

Task Force on Shelter Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2022

Meeting held via Zoom

1. Welcome, Roll Call and Agenda Review

Chair Julie Jeppson welcomed everyone and took roll call for the meeting.

Members Present: **Andrea Simonett**, Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS); **Ariana Daniel**, Servants of Shelter-International Falls; **David Hewitt**, Hennepin County; **Judy Moe**, Richfield Disability Advocacy Partnership; **Julie Jeppson**, Blaine City Council/Anoka Stepping Stones; **July Vang**, public member; **Laura Birnbaum**, St. Louis County; **Lauren Ryan**, Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS); **Mary Manning**, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH); **Mary Riegert**, Minnesota Tribal Collaborative; **Paul Williams**, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA); **Reed Olson**, Nameless Coalition-Bemidji; **Rinal Ray**, People Serving People-Minneapolis; **Ron Elwood**, Legal Services Advocacy Project; **Sam Juneau**, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT); **Sherry Shannon**, public member; **Tamara Stark**, Tubman; **Tyra Thomas**, Street Voices of Change

Guests Present: Kristina Krull and Stacy Sjogren (MMB); Cathy ten Broeke, Eric Grumdahl and Sue Hite-Kirk, Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness (MICH)

Note: Guests watching the YouTube livestream were not identified

Agenda Review - there were no additions made to the agenda.

2. Small Orders of Business

- No corrections were made to the December 2021 minutes.
- Kristina provided an update on vacant positions. An announcement will be made when the positions are posted on the Secretary of State's website.
- Kristina provided an update on the February report. Some changes are being made and she will send it to members again for a more thorough review.

3. Stakeholder Engagement Subgroup Update

Kristina reported the subgroup met in late December to keep developing the initial engagement plan. Four listening sessions are being planned in late January/early February. Members were encouraged to sign for a session. A session will be rescheduled if no task force member has signed up. Communications about the sessions is being developed and will be sent to members for sharing with their networks.

Being on the agendas for the next Continuum of Care and Regional Expert Network meetings is being coordinated. Members were asked to attend these meetings. More details will be provided as meetings are confirmed.

4. Reviewing Draft Standards

Between meetings, small groups developed draft standard in a prioritized category.

This was the first step in trying to figure out how the group will develop standards. Draft standards were reviewed, and member feedback provided.

Questions/Comments

- **Standard 1: Separation from shelter**
 - Poll: Generally good but some tweaks needed.
 - Some shelters that work with single adults, often talk with partner shelters, and do not hold individual to standards of another shelter. A ban from one shelter does not mean a ban from another.
 - Staff may not have been trained and have the best information.
 - Hennepin County family system does have rule and are considering modifying it; challenge with language/terminology of “resident” and “eviction” based on legal statute; use instead separation, removal, etc.
 - What training do staff receive on the ADA for people with disabilities who are separated?
 - Behavioral reports only include details of individuals and not staff.
 - Staff should include a person experiencing homelessness as a way of understanding and connecting; in some shelters this is being done, but not all.
 - What does it mean to implement a standard?
 - For this standard, the group recommended that a person should be made aware of why they are being asked to leave; other issues may have to be addressed later
 - What can we do to keep individuals from being separated?
 - What actions did staff/resident take prior to separation?
 - What actions might staff have been responsible for or contributed to resulting in separation?
 - Other standards can be defined as we go along.

- **Standard 2: Interpersonal treatment of residents**
 - The group struggled with standards that were too broad, but with interpersonal treatment, or finding actionable standards that fell under other headings.
 - Nine evidence-based guiding principles seem to be reasonable, but not sure if list of principles is what all are looking for.
 - Rights vs. standards.
 - Difficult to do this exercise in isolation as standards are inter-connected.
 - Staff developing personal biases with individuals.
 - Separate standard to lay out the expectation for the treatment of residents.

- **Standard 3: Entering Shelter**

- Poll: Generally good but some tweaks needed.
- Cultural practices would be expected.
- Not an option to deny shelter; shared community involvement would be needed.
- Main hub for resources recommended but may need to hold on further discussion of this.
It's not that there aren't enough resources to support shelters doing these things—it's that they haven't been resourced. We need to really support people experiencing homelessness.
- How do we get to dignity and respect if there are not sufficient staff, or staff not trained appropriately?
- The Adult Shelter Connect is operated by Simpson Housing Services and is entirely dedicated to providing a front door and navigation service for shelter, plus the diversion services that Tyra described.
- Inclusive overview options are important especially in rural Minnesota.
- Chemical use and substance abuse concerns for youth shelters.

5. Work Time for Developing Standards

Members were assigned to breakout rooms and small groups continued to work on their standards.

6. Close Out and Next Steps

More standards need to be created, possibly more in the current categories but definitely more in other categories. Small groups will continue to draft standards outside the meetings, and then letting everyone else weigh in on them.

Questions/Comments

- All fine with staying in original group.
- Some members would like to be in multiple groups.
- Slight reorganization of the work to add a "Rights" group – what services are provided and available; also add "Operations and Physical Plant."
- Share upcoming meeting times so individuals can attend different groups as they choose.

Kristina will clarify homework in a follow-up email to include if groups want to take on another category. She will also share upcoming meeting times for all work groups.

The minutes from today will be posted on the website in a couple weeks. The Zoom chat file will be saved appropriately to the files.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is February 14—we are meeting a week early again because of President's Day.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.