Housing Action Team Meeting Minutes

4.28.2020

ZOOM

Attendees: Susan Janke, Sandra Newlin, Donna Conrad, Diana Hartman, Time Ernst, Sharron Pucillo, Rod Hottle, Lori Kempter, Bob Wilson, Susan Scarlata, Matt LaHiff, Sabrina Lane, Debbie Henderson, Dawn Cranmore, Deanne Widauf, Hannah Wickey, Martin Hawes, Julie Gliem, Brenda Birkle, Robin Bocanegra, Terry Williams, Karen Loken, David Cook, Amy Spieker

1. COVID-19 and Housing
	1. Coalition of statewide partners (primarily Laramie County) sent a letter to Auditor Racines a few weeks ago asking for a consideration of a pause on evictions and foreclosures. The letter is attached.
	2. We are working to gather data on the housing need during this time. If your organization has data on the number of requests or amount of funding you have distributed (especially if you can compare to before COVID) this would be excellent. Additionally, if you do any surveys or intakes, if it’s possible to add a question for clients about if they have received a notice of eviction or if they are fearful of eviction this would be great. Please reach out to Amy if you have questions or data.
		1. Thank you to the organizations that are already changing their workflows to capture this data.
		2. Thank you to 2-1-1 for sharing their data. This data shows a near doubling of calls related to housing needs from 2019 to 2020 in Laramie County.
		3. Susan mentioned we may want to collect data on the number of rental properties that have been put up for sale during this time, which is another form of disruption and potential need for a tenant to move.
	3. Our role to distribute information on resources for renters and landlords
		1. Equal Justice has developed [tools on evictions during COVID-19](https://equaljustice.wy.gov/index.php/get-legal-help/self-help-2/housing/eviction/resources). Please follow them on [facebook and share their resources](https://www.facebook.com/EqualJusticeWyoming/?epa=SEARCH_BOX). There is also a flyer attached that you can distribute.
			1. 2-1-1 can distribute this information through their call specialists
			2. Susan Scarlotta suggested reaching out to the housing authority
			3. Media use – LCCP board can review available funding for paid advertising; potential PSA, guest column in the newspaper
		2. Julie from the land lord association has provided a [toolkit and information](https://www.daynightprocessserving.com/Forms.html) to her members through her website about lease addendums and notice to quit during COVID-19
		3. Work with the chamber and chamber members to distribute information to landlords that are not members of the landlord association, work with banks to send information to their mortgage holders
	4. [Proposed legislation](https://wyoleg.gov/InterimCommittee/2020/SMC-2020042403.02-20LSO-0701-Emergencygovernmentaction-Covid-19WD05.pdf)
		1. WY legislature is considering legislation that would help landlords that have lost greater than 25% of income generated by a property for rental units where the renter is below 200% of FPL and has lost income due to COVID-19
			1. What if landlord chooses not to apply?
			2. What is considered COVID related?
			3. Julie with landlords association provided context about what their organization is seeing
				1. For rental properties between $1,000 and $1,500 per month (likely not below 200% of FPL) about 75% of rent is being paid
				2. For rental properties under $1,000 only about 25% of rent is being paid
			4. Questions raised by Julie to look into further
				1. How do utilities factor into the payment? Some are in landlord’s name others in tenant’s name
				2. When is FPL below 200% being calculated as many circumstances have changed with potentially many more falling below?
			5. Next steps – continue to follow and let our membership know about actions
	5. New funding sources – presented by Robin
		1. Category B – FEMA’s Public Assistance Program for [non-congregate sheltering](https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2020/03/31/coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-non-congregate-sheltering)
			1. This can be used by agencies to help house people who are symptomatic but don’t require hospitalization, high risk individuals, or people that have a known exposure but are asymptomatic
			2. Requires a 25% match – Sandra said the match can be in cash or in kind. This means the agency could use its own funding to match the grant funds or it could use in-kind match like if something was going to be renovated and the contractor only charged for materials. The difference between the normal cost and the reduced cost would be in-kind.
			3. Sandra provided this [powerpoint presentation](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/146ls7nP0dCDo-Q5aiGIn0-I6c__uDZ6utifPNRpkNp4/edit#slide=id.p) from the Department of Homeland Security which is orchestrating these funds in Wyoming.
				1. Contact info: ashley.paulsrud@wyo.gov
		2. Community Services Block Grant
			1. Expecting an additional $5 million likely to be distributed by June
		3. Emergency Solution Grant
			1. Additional $1.1 million for WY in early June
		4. Community Development Block Grant funding
			1. Lori mentioned that this can be distributed to individual agencies or through a contractor to distribute – this may be an opportunity for this group to help coordinate
		5. United Way funds – Rod
			1. Funding available up to $500 for an individual who has been impacted by COVID
				1. Some conversation around what is COVID related – Rod said the committee reviewing was considering a wide array of circumstances
				2. Funding application attached
		6. Addition FEMA funding –Rod
			1. Food and shelter program
			2. Announcement expected May 1st and funds will be distributed to the United Way in Laramie County
		7. Many of these programs can be explored further by finding information on the [National Alliance to End Homelessness’ website](https://endhomelessness.org/coronavirus-and-homelessness/)
		8. Discussion
			1. Faith communities can help provide assistance to individuals and help direct to many of these resources
			2. Additionally, they can refer to 2-1-1 who has kept an updated database of changes due to COVID
			3. Consider the difficultly for some without internet access and the library close in access application materials
2. Family Resource Center/Emergency Shelter - Lori
	1. If your agency is interested in co-locating in this space please contact Lori at director@familypromiseofcheyenne.org
	2. Continuing in moving forward with identifying funding and space
	3. Developing a small work group to advance the work
3. For the good of the order
	1. Comea update – about 60 people who are isolating together
		1. No space to quarantine or isolate, though promoting all CDC guidance around hand washing, distancing, and masks
		2. Could use mask donations
		3. Looking into the Cedars Clinic or the Stagecoach as potential for increase space to provide necessary isolation opportunities
	2. Stimulus payments for those on social security should come out by May 1st
	3. Governor is providing a briefing at 4pm related to changes in restrictions

Recover Wyoming is also providing some rental assistance