

**Morris County Continuum of Care
Executive Committee Meeting
May 22, 2025 OPEN SESSION MINUTES**

Attended by:

Name	Representative Category	Present=1 Absent=0
NONVOTING		
Errico, Kasey	County/Lead Agency	1
Kooper, Raquel	Advisory Board Committee/Monarch	1
VOTING		
Alvarez, Alicia	Nourish NJ	1
Bryant, Elise	Community Member/Advocate	1
Caban, Sherina	Community Member/Advocate	1
Calabuig, Karina	Catholic Family & Community Services	1
Curry, Clarence	MC Human Relations Commission	1
Delcalzo-Berens, Allison	Atlantic Health System	1
Deo, Carmine	Community Hope	0
Kirk, Chris	Community Member/Advocate	0
Ocansey, Elorm	Community Member/Advocate	0
Pawlyshyn, Jonelle	Community Member/Advocate	1
Stephens, Kelly	Morris County Housing Authority	1
Sherrod, Rebecca	Child and Family Resources	0
	Total voting members	8
Quorum = 8	Total members	10
OTHER REPRESENTATIVES AND CONSULTANTS		
Archer, Amy	County/Lead Agency	1
Brewster, Candy	HMFA/Consultant	1
Fodali, Maria	County/Lead Agency	1
Balitsos, Kathryn	Monarch/Consultant	1

Guests:

Jeff Bashe – Morris County Housing Alliance

Laura Giorgi – Family Promise of Morris County

Emily Legg – Homeless Solutions

Olivia LeValley – Community Hope

Brandon Markowski – NJ DCA

Rita Mirabelli – NJ DCA Office of Homelessness Prevention

Roberta Robinson – CoC Advisory Board

Sarah Rubenstein – Atlantic Health System

Michelle Sayay – NJ 2-1-1

Courtney Smith – Aetna Better Health New Jersey

Viktorija Spasova-Kaiser - Mental Health Association

Diane Williams – Jersey Battered Women's Service

Welcome: Alicia Alvarez started the meeting at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed all attendees. All attendees introduced themselves.

Old Business:

Data Strategic Plan – Monarch Housing Associates, Kathryn Balitsos

- Gap 1 Review: Improve data quality and system function around data
 - Lack of administrative capacity
 - Client data not being entered
 - Wide range of grants/funding sources that require different reporting
 - Limited HMIS licenses
 - Lack of standardization related to where and how data is collected, which aspects of client records are being reviewed and how often the review takes place, and how often HMIS is being updated
 - Inconsistent data included but not limited to overlapping program stays, funding source errors, length of stay in programs, program close outs, etc.
 - Technical issues related to HMIS for providers and clients
 - Data field language
 - Strategies to fix Gap 1:
 - Feedback from providers and clients to establish standards for data
 - Data quality:
 - The goal is to achieve 90% in data quality
 - Regular training on issues detected through data quality reports
 - Incorporate data quality in scoring
 - Ongoing and long-term system evaluation to track collaboration, coordination and relationship building
 - Use data to evaluate resources for long-term client success
 - Expand data collection by capturing data on evictions, prevention, diversion programs, ALICE population, and shelter housing opportunities in real-time
 - Set priorities and increase data literacy across the full CoC
 - Long-term goal would be to implement data oversight committee

Federal Funding Update – Monarch Housing Associates, Kathryn Balitsos

- Kathryn Balitsos presented on the proposed federal budget (Skinny Budget) and potential cuts
- Monarch Housing Associates is encouraging all CoC partner agencies to advocate to local legislators about the importance of CoC, CDBG, and DV funding and how cuts will greatly impact communities
- The following advocacy efforts and contingency planning were mentioned:
 - Local homeless trust fund
 - Discussion and updating HSAC of potential funding cuts and impacts
 - The County is gathering data from the community to determine potential impacts on a local level
 - Contingency planning should be ongoing
- Laura Giorgi, Family Promise, stated their agency received reduced funding from the CoC and 9 families are due to lose funding/housing this year. It was stated that advocacy is the most important thing right now due to the changes occurring and proposed cuts because individuals/families will lose vouchers.
- Kasey Errico stated the County, as well as all others, do not have answers as to what is going happen with the budget and cuts. Through conversations at HSAC, it was mentioned that the County has been trying to gather information from providers on potential funding cuts and the impact it will have on the community. Some programs are funded with multiple funding sources so if the federal funding is cut the program may still be able to operate for a period of time and/or with a limited scope. All this information is being gathered to specifically show what the gaps may be, what services and needs may be heightened, and what the emerging needs may be. Once gathered, this information will be communicated to the Commissioner Board and other elected officials, as needed.
- Kelly Stephens asked if there is a plan the CoC has when agencies receive funding cuts. She stated many agencies are reaching out for vouchers and although the Housing Authority does everything possible, all Housing Authorities in the County are at 100% projection through the end of the year. She stated this is exasperating and putting households back into the homeless system.

New Business:

Allocations Calendar – Allison Delcalzo-Berens

- The 2025 Allocations Calendar was presented. There is uncertainty about monitoring at this time, but we expect local monitoring to be focused on preparedness and readiness and support agencies on how to prepare for potential changes.

Policy Review:

Allocations Policies and Procedures – Allison Delcalzo-Berens

- Allison Delcalzo-Berens asked if there were any comments on the allocations policy and procedure presented at the previous CoC meeting.

- Kelly Stephens asked if the document should reference any plan the CoC may have to assist agencies when funding is reduced or eliminated.
 - Allison Delcalzo-Berens stated that ranking for projects changes with the community needs and CoC priorities. Therefore, if there is a poor performing project they will be ranked lower than a high performing project and may be in jeopardy of losing funding. She was clear that no project was on probation and this past year the CoC received less funding which caused some projects to lose funding. However, CoC funding is competitive and scoring, community needs, and HUD priorities do come into play when making decisions.
 - Alicia Alvarez stated that no other community has procedures for when an agency receives reduced funding or loses funding. She stated that no agency can rely on funding from year to year and the allocations committee must base their scoring on performance and priorities.
 - Kathryn Balitsos reiterated that agencies cannot rely on CoC funding. CoC funding is not enough to resolve homelessness, and agencies must diversify their sources of funding.

By-Laws – Alicia Alvarez

- Revisions to the by-laws as presented by Alicia Alvarez are below:
 - Align trauma language with executive orders
 - Replace CAS specific language with committees and work groups
 - Replace 10-year plan with strategic plan
 - Change the county-wide assessment to address specifically address the community's homeless population
 - Eliminate footnotes
 - Remove language referencing policy and procedures manual and points towards allocations policy and procedures and conflict of interest policy
 - Define "committee member"

Presentation:

Veteran's Program – Department of Children and Families (DCA)

- Olivia LeValley, Community Hope Outreach Coordinator, presented the Bringing Veteran's Home (BVH) program. The program serves Sussex, Warren, Hunterdon, Somerset, and Morris County.
- The goal is to eliminate veteran homelessness by 2026.
- Services include outreach, emergency shelter, housing navigation, landlord engagement, and regional coordination
- Veterans, National Guard and Reservists can all be served under the BVH program
- Veterans must have an honorable discharge to receive assistance and there are no restrictions
- Income must be at or below 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI)
- Must be homeless

- Category A- no fixed income, literally homeless, transitional, emergency shelter
- Category B- otherwise unhoused – frequently moving, couch surfing
- Category C- Domestic violence, human trafficking, abusive situation
 - Services- outreach, direct engagement, provide emergency shelter (short term less than a month) diversion (prevent homelessness over the next 7 days – connect with family)
 - RRH – quickly connect with permanent housing and supportive services, relator fees, security deposit, landlord incentive
 - Housing navigation – housing searches, securing a place affordable for a homeless veteran.
 - Regional coordination with a centralized management structure. Jessica Puglise is the regional coordinator and works out of Community Hope. She can evaluate all of the individual's needs and connect to services.
 - A referral is needed for the BVH program
 - Flyers have a QR code
 - DCA BVH website - <https://bvh.dca.nj.gov/>

Public Testimony:

- Elise Bryant discussed the gubernational election in NJ and the importance of brining funding into the State to support programs

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:34 am.