



COMMUNITY, HOUSING, AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE – FEB. 3, 2022

Please see this week's Community, Housing, and Human Services department update. The next update will be distributed Feb. 17.

Operational.

Status:

- The 2022 Point-in-Time Count that provides an annual snapshot estimate of the homeless population in Spokane County [will be Feb. 24-March 1](#). About 100 volunteers will be needed. Volunteer signups and resources, an event flyer to share, FAQs and more information are on the [City's website](#). If you have questions, email adjulovic@spokanecity.org.
- The 10th annual Spokane Homeless Connect, a community-led outreach event associated with the PIT Count that provides services to the homeless and serves as a central census-taking site for the count, will be March 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Spokane Convention Center, 202 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
- The [search](#) for a temporary warming shelter to supplement the existing provider network continues. The City is searching for property has approximately 20,000 square feet available to accommodate human habitation; an ability to accommodate restroom facilities, either permanent or temporary, on-site; distinct distance from a school, daycare, retail, and business concentrations; and equitable access to public transportation. At least 50 sites have already been considered.
- A planning retreat between CHHS, the Continuum of Care, County, providers, the business community and other partners to explore ways to improve regional collaboration to address homeless and housing issues will be Feb. 14 at the Convention Center.
- The CoC Board approved a pilot system change to the coordinated entry prioritization process for permanent supportive housing (PSH) after a work group identified a need to address PSH projects serving a narrow age group. Beginning Feb. 4, all PSH referrals will be offered to individuals in the waiting pool from the 62-and-older and 18-24 age groups until their respective unit allotments are filled or the waiting pool has no remaining eligible participants. If the wait pool of eligible individuals is depleted before the percentage allotment is filled, the evaluation team can recommend that the age range is expanded. The effectiveness of this new process will be analyzed over 18 months.
- Existing Emergency Rent Assistance Program funds are quickly being exhausted due to an increase in recent distributions. [Two online application portals have been paused due to distributions and allocations](#). Meanwhile, [The Carl Maxey Center](#), which prioritizes assistance to African American and BIPOC households, was recently awarded additional funds that are available to apply for. Funding distribution updates for the program have been posted on the [City's website](#) twice a month along with how to apply. The funding helps keep people in their



homes and helps landlords and tenants avoid evictions. The City will continue to search for future funding for the program.

- Most local shelters have experienced virus outbreaks and have opened isolation spaces. The health district is seeing a delay in some positive test results. If people are symptomatic and negative, shelter clients should still isolate and test again a day or two later.
- The Spokane Fire Department continues wellness checks of vulnerable individuals throughout the community who are out in the weather. The Spokane fire and police departments have also been handing out bus passes to help individuals get to shelters.
- The City is applying for Washington State Commerce funds to support affordable housing development. K&H is representing property owner Proclaim Liberty to build 47 new units of affordable housing in the Perry District. This grant would help offset the infrastructure costs with developing on a rocky surface.
- Annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant contracts to purchase parking lot surveillance cameras at Northeast Community Center and an LED community center sign at the MLK Community Center are in the approval process.
- A contract between the City and Washington State Department of Commerce for a \$1.352M grant that will fund improvements to the MLK Community Center is in the City Council approval process. The project will include an asbestos survey and abatement if necessary, and a complete tear off and replacement of the roof. Construction is planned for this spring with completion around September. The grant was awarded to the City last June after a capital needs assessment on the building was performed.
- For key partners, the CMIS team continues to test the new Coordinated Entry Annual Performance Report. Working closely with community leads and HUD to finalize the report. The CMIS Team continues to extend access to the CMIS database by onboarding new community partners and training new staff at current participating agencies. The team continues to look for ways to innovate and improve its internal and external data processing to better serve our partners. It has two projects underway, MDQR and Rental Assistance, with the goal to improve stability, consistency, reporting capability, and lower the time spent on manual data manipulation.
- Built for Zero case conferencing meetings with providers continue and are on track for by-name list launch for single adults in the near future. Single adults case conferencing meets every two weeks with CMIS-participating providers to discuss clients who are in one of two priority areas, chronic unsheltered and chronic sheltered, and steps will be taken to move them toward housing. A similar meeting occurs for veterans on the opposite weeks of the month and for youth every Thursday. United Way is forming a new lived experience advisory group similar for youth to advise Built for Zero. A lived experience coordinator should be on board by March. A similar group for veterans is also being explored.
- Financial analysis updates of CHHS programs are being performed to help future decisions.
- Proposals for organizations to coordinate the Spokane City/County Continuum of Care's participation in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) are being reviewed. Meanwhile, data is being analyzed to shape a coordinated community plan for the YHDP grant from HUD.

Training and Team Building.

Status:

- Applications for [Neighborhoods, Housing and Human Services Director](#) are being accepted through Feb. 20. Applications for two CHHS Program Manager positions are being reviewed. The

position of CHHS Contract and Business Standards Compliance Officer has been filled. A Senior Grants Analyst has accepted a position outside of the City.

- Four applicants for CHHS Board will be interviewed by the Executive Committee on Feb. 17.
- The City of Spokane/Spokane County Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) is seeking applications for four board positions representing Education (K-12); Law and Justice systems; Nonprofit (Temporary Housing); and Business. Applications and instructions are [online](#). Applications are due Feb. 7 at 5 p.m. The time commitment ranges between 5-10 hours a month. Board members serve five-year terms. The CoC's mission is to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-reoccurring in our area by fostering shared responsibility among stakeholders and coordinating resources essential to the success of local plans to end homelessness.
- Free Narcan kits and training are available West Spokane Wellness Partnership. Narcan, or Naloxone, is an injection or nasal spray to quickly reverse opioid overdoses. Information: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3XVPPXV>; Sarah McNew, smcnew@esd101.net; <http://westspokanewellness.com/>.

Policy and Planning.

Status:

- AARP invites applications for tangible improvement projects that can help our community become more livable. Applications are being accepted through March 22 for grants to improve public places; housing; transportation; civic engagement; diversity, equity and inclusion; support efforts to build engagement and build-on programs under new federal laws; and other innovative ideas. Since 2017, AARP has funded more than 800 projects across the country. Visit www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge to learn more and apply if eligible.
- The Department of Commerce is convening an advisory committee to help design the process for engagement of homeless services providers in Washington state. This work will inform how the state proceeds with supporting homeless services providers. All advisory committee members will be compensated at least \$150 per session, with the expectation of 4 sessions throughout the process. Commerce is seeking members for the committee, which will start meeting late this month. The department will develop recommendations and potential interventions to support homeless service providers who work in traumatizing environments, to better manage and address workplace stress and trauma. A series of interviews, focus groups, and conversations with frontline homeless service providers around the state will be held. Interested parties can apply [here](#).
- Among the overall current CHHS priorities are: the warming center location and sustainability, the Point-in-Time Count, shelter coordination and transportation, homeless outreach, RFPs and contracts, and Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) planning.
- The bylaws of the CHHS Board are being reviewed and could be updated as necessary.
- The CHHS Board approved the recommendation of its RFP Committee to award the application process of \$230,000 in recent emergency rent assistance funds to LiveStories.
- CHHS staff, in collaboration with the County and other regional organizations, is evaluating options to identify a sustainable solution for grant funding to cover ongoing operational needs.
- Leadership is exploring ways to proactively collaborate with all local groups and boards working on regional homelessness topics.

Communication.

Status:

- Recent press releases on the [PIT Count date change](#) due to the spike in COVID-19 cases and [pause of two emergency rent assistance portals](#) due to funds that have rapidly been distributed and allocated drew media coverage from The Spokesman-Review, KXLY, KHQ, the Spokane Journal of Business, Spokane Public Radio and other media.
- The [Homeless Pocket Resource Guide](#) that lists shelters, drop-in day centers, general resources, mental health contacts and free meal sites has been updated, is posted on multiple City websites and can be shared.
- Communications team is planning housing success stories pertaining to the Community Development Block Grant, HOME and Head Start to Construction Trades programs.
- Continuing meetings with stakeholders to ensure communication is better, concerns are heard directly, and answers are provided to specific questions or concerns.
- These CHHS updates are archived and posted on the City's [website](#).

Reaching out.

To help us communicate better and more efficiently, especially with the staff transitions, we would ask you to use email distribution lists created to ensure the right individuals get the email and can respond quickly:

Grantees – please send invoices and reports to the chhsreports@spokanecity.org email instead of sending items to specific staff members. They will be received and processed.

For general CHHS inquiries (not billing- or reporting-related), please send an email to spokanechhs@spokanecity.org for assistance.

For leadership, status, or program level questions: CHHS Leadership (chhsleadership@spokanecity.org)

For contracts or financial related questions: CHHS Accounting (chhsaccounting@spokanecity.org)

For grant related questions: CHHS Grants (chhsgrants@spokanecity.org)

For RFP submittals or questions: CHHS RFP (chhsrfp@spokanecity.org)

For CMIS/HMIS related questions: CHHS CMIS (cmis@spokanecity.org)

Thank you for your continued interest and investment in the body of work the CHHS department provides our community. We are always open to questions and input.

CHHS Leadership Team and Staff