSOC vote to approve the MOU, vouchers could be processed as soon as July 1, 2021. Participating agencies to the MOU will meet to discuss a schedule and process for providing feedback to HASLO on program implementation and for identifying any needed changes to the MOU to make the process work more smoothly. To ensure that the MOU can be changed within a month or less from the time that a need for such an amendment has been identified, the HSOC is being asked to authorize the HSOC Executive Committee to approve amendments to the MOU. If the proposed change is needed and is identified a few weeks or less prior to the next regularly scheduled HSOC meeting, it can still be brought to the full HSOC instead of the Executive Committee.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of this item would make up to 156 Emergency Housing Vouchers available to assist persons who are homeless or at risk in San Luis Obispo County. By providing stable housing for 156 households, the program may result in 156 fewer households seeking homeless assistance in the county. There is no cost associated with signing the MOU.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff recommend that this item be adopted.

Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the administration of the Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) has been created and entered into on June 8, 2021.

*Housing Authority of the City of San Luis Obispo (HASLO)
487 Leff Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401*

*County of San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services (CoC Recipient)
P.O. Box 8119
San Luis Obispo, CA 93403*

San Luis Obispo County Homeless Services Oversight Council (CoC body)

CoC Recipient and Member Agencies:

*5Cities Homeless Coalition (5CHC)
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County (CAPSLO)
El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO)
Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA)
The Salvation Army San Luis Obispo (SA)*

I. Introduction and Goals:

- a. HASLO, the CoC, and Member Agencies are committed to administering the EHV's in accordance with all program requirements.
- b. HASLO is committed to quickly and efficiently implementing the program requirements for the EHV's. HASLO is establishing a goal of utilizing at least 50% of the vouchers by November 1st, 2021 and at least 75% of the vouchers by January 1, 2022.

HASLO values its partnership with the CoC and recognizes that the CoC is key to providing community-wide services to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families and minimize the trauma and dislocation that homelessness causes for individuals, families, and communities.

HASLO has identified a team of staff that will be dedicated to working on the implementation of the EHV's, from intake and eligibility specialists to the HQS inspector and including a housing liaison staff member to ensure that they are working effectively with the applicants and agencies and current and potential landlords to utilize the EHV's.

- c. Identification of staff positions at HASLO and CoC who will serve as the lead EHV liaisons.

HASLO Liaisons: Kerry Wilson, Administrative Support Manager
Jeanne Nolan, HCV Manager

CoC Liaison: Laurel Weir, Homeless Services Coordinator
George Solis, Program Manager

CoC Recipient and Member Agency Liaisons:

5 Cities Homeless Coalition (5CHC): Veronica Cablayan, Program Director
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County (CAPSLO): Jack Lahey,
Homeless Services Director
El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO): Wendy Lewis, Executive Director
Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA): Mark Lamore, Director Homeless
Services
The Salvation Army – San Luis Obispo (SA): Elaine Mansoor, Captain Corps
Officer – County Coordinator

Responsibilities of the HASLO EHV liaison:

- Training CoC members on the EHV program and on EHV eligibility for families
- Updating the Administrative Plan for the Agency to outline program policies for these vouchers, including identification of any waivers being utilized to streamline the issuance and utilization of the vouchers
- Creating an inter-agency committee to develop a plan to effectively utilize the services fee provided with these vouchers. The inter-agency committee will assist in the development and implementation of a plan for utilization of the services fee, will monitor the effectiveness of the incentives and make appropriate recommendations to change the utilization of the services fee, if required.
- Developing a notice to inform families on the current Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waiting list of the availability of EHV's, requesting families to confirm whether they may meet the eligibility requirements of these vouchers, and requesting permission to cross-reference their previous participation with a CoC Recipient or Member Agency (also referred to as Participating Service Providers)
- Developing a referral form that clearly identifies the information required to determine program eligibility, including documentation of waivers for providing documentation at the time of application, and implementation of a strategy to obtain required documents within the timeframes of the EHV program
- Maintaining a signed release of information (Form 815) for each participant to ensure open communication between HASLO and the Recipient or Member Agency
- Reviewing applications for EHV, certifying program eligibility, and conducting annual recertifications for continued eligibility
- Ensuring that all applicants understand their right to request a reasonable accommodation and are aware of the process for submitting these requests

- Ensuring that housing search assistance is being provided to applicants
- Developing a strategy for outreach to current and prospective landlords to explain and provide information about program policies and procedures
- Scheduling HQS inspections in a timely manner to determine that the unit meets Housing Quality Standards and approving units for leasing and contracts
- Determining amounts and paying Housing Assistance Payments to landlords on behalf of participants
- Providing ongoing landlord liaison services and to work in conjunction with the CoC agency members to address issues raised by landlords with lease compliance challenges
- Monitoring program performance and compliance of participants and owners

Responsibilities of the CoC liaison:

- Developing a tracking mechanism to flag eligible families or youth when they are referred through the COC for an EHV
- Helping to identify funding sources that may be available to assist CoC members with provision of case management services
- Creating policies and procedures for documentation of the evidence relied upon to establish and verify that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements for the EHV

Responsibilities of the CoC Recipients and Member Agency liaisons:

- Assessing eligible households for EHV and services (if needed)
- Identifying clients who currently reside in Permanent Supportive Housing, were homeless at the time of admission to that program, and are eligible for a Moving On strategy
- Implementing a plan for conducting intake and eligibility appointments for applicants from HASLO's section 8 waiting list that may believe that they meet the eligibility requirements for EHV
- Obtaining a signed release of information (Form 815) for each participant to ensure open communication between HASLO and the Member Agency
- Referring eligible households to HASLO for EHV
- Providing supporting documentation to HASLO of the referring agency's verification that the family meets one of the four eligible categories for EHV assistance.
- Assisting referred households in completing and obtaining necessary documentation for the EHV application process, in accordance with the waivers that may be available to provide necessary documentation within the appropriate timeframes
- Assisting households with their housing search
- Evaluating funding for, and identifying opportunities to provide, ongoing case management services, if needed, for the household to remain successfully housed

II. Defining the populations eligible for EHV assistance to be referred by CoC.

In order to be eligible for an EHV, an individual or family must meet one of four eligibility categories:

- Homeless

- At risk of homelessness
- Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking
- Recent homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family from becoming homeless or having a high risk of housing instability

Detailed information on household eligibility can be found in Section 8 of PIH Notice 2021-15. The priority for processing applicants will be:

1. To assist those that are fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking.
2. To assist those that have a high risk of housing instability and to ensure that their housing is immediately stabilized through the implementation of an EHV.
3. Those who have been identified by the CoC Recipient and Member Agencies as having a high risk of complications from COVID-19 and who are literally homeless or who are exiting a medical or other care facility.
4. All other applicants will be processed in the date/time order of receipt of the referral from the Member Agency.

III. Services to be provided to eligible EHV families

1. Partnering service providers will support individuals and families in completing applications and obtaining necessary supporting documentation, in the timeframes provided under the waivers of the program, to support referrals and applications for assistance, while aiding households in addressing barriers.
2. Partnering service providers will support HASLO in ensuring appointment notifications to eligible individuals and families and will assist eligible households in getting to meetings with HASLO.
3. HASLO will establish windows of time for EHV applicants to complete intake interviews for EHV.
4. Partnering service providers will provide housing search assistance for eligible individuals and families.
5. Partnering service providers may provide counseling on compliance with rental lease requirements.
6. Partnering service providers may assess individuals and families who may require referrals for assistance on security deposits, utility hook-up fees, utility deposits, and other related moving expenses.
7. Partnering service providers will assess and refer individuals and families to other available resources as appropriate.

IV. HASLO Roles and Responsibilities

1. Coordinate and consult with the CoC in developing the services and assistance to be offered under the EHV services fee.
2. Accept direct referrals for eligible individuals and families through the CoC Coordinated Entry System.
3. Commit a sufficient number of staff and necessary resources to ensure that the application, certification, and voucher issuance processes are completed in a timely manner.
4. Commit a sufficient number of staff and resources to ensure that inspections of units are completed in a timely manner.
5. Designate a staff to serve as the lead EHV liaison, intake specialist and landlord liaison.
6. HASLO will review the importance of rental lease compliance during the intake appointment and again when a unit has been identified and the lease is pending.
7. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

V. CoC Member Agency Roles and Responsibilities

1. Designate and maintain a lead EHV liaison to communicate with HASLO.
2. Refer eligible individuals and families to HASLO using the community's coordinated entry system.
3. Support eligible individuals and households in completing and/or applying for supportive documentation to accompany admissions application to HASLO (i.e., self-certifications, birth certificate, social security card, etc.).
4. Attend EHV participant briefings when needed.
5. Assess all households referred for EHV for mainstream benefits and supportive services available to support eligible individuals and families through their transition.
6. Identify and provide supportive services to EHV families as appropriate. (While EHV participants are not required to participate in services, the CoC Member Agency should ensure that offered services are available and accessible.)
7. Comply with the provisions of this MOU.

VI. Program Evaluation

HASLO and CoC, or designated CoC recipient, agree to cooperate with the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and to provide requested data to HUD or the HUD-approved contractor delegated the responsibility of program evaluation protocols established by HUD or HUD-approved contractor, including possible random assignment procedures.

HASLO

Signed by

_____	_____
Executive Director, HASLO	Date

Continuum of Care and Recipient Agencies

_____	_____
Chair Homeless Services Oversight Council of San Luis Obispo County	Date

_____	_____
Executive Director Transitions Mental-Health Association	Date

_____	_____
The Salvation Army Captain	Date

Executive Director
5Cities Homeless Coalition (5CHC)

Date

Executive Director
Community Action Partnership of
San Luis Obispo County (CAPSLO)

Date

Executive Director
El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO)

Date

**HOMELESS SERVICES OVERSIGHT COUNCIL (HSOC)
ACTION ITEM
June 8, 2021**

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 3.2

ITEM: Vote to use 1) a Census Methodology for the 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count of Sheltered Persons; 2) an Observational Count Combined with a Sampling Methodology for obtaining demographic and survey information for unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness; and 3) a contractor to plan and carry out the count in accordance with this methodology

ACTION REQUIRED:

Vote to use 1) a census methodology for the 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count of sheltered persons; 2) an observational count combined with a sampling methodology for obtaining demographic and survey information for unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness; and 3) a contractor to plan and carry out the count in accordance with this methodology.

SUMMARY NARRATIVE:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all HUD-funded Continuums of Care (CoCs) to conduct a Point in Time (PIT) count of all sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons within the CoC service area at least once every two years. The count must be conducted within a single, 24-hour period during the last ten days in January.

The purpose of the count is to provide the federal government with national data on the prevalence and demographics of homelessness. HUD also uses data from the Point in Time count, together with data from the County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), to measure the County's performance against other CoCs in addressing homelessness. Additionally, the count has been used by the State of California to determine how much homeless assistance funding the CoC would receive from certain one-time only homeless assistance grants, such as the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP).

CoCs have the option of conducting a complete count of both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population every year; or conducting a complete count every two years, and in the interim years, using the unsheltered data from the prior year while still conducting a new count of sheltered homeless persons. The San Luis Obispo County CoC has opted to conduct a complete count every two years, with the most recent complete count having been conducted in January 2019.

Due to safety concerns created by COVID-19, the Homeless Services Oversight Council (HSOC) Executive Committee voted to request an exception from HUD from the requirement to complete a full count of unsheltered persons in the 2021 Homeless Point in Time Count, based on the recommendations of the HSOC Finance and Data Committee and HSOC Encampment Committee. HUD approved this request and in January 2021, the San Luis Obispo CoC only conducted a sheltered count.

To prepare for the next unsheltered count, the CoC must determine whether to use a complete coverage type approach, which ensures all areas of the county are covered, or a sampling methodology, where representative samples are taken and the data is then used to make estimates about the overall population. HUD has indicated a complete coverage is the preferred methodology for the overall count.

San Luis Obispo County CoC has in prior years conducted a complete coverage count using observational methodology to determine the overall number of unsheltered persons, while using a sampling methodology for surveys to obtain demographic and other information, such as services usage among unsheltered persons. The benefit to a complete count versus a sampling count for an observational methodology is that such a count covers more of the county and is less subject to sampling errors.

At the same time, given the size of the area to be covered and the number of persons to be interviewed, the CoC has previously opted to use a sampling approach to collect demographic and other client-level information. Sampling requires substantially fewer resources while still providing reasonable data quality. For example, during the 2019 Homeless Point in Time Count for the county, there were 1,483 homeless persons counted on the night of the count and 418 unsheltered and sheltered persons surveyed. This sample size and the sampling methodology led to reasonable margins of error for the estimates, while substantially reducing the resources required to collect the data compared to what would have been utilized for a complete coverage methodology for the survey.

For the sheltered count, the CoC will use a combination of HMIS data from HMIS Participating Emergency Shelters, data from comparable data bases for victim service providers, and interviews and surveys to collect demographic data from non-HMIS participating shelters and transitional housing.

In prior years, the County has contracted with an outside vendor to design and assist the count implementation, as well as to compile the statistical data and produce a report analyzing the results. The vendor ensured that the methodology used to conduct the count was consistent with the requirements promulgated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The County Department of Social Services provided planning and operational support, with assistance from CoC subrecipient agencies and their clients.

For the 2022 Count, staff are recommending the CoC again adopt a complete count methodology for the overall count and a sampling methodology for the survey. This approach adopts HUD's preferred methodology for the overall count and remains consistent with prior years' methodology.

Staff are also recommending the County contract with an outside vendor to design and assist the count implementation, as well as to compile the statistical data and produce a report analyzing the results. The time to plan and carry out the count is significant, and staff do not have sufficient resources to carry it out at this time without additional assistance.

On May 26, 2021, the HSOC Finance and Data Committee voted to approve 1) a census methodology for the 2022 Homeless Point in Time Count of sheltered persons; 2) an observational count combined with a sampling methodology for obtaining demographic and survey information for unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness; and 3) a contractor to plan and carry out the count in accordance with this methodology.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The HSOC vote is advisory and will have no immediate financial impact. If the County adopts a full count approach with use of paid peer surveyors, the Count is estimated to cost \$76,700. The financial impact of changing from a full count to a selected locations survey may cost more or less than a full Count approach, depending on the final adopted plan.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Staff recommend the use of a complete count methodology for the count and a sampling methodology for the demographic information and other client-level data collected by the survey.