

The Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing

The Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing (ICHAH) was established by Governor Strickland's Executive Order 2007-08S, as signed on April 23, 2007. The mission of the ICHAH is to "unite key state agencies to formulate policies and programs that address affordable housing issues and the needs of Ohioans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless". The ICHAH is further responsible for making recommendations to assist the Governor in "...devising and implementing a long-term plan to support affordable housing and to end chronic homelessness."

The Work Groups and their mission statements are as follows:

- **Access to Housing:** The mission of the Access to Housing Work Group is to receive input from people with disabilities and their advocates about access to affordable, accessible housing; to survey the state's current efforts to provide housing for people with disabilities; and to recommend public policies and strategies that will expand access to housing and enable Ohioans with disabilities to exercise true choice.
- **Chronic Homeless:** The Chronic Homeless Work Group will work to increase and systematize development of housing and service opportunities for Ohioans experiencing long-term homelessness.
- **Family and Youth Homelessness:** The Family and Youth Homeless Work Group will influence and promote policies, procedures and best practices that prevent and end homelessness for families and youth in Ohio. Our efforts are targeted at improved collaboration among state agencies for the effective use of resources by at-risk and homeless Ohioans and the agencies that serve them.
- **Mainstream Resources:** The mission of the Mainstream Resources Work Group is to address policy barriers to accessing Mainstream Resources and improve processes that increase access points to Mainstream Benefits. This will be done by 1.) Reviewing and analyzing policy barriers that may exist and recommending alternative consumer friendly policies; and 2.) Expanding opportunities for homeless or potentially homeless persons to access Mainstream Benefits for which they may be entitled.
- **Research and Planning:** The mission of the Research and Planning Work Group is to recommend policies and procedures for planning based upon an examination of critical data. The Work Group is responsible for the development and creation of an annual report for the ICHAH and the recommendation of a long-term plan to end chronic homelessness and support affordable housing.
- **Systems Transitions and Discharge Protocol:** The Systems Transitions and Discharge Protocol Work Group will assist public and private institutions in the development of protocol that identifies the homeless, creates linkages to community service agencies, and promotes self sufficiency.

Accomplishments for 2007

Family Homelessness Prevention Pilot Project

This pilot project is a program that enables non-profits to identify families at imminent risk of homelessness and provide the families with a number of supports and strategies to prevent a loss of housing. It is being implemented through two-year demonstration grants to service providers, one in rural and four in urban communities.

Social Security Income (SSI) Ohio Project

The Mainstream Resources Work Group created a proposal to expedite SSI/SSDI benefits for homeless individuals. This includes usage of the SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) methodology and creating an electronic platform, modeled after the Ohio benefit bank, to guide trained counselors through the application process. The project also includes a second SSI Ohio Coordination, funded through the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

Returning Home—Ohio

This ongoing project aims to create 80-100 units of supportive housing, and prevent discharge into homelessness and reduce recidivism rates. This program identifies the target population as individuals who were homeless prior to incarceration and had significant barriers to accessing and maintaining housing upon release.

Technical Assistance Collaborative Proposal

The Research and Planning and Access to Housing Work Groups collaborated to create a proposal for the Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. (TAC) to undertake a comprehensive analysis of key affordable housing and supportive services issues in Ohio. TAC is a national non-profit organization that works to achieve positive outcomes on behalf of people with disabilities, people who are homeless, and people with other special needs. The study undertaken by TAC will assist the Policy Committee to formulate recommendations for future action on addressing issues of homelessness in Ohio. The TAC project will ultimately result in an analysis of Affordable Housing Resources, and a review of the State Medicaid Plan and options.