

SHC 6-month strategy August 2022 – February 2023 Draft 8/5/22

Currently, the homeless system in Maine has inflow but very little outflow; the system is stuck post-pandemic. The Statewide Homeless Council proposes that Maine pursue the following strategies to unstick the homeless system so it can be in a much-improved position in six months with outflow equal to inflow:

1. **Rapid Resolution** - Umbrella for Diversion, Rapid Exit, and Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

Diversion – Double the size and reach of Maine’s existing diversion pilot immediately (add \$350k) to ensure each HUB has an effective diversion program/strategy in place by this fall and have a training element built into this expansion.

- Build on what we have learned from pilots
- Distill what we know through training paid for within the budgets
- Eviction prevention - Pine Tree Legal has funding for eviction prevention
- Train front line staff so they are familiar with the type of cases PTL takes on
- Community practice workshops with HUD are going between now and most of the fall to better understand how we can best use this approach and apply new resources most effectively – gather best practices and be strategic going forward.
- ERA is playing a critical role – what is lined up to carry on from this welcome resource?
- Build on prevention opportunities for stabilization
- In depth service to divert and prevent, including Pine Tree Legal
- Pine Tree Legal has funding for eviction prevention
- Housing Navigation relationships

Rapid Exit – Conduct trainings in each Regional Homeless Council on Rapid Exit. Add a statewide pot of money (\$100k) with no constrictions to allow shelters/outreach workers to rapidly exit people from homelessness.

- Plan for how to get each person out of the shelter quickly if they land there
- Housing Navigation relationships – allow whoever has the relationship to leverage it to exit the person from homelessness
- Enter data into HMIS so we can demonstrate the impact of this intervention

RRH – Add three ESHAP provider shelter based RRH programs in the state by the fall and seek HUD TA free training for these programs (\$750k)

- Supportive services that are ongoing after someone is housed
- Case management
- Support for items outside of just rent
- Flexible money for security deposit
- One CM follows the client through the process of accessing and staying in housing
- Pre-tenancy supports
- LL engagement
- Up to one year of engagement after housing
- Stand up smaller RRH programs across the state – expand on the few that we have currently

- Have voucher resources as a tool
- Housing Navigation relationships
- Can be a pathway to housing as a segue to PSH for populations with higher needs – this is better than having those populations wait for PSH which is limited
- Secure TA for how to make RRH flexible to meet needs of varying populations
- Use RRH as a pathway to TCM so a broader network of shelters can be set up to use TCM – apply TA here
- Targets (i.e. serving 15 clients) work better than setting an exact resource amount for each person. That way flexibility can allow the program to meet needs as they reveal themselves
- Create a workshop for shelters (or HUBs) so they know how to best use these resources (RRH, TCM, etc.)

2. Landlord Engagement – Front end and post-housing. Create and disseminate marketing materials (\$2k), fund landlord (LL) incentives (\$180k to double this pot; maximum incentive is \$2k which means 90 households would be served by this addition). Provide training on effective LL Engagement strategies in each Regional Homeless Council by this fall.

- LL Incentives – MaineHousing, local organization incentives,
 - Having MaineHousing manage this as a program as an expansion of what they already do would be beneficial
 - Expand targeting of LLs who accept rental subsidies
- Master leasing
- Flexibility of subsidies
- Shared housing
- Broader collective engagement of LL – Media, campaigns,
- Being there to support people once housed so LL feels like they have a tenant properly supported for success
- Housing Navigation relationships
- Offer to pay to hold the unit while paperwork is completed, unit is being inspected, etc.

3. Case Management/Outreach (a lead professional worker who can help navigate and stabilize) – Place outside of shelters (in other organizations) as well as inside shelters. Allow broader access to STEP and Section 8 housing choice vouchers and LL incentives to stabilize populations in need. Boost the supply of flexible outreach workers so that people outside can bypass shelters and go directly into housing (one per HUB, \$800k).

- Coordinate HUB efforts and outreach workers to meet the needs of people outside/in encampments
- Targeted Case Management (TCM) – add TA to support shelters in implementing these programs where they are not in service
- For smaller shelters without access to clinicians, find a mechanism for clinical supervision for billing service provision
- Long term case management
- Outreach directly into housing (stepping across the threshold)
- Add TA for outreach for areas not providing this service

4. Enhancing shelter – Provide resources (\$250K) and training intended to support shelters in lowering barriers. This can include training, additional staffing, expansion resources, needle exchange and safer use strategies, and warming centers. Ensure there is preparation for a warming space in each HUB. Develop a plan to replace lost shelter beds in each HUB – consider using other spaces temporarily.

- Use resources for operations, maintenance, capital improvements for facilities, and to stand up warming centers
- Add significant training on managing challenging populations, behaviors, and complications including needle exchange, Narcan, pets, etc.
- Engage mayors and local homelessness task forces to help educate around regional approaches to meeting temporary needs – make sure municipalities don't feel alone
- We have more people that need shelter than we have shelter for – shelter capacity needs to be solved
- Ensure there is capacity for people outside/ in encampments, and lower barriers so that entry is desirable for these populations
- Shelter network is still the front line
- System is clogged – ensure an adequate number of beds
- We still will need to further fund the shelter system beyond just adding additional interventions listed here
- Partner with GA and APS and ensure they are working in concert with our efforts
- Distinguish between day spaces and overnight spaces
- And plan now for warming centers this winter
- Address challenging populations that are emerging and beginning to be more commonplace in our shelters – ensure all shelters are prepared to serve emerging challenging populations – seniors, SUD, Adult Protective Services populations, TBI, how to dovetail with systems best designed to serve these populations. Increasing amounts of SUD and Trauma are emerging as new challenges for shelters. This population is showing up in warming centers. Lowering barriers could solve outdoor homelessness in parts of the state; people are outside due to higher barrier shelter requirements. Ensure there is a safety net for people who cannot stay in shelters (barred).
- Test the theory that circumstantially homeless populations are languishing – could it be that we are seeing a dramatic increase in more challenging populations that coincided with the pandemic? Do we need more efforts for longer term interventions?

Other things to keep in mind

- Track outcomes
- Properly resource agencies to help
- Need post-COVID money to expand most of these

SHC 6-Month Strategy Budget

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Description</u>
Diversion	\$350,000	Double Diversion Pilot to ensure each HUB has an effective diversion program/strategy in place by this fall
Rapid Exit Toolbox	\$100,000	Add a statewide pot of money with no constrictions to allow shelters/outreach workers to rapidly exit people from homelessness
Rapid Re-Housing	\$750,000	Add three ESHAP provider shelter based RRH programs in the state by the fall and seek HUD TA free training for these programs
Landlord Engagement	\$182,000	Create and disseminate marketing materials (\$2k), fund LL incentives (\$180k to double this pot; maximum incentive is \$2k which means 90 households would be served by this addition). Provide training on effective LL Engagement strategies in each Regional Homeless Council by this fall.
Case Management/Outreach – One position per HUB	\$800,000	Boost the supply of flexible outreach workers so that people outside can bypass shelters and go directly into housing. Allow broader access to STEP and Section 8 housing choice vouchers and LL incentives to stabilize populations in need.
Enhance shelters by lowering barriers to access	\$250,000	Provide resources and training intended to support shelters in lowering barriers. This can include training, additional staffing, expansion resources, needle exchange and safer use strategies, and warming centers. Ensure there is preparation for a warming space in each HUB. Develop a plan to replace lost shelter beds in each HUB – consider using other spaces temporarily.
Total	\$2,432,000	