Housing and Health Services Coordination Council (HHSCC)

Quarterly Meeting

10:00am February 21, 2024

221 E. 11th Street

Austin, Texas 78701

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:02):

It's a little after 10:00 AM let's start with a roll call. Doni Green.

Doni Green (00:00:09):

Here.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:11):

Mike Goodwin?

Mike Goodwin (00:00:11):

Here sir.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:13):

Diana Delaney.

Diana Delaney (00:00:14):

Good morning.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:15):

Alright. Claire Irwin.

Claire Irwin (00:00:17):

Morning

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:20):

Blade as in Berkman.

Blade Berkman (00:00:22):

Yep.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:00:24):

Alright, and then for staff we have Bill Cranor, Jeremy and Megan Sylvester here. So we don't have a quorum, but are there any members on the phone that would just like to say hello and introduce themselves?

Veronica Neville (00:00:42):

Hi, this is Veronica Neville with HHSC.

Brooke Boston (00:00:49):

Brooke Boston with TDHCA.

Andre Adams (00:00:59):

Andre Adams. TDHCA.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:01:10):

Okay. Can't approve the minutes. Don't have quo. Bill, you want to give us an update on Section 811 please?

Bill Cranor (00:01:18):

Sure. Section 811 currently has 440 people housed, which I think is what we had last meeting also, but we do have five people that are scheduled to move in from our new FY 19 funding needs to be the first FY 19 people that will move in. We have signed one rack and we have five people they were supposed to have moved in last week, but sometimes coordinating move in dates, delays things. Something else I really wanted to talk about was a couple of years ago we had gotten permission to have a preference for the target population as if we didn't feel like were being fully served those people exiting nursing facilities, those people exiting intermediate care facilities with developmental disabilities and used in young adults aging out of foster care. At that time we were running about 92% of people with serious mental illness as making up the lion's share.

(00:02:16):

We're still a little less than that, but over the last year or so we've seen a great increase in the actual numbers of people housed in relationship to the total number housed. So for example, the last 10 people housed, three of them were from those other target populations over the last 58 and over the last 117. So that's showing over a longer period it's about 17% that has been as opposed to traditionally the 8 or 9%, which means we're basically doubling in this. And this is also taking into account that not all of, in fact most of our wait lists have not gotten to the point where we've instituted preference because the people that were before the preference are still on the wait list. So we are seeing progress on that front and I think that's very important. To that end, we're in the process, we just started to do what we call wait list cleanup, which is we reach out to tenants and applicants or applicants and say, are you still interested? And if they're not, we remove them from the wait list. If we can't get'em in touch with them at all via numerous avenues over numerous months, we will remove them from the wait list. This tends to also not only shorten the wait list but shorten wait times for everybody because they'll have to go through those debt applicants and will also help improve those preferences by removing the people above the preference from the wait list that are no longer interested.

Mike Goodwin (00:03:48):
Are you having any issues in the integration with the people aging out of foster care and the other categories?

Bill Cranor (00:03:58):
No, foster care tends to be one of our most successful groups. One reason is they tend to get housed at a higher percentage because they don't have criminal histories or bad landlord checks on their history. Whereas all the other groups tend to,

but they tend to do as well in the community as the other target population, it's probably better than persons with mysterious mental illness actually.

Doni Green (00:04:28):
Do you have a sense of the percentage of properties that are frozen right now?

Bill Cranor (00:04:36):
A sense, we have 146 properties I think. Not including the nineteens, which none of those are frozen, but they're just starting to work. We've only even had nibbles from one property, so I'm leaving those out of the 146. I think we would have probably a third of those are waiting lists open, but most of those wait lists open over half are for only two and three bedroom units.

Doni Green (00:05:02):
Yeah. Do you know if there are any in the Dallas Fort Worth area that are accepting applications right now?

Bill Cranor (00:05:09):
I'm sure there are. I don't think there's any MSA that is completely closed.

Doni Green (00:05:14):

Okay. I remember seeing a notice within the last couple of weeks that I believe Dutton was frozen and I think there were some,

Bill Cranor (00:05:23):

Yeah, there's some counties that are frozen. The counties, they're open mostly two and three bedrooms. There's a few that are coming on. Patriot Park in Fort Worth I believe is open for FY 19 deferrals and we are trying to house people actively there and that is one that we had held for FY 19 because they were constructed basically in FY 19. And so at that point we were pretty committed to 12 and 13, so we kind of held them back and so they're open and I think for all bedroom sizes, that's just off the top of my head.

Doni Green (00:05:57):

So there's a disconnect between the type of unit that folks on the interest list need and those that the properties make available. So if the property participates in the program, can it choose to designate only two or three bedrooms? Is it require to do any?

Bill Cranor (00:06:18):

No, we actually pick the bedroom.

Doni Green (00:06:20):

You do? Okay.

Bill Cranor (00:06:20):

We usually do about 80% one bedrooms, but we like to have a two and or three or sometimes a two, three and four for those people that do need that extra bedroom. So we grab them when we can, but most developments build mostly two bedroom units. We can't take 100% of the certain one bedroom units. If they have a smaller property, those end up being maybe 50 50 or stuff like that. And then some properties don't build any one bedrooms and so that's really what part of the challenge is to make the actual mix they have available. Plus we're limited by the units we can take at the properties. We can't take their markets, we can't take their 30%, so we can only take that in the middle affordability section. And so it's what they have that we take. And then we try to be about 80% one bedroom even though our wait list is more like 85%,

Doni Green (00:07:22):

For people leaving nursing facilities it's probably 98, 99%.

Bill Cranor (00:07:28):

But I was telling them. But if they need the extra bedroom for

Doni Green (00:07:31):

Living or medical equipment equipment, but even so I think that 98 99 is probably too high, but it's probably 90ish.

Megan Sylvester (00:07:44):

I have a dumb question. What do you mean by frozen? What does that mean?

Bill Cranor (00:07:46):

We close the demanding would be waiting for,

Megan Sylvester (00:07:51):

Okay.

Bill Cranor (00:07:52):

Years more than here, but most of them two or three years.

Megan Sylvester (00:07:55):

I see. Okay.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:07:56):

How's the application for the new round

Bill Cranor (00:07:59):

The application for the new round as was submitted early. So we're hopeful and we got to here in May.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:08:07):

It's another 8 million.

Bill Cranor (00:08:09):

8 million.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:08:11):

Okay. Do we need to put it in QAP again? 811 units?

Bill Cranor (00:08:16):

Well we don't if we don't get the money.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:08:19):

Okay, okay. We'll do in May.

Bill Cranor (00:08:23):

So it would be next years.

Megan Sylvester (00:08:26):

Well it's HUD May, which may be June. Especially if we have a government shutdown. I wouldn't expect that dead light slip.

Doni Green (00:08:37):

So what's the property's commitment if somebody moves in, how long is that tenant guaranteed to receive a subsidy?

Bill Cranor (00:08:48):

As long as HUD gives us money between as long as the federal network wants it. So ultimately theoretically looking how they've done project based section, going back to the seventies forever

Bobby Wilkinson (00:09:02):

And even the shutdowns, as long as we have our contract with,

Doni Green (00:09:05):

As long as it's obligated,

Bill Cranor (00:09:07):

As long as the funds are obligated. So for example, we just got funds recently, Bobby, you remember this, they were late from HUD and we couldn't pay anybody right at the first of the month. But once the funds hit our bank account or our tracks account, I should say all we do is pull against that. Should those funds run out during a shutdown though we can't get them refill. And right now for FY 12, we only have a year's worth of funds and for FY 13 we have our original amount, but it is also only going to be about a year. So if there's a shutdown, say January of next year and we haven't been refunded for the following year, we could sit with that funds for a while. FY 19, we have a full five years,

Doni Green (00:09:52):

811 is different from, I think it was low income tax credit properties. They're not making a commitment to subsidize the rent indefinitely, right? I mean it's for a given term.

Mike Goodwin (00:10:06):

The tax credit?

Doni Green (00:10:07):

Yeah,

Mike Goodwin (00:10:08):

Well it's for the life of the credit,

Doni Green (00:10:10):

Well it's actually for the 30 year period,

Bill Cranor (00:10:15):

But there's a fox 20 year all the property signed in 20 year contract with two five year renewal. After that the property can sign in another five in a contract.

Doni Green (00:10:23):

I just know we're getting ton a calls for people who, we're receiving subsidies and the property has ceased participating and folks are calling us at the 11th hour saying I need an apartment next month and I can afford to pay $500. And there is nothing that I've been able to find.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:10:43):

They're losing their 811, not

Bill Cranor (00:10:46):

811 doesn't lock go, the first earliest one, Sunday. Any property could opt out would being like 2046.

Doni Green (00:10:54):

Yeah, I think it's tax credit.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:10:56):

Tax credit. They usually have at least 30 year LURA. But yeah, we have some that got funded years, years ago that did roll off occasionally.

Doni Green (00:11:08):

There's also a program called Low Rent Mod that was funded. It's like a seventies program and then there was a way to kind of restructure that in called the mark to market markup basically. And those properties are coming to the end of their commitment through that program. And so it's a disproportionate impact in older cities that participated in the program. So like Dallas and Houston, I don't think Austin has maybe just a couple of those properties, but Dallas and Houston have a bunch so you might be hearing that too because kind of on the first wave of that happening,

Bobby Wilkinson (00:11:56):
What's it called? Low rent mod?

Megan Sylvester (00:11:57):
Low rent mod.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:11:58):
And it's funded from where?

Megan Sylvester (00:11:59):
It's a HUD program and it was a program in the seventies where HUD had basically had subsidized the mortgage, then there was an option in the nineties to transfer out of that funding stream to a more traditional project-based funding stream. But if you

didn't do that, then your original commitment from that low mod program is going away because there were generally 40 or 50 year commitments.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:12:31):
It's a pretty big cliff unit wise that we're seeing?

Megan Sylvester (00:12:35):
The last time I heard. I think it's about if everyone were to leave, and of course some properties have been re-upped with something else, they become tax credits or they become something else. But if everyone naturally were to leave, it's about half a million units naturally. But Texas, because we're kind of a younger population state doesn't have as many of those properties that Detroit or Boston or somewhere like that where my colleagues over there are really talking about it and especially in certain neighborhoods that built a lot of affordable housing in the seventies and now it's potentially all going to go away because those areas are really, Cambridge is one of 'em. I had a colleague that worked on that program for the nonprofit that was in to buy the partnership out of the building and so they're doing things to try to preserve affordability. But yeah, there are going to be a loss of units.

Mike Goodwin (00:13:47):

Is that what they called the LIFA program and the ALIFA program. Low income housing.

Megan Sylvester (00:13:52):

Yes, kind of. There were many programs that qualified, but most of them were smaller impact and that's what you could refinance under if you were one of those programs that they had called them orphan programs because starting in the eighties congress chose not to sort of fund those mortgage subsidy like programs anymore. Like 2 36 is another one that you'll hear. But the low mod rent was a bigger program because it came with the mortgage and it came with operating assistance. And so it was a more popular program. More people did choose however to do the restructuring in that program because they were already sort set up on a project basis. It was a good deal because if you're running a Section 8 property and your rents are a hundred dollars, if you go through markup to market, your rents are now $140, which you've never had before and HUD gets you money to rehab the property, so it's rehab the property, but you make an extended commitment to run into that program. And those were all of the sixties and seventies, 40 year mortgages. It would come in due when HUD came up and said, we lied, you can't pay off your mortgage and you can't leave the program. And so they brought those two.

Megan Sylvester (00:15:14):

And HUD a long time ago, so I don't know how accurate this is. I went to a definitely pre covid meeting sort of about what HUD was doing and was planning to do and about half of the people that were eligible took the mark. Right. So now those commitments probably go to 2040 or 2030s to 2040. So we've got some leg time. The people who didn't take that, they're the ones that are starting to fall off this year and then going in for 2030.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:15:48):

Any more questions on 811 for Bill? Okay Bill, we do need to circle back and don't let me forget with QAP about putting 811 units in there. The sooner we can probably get it in there the better I'd like to get in there before September, but December one is my ultimate drop down.

Bill Cranor (00:16:14):

Yeah, yeah.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:16:15):

Okay, going on item three, emergency housing vouchers. Andre, are you going to talk to us about that?

Andre Adams (00:16:23):

Yes I am gonna provide a little update here for you. Alright, thank you. So as of today, we are at a hundred and, excuse me, 706 applicants have leased up and have successfully secured units and right now we have a total of 62 that are pending between HQS pending inspections and have contracts before they can move in. But hopefully the next two to three weeks we should be at 768 lease up, which will be only 11 away from our 798 total vouchers. So that's a woohoo. Great. Yeah, definitely, definitely. I'm doing cartwheels right here now, but I wanted to give you a little update on just a percentages. The average lease up time that the vouchers are taken to lease up just between 93 and 96 days. So they are with their background and of course the service fees, that's helping out a lot. They're still able to secure units and on the average we're losing about 3% of applicants that leased up that they're either being evicted or whatever the case may be. But the landlords are not taking 'em to court technically. They're basically not renewing their lease so they're still eligible to get another and that's how we're able to reissue that same voucher to that applicant to look for a unit. And like I said, it's been pretty successful overall working with the COC. Definitely the different types of case management and just everybody brainstorming to just make this program successful. That definitely that can be.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:18:17):

That's great. Andre, man, I remember I was sweating at the beginning of EHPD when it seemed like we were having a hard time getting off the ground, so now we're almost maxed out. That's awesome.

Andre Adams (00:18:27):
Yeah, definitely. I agree.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:18:31):
Any questions about emergency housing vouchers for Andre? All right, Jeremy's going to talk to us about the state of Texas 2024 One-Year Action Plan consultation. It's also called the OYAP.

Jeremy Stremler (00:18:44):
Yes. So pretty much it's an opportunity for anyone on the council to provide input on how we want to see the CPD programs operate over the next year. That includes CDBG, HOME, ESG, HOPWA and NHTF, National Housing Trust Fund. We've begun working on the One-Year Action Plan for the next fiscal year and it's just an opportunity to provide any input if there's anything that you've heard of or seen in the programs that you have questions about or concerns about or anything of that nature to bring them forward and let us know so that we can have those discussions potentially make changes before our next program year starts. I

will say because we've already broached the subject, we don't know how much money we're going to receive because the current weight for appropriations is for the money that will be for the next One-Year Action Plan. Hopefully that will happen sooner rather than later so that we can submit a plan with money in it. Otherwise don't know, I don't think we've run across quite definitely not in recent years run across, not having but through August when it's required to be done in the last five or six years or so. It's been a long time since

Mike Goodwin (00:20:24):
You're going to be lucky if you get the appropriations bill passed this year. Trump doesn't want it, he wants to use it for the election and he is running the Republican party now and look what they've done. They kill the border bill, the Republicans screamed border bill, border bill, Senate says here's a border bill. Trump says don't touch it. I want to use that in my election stuff. And so they've killed the border. If they've killed the border bill, they killed Foreign Aid, they killed Foreign Aid to kill everything else. So you're going to be lucky to get, you may get a CR.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:20:56):
Probably that may have been what happened. It was 2017, it was before you were here and a very similar thing happened. We

waited and waited and there were all sorts of contingencies, but we managed.

Megan Sylvester (00:21:08):

There was a year not in the not too distant past.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:21:11):

It was 17.

Megan Sylvester (00:21:13):

Where if there hadn't been at the end of the year it was, I believe it was "Omnibus" (maybe) because there were some bills or maybe that was the year. It was just the, I don't, anyway there the HUD had released some guidance that it was going to release half of the year's allocation. So if there wasn't a budget bill passed by some date,

Elizabeth Yevich (00:21:34):

There's a contingency. So there's plenty, some money.

Megan Sylvester (00:21:37):

That's so much work for everyone because then they have to go back and you have to sign a new grant agreement with the other half and anyway, it's just a mess. No one wants to do it,

Elizabeth Yevich (00:21:49):

Paperwork,

Megan Sylvester (00:21:50):

But it might happen.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:21:53):

The money will eventually get there. How's that?

Jeremy Stremler (00:21:58):

Fingers crossed. But yeah, so that's what, this is your day. If anybody has anything, if you think of anything feel free. So it's CDBG, HOPWA, HOME, ESG and NHTF. So National Housing Trust Fund,

Elizabeth Yevich (00:22:19):

There's the five, those are five TDHCA

Jeremy Stremler (00:22:24):

HOPWA

Elizabeth Yevich (00:22:24):

Right. Those are separate.

Megan Sylvester (00:22:27):

And just to note, NHCF is funded slightly differently.

Jeremy Stremler (00:22:31):

It's not an appropriation, so that will still most likely happen unless the government shut down. There's nobody to process those payments from HUD. But if they don't appropriate anything, that will still happen because it is not appropriated.

Megan Sylvester (00:22:48):

So Freddy and Fannie, certain amount of fees go

Jeremy Stremler (00:22:51):

To percentage of their fees. Yeah, go to the nationalizing housing trust fund and then it's distributed, but it is distributed by HUD, so if there's a shutdown, there's nobody to distribute the funds, but the money itself is not appropriated by the federal government.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:23:06):

And we can send a brief email after this just listing those programs just so you have it in print right in front of you. So yes,

Jeremy Stremler (00:23:14):

Yes. Yeah. And on our website pages I can forward you all where I did the timeline last summer, I think of when all the programs came into existence and the description of each one and I can forward that around again as well too. Just refresh everybody's memory on that. But yeah, Suzanne's not here, but it would be a rare opportunity where all of the agencies that participate in the One-Year Action Plan are here because Blade runs the HOPWA program. So again,

Bobby Wilkinson (00:23:52):

GLO's still play a role

Jeremy Stremler (00:23:54):

So not in the One-Year Action Plan. CDBGDR funds are kind of in their own world. They do plans and reports and submit them to HUD but all on their own.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:24:04):

All on their own.

Jeremy Stremler (00:24:05):

We have some blurbs in the consolidated plan and the One-Year Action Plan kind of referencing that, if you want to look at CDBGDR reports,

Bobby Wilkinson (00:24:13):

Look over there,

Jeremy Stremler (00:24:13):

Go over there. We're not doing that but yeah, and those don't fall under the same planning requirements because they aren't an annual allocation. Right. Obviously disasters happen on our annual basis for the most part, but they aren't something that is pre-thought of and pre appropriated for before disaster happens.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:24:43):

We haven't had a big money one since Harvey, but

Jeremy Stremler (00:24:46):

Yeah, there haven't been any really big ones.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:24:48):

Anything else Jeremy?

Jeremy Stremler (00:24:50):

Nope, That'll do it.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:24:51):

Thank you sir. I believe Blade has a presentation on the housing opportunities for persons with AIDS or the HOPWA program.

Blade Berkman (00:24:58):

Yes, yes. Hey, good morning everybody.

Suzanne Barnard (00:25:05):

Can I tag it

Bobby Wilkinson (00:25:06):

For the record? Suzanne Barnard from the Department of Agriculture has entered the building.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:25:19):

Yeah, we were just talking about you Suzanne but now we're on to, we've moved on to HOPWA.

Blade Berkman (00:25:26):

Good morning everybody. My name is Blade. I'm the housing opportunities for persons with AIDS or HOPWA coordinator for the HIV care services group at the Texas Department of Sustainable Services, our HIV Care services group administers states and federal funding for HIV Corps medical care and support services and my role there is to administer the HOPWA grant. So I kind of do the whole deal, the grants. I work with you all on the con plan and the HOPWA portions of the One-Year Action Plan, budget contracts, policy development, reporting, training, technical assistance, whatever it takes. So that's my role. I've always done housing and HIV work fresh out of social work school. In 2009 I got started at a place called Samaritan House in Fort Worth, which provides a variety of housing assistance services to folks living them with HIV and I did the same thing when I moved to Austin during homeless prevention and rapid rehousing for folks living with HIV and now I work at the Department of State Health Services as the HOPWA coordinator since 2014. Been a minute. So yeah, that's my spiel. I just want to provide a high level big picture overview of our HOPWA program today. Here's an overview of the slides. I thought I'd keep it simple and light. We're going to talk about the program purpose, our administrative structure eligibility, so you know who we're targeting and just a brief overview of the activities we perform with our HOPWA. Okay. The program is called Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS. However, all people living with HIV regardless of how advanced are eligible for participation in the program. It doesn't have to be AIDS, HIV is enough we administer a formula grant. the housing opportunities for person with AIDS formula and grant from HUD. There's some pictures of HUD's headquarters and at the bottom corner there that's HUD's office of HIV/AIDS housing. That's the whole office.

So anyway, HOPWA was created on the AIDS Housing Opportunity Act signed to the law in 1990 with the first appropriations. HOPWA serves as the only federal program dedicated to addressing the housing needs of low income people living with HIV in their households. Our goals are to help eligible persons living with HIV establish maintain affordable, stable housing, reduce their risk of homelessness and improve their access to healthcare and other supportive services because stable housing allows persons living with HIV to work on viral suppression, access comprehensive health care adhere to HIV treatment and achieve suppression. The big objective of HME work nowadays. HOPWA provides a range of housing assistance and supportive services. I can't go through all of them today, but we do just a narrow subset of everything that the HOPWA regulations allow us to do. HOPWA began before the lifesaving HIV medications that we have today.

So originally the HOPWA program was envisioned to provide people living with AIDS, a place to die with dignity. But over the years and with advancements in HIV treatment and care, the focus of the program has evolved to using housing as a structural intervention to end the epidemic. And fun fact HOPWA celebrates its 30 year anniversary recently. We are the only HOPWA grantee in Texas of course similar to Ryan White where we have our A

city funding and park EF funding or for community planning and development program where you have eligible state and cities they receive funding. The HOPWA kind of the same way. HOPWA also makes awards to cities. So in Texas there are a total of seven HOPWA formula jurisdictions including ours and you can see our most recent formula allocations here in this graph. So yeah, we aren't the only ones in Texas doing this work, but our program covers all of the counties in Texas, all 254 counties prioritizing the counties outside of those metro areas. As a result, our program targets non-urban less populated areas.
Let's say

Doni Green (00:30:37):
The funds are going to the urban areas, are they serving folks in contiguous areas or

Blade Berkman (00:30:47):
Who us?

Doni Green (00:30:48):
The funds are going to the metropolitan areas, the program prioritizes by non-metropolitan. So the folks who are Dallas and Houston are receiving the majority of the funds. Are those funds being used to assist people beyond the metropolitan area?

Blade Berkman (00:31:07):

No, the cities use their funding for their metro area for their jurisdiction. We, there's nothing prohibiting us from allocating additional funds to those areas. So we do set aside a little bit of extra money to cover ideally in theory sort of the fringe areas of those larger Metro areas.

Doni Green (00:31:29):

It's really the first where it says state of Texas, those are the funds that are dedicated to serving the

Blade Berkman (00:31:37):

Balance of state essentially. And the way that prioritization works I guess in practices with our formula for distributing funds, we adjust out most of the people in the directly funded counties. That's kind of how it works. So they get a very small fraction of what they might otherwise get if we didn't adjust those folks out. It's just meant to help out a little bit because never enough money in those areas and from an epidemic perspective, that's where HIV is and we want to make sure we're allocating funding to address it. Big picture of the administrative structure of our program is outlined here. Obviously HUD's Office of HIV AIDS housing manages the HOPWA grant and we administrative formula grants we contract with administrative agencies and six Ryan White part B HIV planning areas encompassing 26 HIV service delivery areas. AA's are essentially our contractual right arm. They administer all the funding that we have, we put it out to them and they go for and select service providers for Ryan White HOPWA and yeah, this is kind of how it looks. This is actually a little bit simplified. We have actually six administrative agencies and I believe currently 29 project sponsors. Project sponsors are HOPWA service providers, a nonprofit organization or governmental housing agency then receives funding to perform HOPWA services.

(00:33:20):

That's just the jargon for service provided. And then here again it's just more context. This is a map of our administrative agency plan in regions there are six, it hasn't always looked like this but we lost some in may recently and so as you can see Brazos Valley Council governments kind of stepped up to the plate and took over that area. They are doing the most huge Pan West central Texas region back then. Otherwise we have, we're working on creating sort of a border region there in yellow South Texas Development Council. This is covering El Paso, Harlingen, Uvalde, Corpus. University Health in San Antonio is our administrative agency for that part of South central Texas. We've got Tarrant County Public Health, Dallas County Health and Human Services and in the East Texas planning region, the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS resource group, which is a nonprofit that admins under federal funding at they cover East Texas. More context here is a map of Texas broken, into our HIV service delivery areas of which there are 26 and we have a project sponsor situated in each of those areas providing services to that service area. Okay. Eligibility before we talk about activities, I just want cover eligibility. HOPWA eligibility is pretty simple. At least one household member must live with HIV, the households annual income can't exceed 80% of the area median income for that households county of residence and household size and the household has to reside in that project sponsor service area. That's it. That's eligibility. Pretty low barrier eligibility there. In the interest of time, I'm going to skip some of this.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:35:19):
I was about to say I could feel it.

Blade Berkman (00:35:22):
You would. Yeah and just to give you a sense of, this is more for the non HUD people that I usually give this presentation to, but most people are used to federal poverty level and so I remind them that we use area medium income and for example, discount the household of one person who makes 65,000 a year or less would be eligible for the HOPWA. Right? So again, the eligibility criteria is not that strict and the income limits

are pretty generous as compared to other federal programs. Before we talk about activities I just fitting it's important to contextualize them a little bit. You've probably seen something like this before. Affordable housing continuum, which rent is all the way from harmless to market rate housing and home ownership. So each home activity that we perform has a purpose, a target population. It could be providing temporary emergency shelter to folks who are homeless to be providing transitional supportive housing, permanent supportive housing or it could be providing short-term payments to help prevent somebody from becoming homeless. So HOPWA can do all kinds of things but our program focuses on this range here at the west of the continuum. We are not building units, we are not rehabbing, I dunno you'll be doing anything fancy like y'all do. We just do what HUD calls client determined activities. So we're not helping people buy housing, we're not financing or lending or anything like that.

Megan Sylvester (00:37:14):

What's social housing? Not familiar with that term.

Blade Berkman (00:37:19):

I think this is from Canada.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:37:23):

We would say permanent support housing.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:37:29):

Social housing.

Megan Sylvester (00:37:35):

Possibly like co-op housing where like shared housing. Shared housing.

Blade Berkman (00:37:41):

Okay. Like shared bathroom. This is fancy.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:37:45):

Suzanne's the complicated one at CDB too. So who complicated we're facing y'all

Blade Berkman (00:37:54):

Okay, so here are our services, our activities that we've authorized. We do tenant-based rental assistance. So they go short-term mortgage utility or strong facility-based housing assistance, which we have limited to two subcategories, short-term supportive housing and transitional supportive housing. You could use HOWPA funds to provide permanent supportive housing, but TBRA is really doing the most work there for us. So we're not doing permanent supportive housing facilities, just short-term and transitional. We also offer as permanent housing placement and housing case management. We've got some other lesser used activity categories but they're not as fun. Don't try and read this still. I'm still trying to read this. I don't panic. Lots of small text here but you don't need to see or read this. I just want to give you a sense that each of these activities has their own target population's requirements, workflows, their own housing status that they're trying to address. So yeah, for a household to qualify for any of these activities, they first have to be base appropriate eligibility requirements that we just talked about and then you can look at which activities are the best fit for a households, which one is most likely to address presenting.

Doni Green (00:39:11):
You said the TRBA is the primary.

Blade Berkman (00:39:13):
Yes.

Doni Green (00:39:15):
What do you do? I love the TBRA program but it's not broadly available. So how do you handle that? It's particularly for the balance of the state where you probably don't have TBRA administrators.

Blade Berkman (00:39:28):

Well our product sponsors, so our service providers are the tenant-based rental assistance providers. It's not as heavy as housing choice voucher kind of rental assistance or rental assistance for other programs. Something I know y'all are fascinated by is that we don't use a voucher based system for our tenant-based rental assistance. The HOPWA regulations don't require us to use a voucher and in 30 years of administrative a HOPWA grant, we have never used a voucher system. So it's not as administratively burdensome as you might think. I don't know if that helps.

Doni Green (00:40:06):

Could you, you've expanded the supply by having the administrators assume that responsibility? Correct.

Blade Berkman (00:40:14):

We have reduced our in-house administrative burden by contracting out some of our administrative functions, chiefly selecting service providers and doing monitoring, providing quality assurance, that kind of stuff. But we don't administer the program in house. We don't do any tenant-based rental assistance applications or stuff like that. That's all handled by each local organization in each HIV service delivery area.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:40:48):

Do you mean how do they find units that are willing to accept?

Doni Green (00:40:52):

So my experience has been, I serve in a 19 county area for relocation services and there are a handful of TBRA administrators. So it's just not an option for the vast majority of people when we serve because there's no provider.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:41:07):

Okay.

Blade Berkman (00:41:10):

We have providers. I think we're good there. Yes, tenant base rental assistance is a big category for us. You can see here on the left and believe that's the number of households that we served last year. So in the 2022 program year we served 1017 unduplicated households. 524 of those households received rental assistance. So it's just 500 I guess it's not really a super huge number.

Jeremy Stremler (00:41:38):

I guess Blade something, I might put it in context is what is the size of the target population in Texas? Right? What is the size of persons living with HIV under 80% in context?

Blade Berkman (00:41:52):

Yeah, good question. I think so there are about 98,000 people living with HIV in Texas last I checked. Our programs touch about a third of those folks, but the number of people who actually qualify for HOPWA is very high, far more than whoever actually receive HOPWA services. That 80% limit is pretty generous so a lot of people qualify.

Doni Green (00:42:19):

So if the program can help people that are already housed that might need help with rental, paying their rent or utilities or they need services. Or all people that are looking for housing.

Blade Berkman (00:42:33):

And Marty does too to prevent foreclosure and here are some of our very expenditures for the same program here. TBRA 50% R expenditure. It's a lot of course TBRA requires a longer term funding commitment per household, so that's part of the supply. But after that housing case management takes the biggest share, which takes for a lot of worker time and effort working with households and applying for the program at doing housing quality standard inspections and things like that. And then followed by that short-term reward utility payments to prevent homelessness about 12% of our budget.

(00:43:16):

Okay. I'm just going to provide a quick overview of some of our activity. I know we are little press for time.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:43:22):

No, you're fine, you're fine. You're fine.

Blade Berkman (00:43:24):

Provide tenant-based rental assistance. Obviously tenant-based rental assistance is a portable rental subsidy. A household goes out into the private market, selects a unit of their choice and they can move within program rules. They can move with continued assistance to a new unit. It's not facility-based rental assistance where you have to live in that facility to receive that rental assistance. Tenant-based rental assistance support. Let's see. Yeah, TBRA alleviates renters burden, makes housing affordable. It converts any ordinary market rate unit into an affordable housing. That's kind of how the magic of TBRA and also some cool exciting news. HUD recently approved a proposal that we submitted to use a higher what's called a rent standard. The equivalent is the payment standard for housing choice voucher.

(00:44:19):

We submitted a plan with a justification on why we needed a higher rent standard and they approved it. We're using 130% of the small area of fair market rent were available and 130% of fair market rent where not very good. It's very cool, right? It really is. Yeah. Good place because after we did a little research we figured that was about the statewide average. It's like 30% more than fair market rent. The HOPWA regulations allow you to use fair market rent for your rent standard or a HUD approved community wide exception rent standard, which is about as vague as it sounds. HUD recently put out some guidance on what that meant and one of the meanings was we could submit a proposal to them with a justification on something custom. So that's what we hear.

Jeremy Stremler (00:45:12):
And how long is somebody eligible to receive TBRA funds through the HOPWA program?

Blade Berkman (00:45:16):
A year at a time? Yeah. The HOPWA regulations require recertification eligibility recertification annually at minimum, but if circumstances change throughout the year, you can also do an interim eligibility recertification. But yeah, annually

Mike Goodwin (00:45:33):

Are those vouchers controlled by, I'll say your program office. The various program officers have their own TBRA allocation and they provide the voucher.

Blade Berkman (00:45:47):

They provide the rental assistance? Yeah, no voucher system, but they work with applicants directly. So we don't process any applications in house. We don't work with clients directly. It's all happening with the local nonprofits services. So

Megan Sylvester (00:46:02):

The administrative agencies pay the landlords directly or does the payment go through the tenant?

Blade Berkman (00:46:07):

No, so we have a contract with our administrative agencies. It's the big contract to cover the entire planning region. AA's take that money and subcontracted to service providers. They bill their AA every month. The AA sends us a big bill every month for the region. And if we

Megan Sylvester (00:46:27):

So the service providers are paying the landlords directly or they're paying the tenants and the tenants are paying the landlords.

Blade Berkman (00:46:32):

They pay the landlords directly.

Jeremy Stremler (00:46:33):

So you're funneling all the money down through each level once they're requested from you?

Blade Berkman (00:46:37):

Exactly, yeah. And then they submit their bill to us and then we draw that down to IDIS.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:46:44):

Good old IDIS.

Blade Berkman (00:46:45):

Yes.

Megan Sylvester (00:46:46):

Good old better than DRGR.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:46:51):

Point noted.

Blade Berkman (00:46:53):

Next activity is short-term rent, mortgage and utility assistance STRMU. STRMU is about homelessness prevention, keeping people who are already housed. So HOPWA limits the amount of STRMU product sponsor can provide to a household. Product sponsors can provide up to 21 weeks of assistance. I don't know where 21 weeks came from. It's just always been 21 weeks. Don't ask. 21 weeks of assistance and a given 52 week period or said another way can pay for 147 days of accrued costs. So what does that mean? Say a household needs help with January rent and rent's a thousand dollars and there are 31 days in January. If you paid all $1,000 then you proportionally paid all of the days in January.

(00:47:44):

So if you shell out a thousand dollars for January rent, you've paid for 31 days out of your 147 day limit. Similarly, maybe you only paid half of that. The household can cover 500 and you cover and your agency will cover the remaining 500. Then proportionally you've only paid for half of the days in January. So with rounding, that's 16 days of assistance. I know. Yay. Mid-morning math. HUD was a little heavy on the math unfortunately, but that is how STRMU works. It can provide assistance for current rent, rental debt, utilities, utility debt, mortgage, mortgage debt, late fees, all kinds of stuff.

(00:48:34):

Next is facility based housing assistance. This is a huge broad category that encompasses all kinds of expenditures for support housing, facilities. With the way our model works, it primarily covers one of four types of costs. Operating leasing, master leasing and project-based rental assistance. So there are a number of different ways to structure it. You could have a short-term style facility or a transitional style facility, single site status site. And depending on whether a product sponsor actually owns that facility or leases it, that'll determine the kind of eligible cost that you can build a HOPWA. It's too complicated to get into these like its own hour long meeting, but our subcategories are short-term support, housing and transitional. Both are intended to achieve sort of the same goal, just a different method of getting there. So short-term provides a short-term emergency facility like the emergency shelter, hotel, motel stay, if there are no other alternative options, boarding houses, halfway houses typically arrangements where you pay out a nightly or bed rate basis. So STSH, short-term supportive housing covers that. And then we have transitional supportive housing which provides up to 24 months of facility-based rental assistance. We really only have one agency doing this work and it's AIDS Foundation, Houston and Houston. They're administering a program for people who were recently released from prison or incarceration. So they have a master leasing arrangement where they leased out a bunch of units from this apartment complex and they sublease those units to eligible tenants usually because the criminal issue, criminal background issues prevent them from securing a lease. Right? So AIDS Foundation Houston assumes that tenancy burden and some leases to eligible households and then they receive a rental assistance subsidy based on their income. So yeah, like I said, only really one of our agencies is doing transitional support of housing finance special project in Houston.

(00:51:04):

Next thing, permanent housing placement. This is about accessing a permanent residence maintained either on their own or with the help of some ongoing subsidy, either help or not HOPWA. You can use PHP as a standalone service or any conjunction with other housing assistance. So for things, select security deposits first, last month's rent, location fees, administrative fees, utility hookup fees, utility deposits. It can even help with renter's insurance if in the form of a one-time payment to give you in and if absolutely necessary. PHP can also pay for utility and rental arrears that are too big of an obstacle that they prevent somebody from getting into housing. Right? Your rental history is so bad that nobody will rent to you and if that's the case, PHP can help pay that off in the interest of getting somebody a house. We also do housing case management. It's just what it sounds like. It's a case management with an emphasis on housing issues but it is pretty fundamental to the success of many of our households or case managers are working to get people connected to other mainstream benefits resources, work on housing plans, that kind of stuff.

(00:52:37):

And finally we've got some other kind of boring administrative stuff I don't want to spend too much time on, but we do housing information services which provides counseling information referral services. This is not the same thing as housing counseling. A formal housing counseling, extra housing information services. Little was rigorous on the regulations there. You can provide fair housing guidance for health sensitive experience discrimination based on belonging to any protected claims. We've also got resource identification which provides which you can use to general research and determine the feasibility of specific housing initiatives. And then we've got administrative costs. So our grantee administrative costs project sponsored administrative costs, the HOPWA regulations limit our grantee admin to 3% of each annual grant. And then project sponsors give to take up to 7% of their contract to further on administrative costs. Yeah. Questions. We kind of hustled through some of those slides there.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:54:00):

You have as many acronyms, all new acronyms. The alphabet soup continues.

Megan Sylvester (00:54:06):

They have the opportunity to have STRUM and they chose not to.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:54:12):

So close.

Blade Berkman (00:54:14):

Actually you know what, there are many regional pronunciations of STRMU and I believe one of them is strum.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:54:22):

Oh there we go.

Blade Berkman (00:54:23):

I've heard STRMU and SMU and Strom. And

Megan Sylvester (00:54:29):

I was at a head training in January and a new acronym was introduced to me about where we're supposed to send baba waivers and it's the MEOW.

Blade Berkman (00:54:48):

I have a good one. They recently changed the reporting format for HOPWA and the first year we had this leniency period on reporting. So they put out an LOL. Letter of Lenience.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:55:03):

I have to ask, what is meow? I know BADA build America by America. It's mailing. No. Can we guess Mail M? Do remember what? It's mailing? EE. Come on. E enforcement email. How do you spell meow? Yeah

Megan Sylvester (00:55:29):

But yeah, no it's really. It's good that you have a place where you can send the waiver. You send it to the meow.

Mike Goodwin (00:55:48):

Will that mean they'd have a cat house?

Elizabeth Yevich (00:55:51):

There we go.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:55:54):

Very good. Thank you Blaine. That was great. Now is the time where we would accept public comment. Anyone on the phone?

Mike Goodwin (00:56:07):

Just one? And you all are aware of it more than anybody else, I would assume that is there is no such thing as affordable housing anymore. It's gone away. And you were talking about, for example, your qualification of the HOPWA program is 80% single person $65,000. How many people in our housing bucket make over $65,000 a year? My answer is very few. If they're really going into that element and what's happening in the area I live in is all them folks from California, and these are not the ones that are being bused. These are the ones that are running from California, are coming into the rural areas. They're buying up all of the old housing, they're gutting it, they're putting a masonry facade and they're taking a 1200 square foot house and selling it for between 350,000 and a half million dollar. So you've got to be able to afford a $350,000 house to live in the city of Murray. And the folks that are our tourist service people, which means the people working for the shopkeepers cannot afford to live in the city where they work. So they're all driving 20 or 30 miles one way every time they go home to and from work. McDonald's are advertising starting salaries at $15 an hour now on Billboard outside the place. So Bill, we have the housing crunch coming and that's why we're talking about the housing here is all of these people that were in the credit programs that can get out are getting out because they can raise their rents and there's no control. And so that's a social comment, isn't it? It's one that we need to be concerned about because of what are we going to do with all the people that are under housed that or cannot be house.

Bobby Wilkinson (00:58:10):
Good boy. Excellent. Jeremy, do you have any updates on the next meet or anything?

Jeremy Stremler (00:58:18):
So I have one update. It's mostly for state agency members. This year is one of the years that the council has to submit a biennial plan and report to the governor's office and the legislature. So for state agency members, not all of you will receive an email from me because there's only a couple agencies where updates are needed. It's mostly HHSC and Veterans Commission and then TSAHC. So you'll receive an email from me with some text from the last document that you can decide if it needs to be updated or not. But so just be on the lookout for that at the beginning of March and we will be updating that document again and at the July meeting we will finalize that. We'll have another meeting in between and April, but that'll kind of be where that's headed. So just be on the lookout for that and then sometime before the July meeting, everyone will get an opportunity to see the full draft and make any comments

or suggested edits that they want. But just wanted to put that out there. That is happening.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:59:42):

In the April meeting because this one got shifted a few weeks. Might be early May because we're going to be a little busy in April with that other document. Yeah, that other little thing called the AI, we'll be taking that out for public comment. So y'all were both involved in that. Thank you Blade and Suzanne for your input. Probably early May, but Jeremy will be in touch for that meeting.

Megan Sylvester (01:00:04):

Speaking of public comment, did y'all already talk about the CDBG proposed rule?

Elizabeth Yevich (01:00:10):

We did not.

Megan Sylvester (01:00:12):

So they had put out a proposed rule for the effects, the CDBG program and a little bit on the comp plan. It's still proposal. So two years from now perhaps we will see some improvements here, but there's some exciting things that he's clearly trying to change the behavior as well and drive certain activities. One of the exciting things for this group is that we would potentially be able to use Medicare qualifications as a documentation of low mod status rather than having to collect separate income eligibility, which these other different types of activity credit Medicare. Medicaid. Medicaid. Yeah. Medicare is not a lean based program. Medicaid is correct, but elderly status is, I put those two things together in my head. Medicaid and also age. They've defined an age for housing purposes, which they've never done before.

Bobby Wilkinson (01:01:17):

So not being tested just like at a certain age you're low mod for CDBG.

Megan Sylvester (01:01:21):

You're presumed to be low mod at age 62 for housing.

Bobby Wilkinson (01:01:26):

Okay.

Megan Sylvester (01:01:32):

There's extra limitations because we've already discussed we are complicated, but that is a piece of the puzzle that can be just a checkbox rather than a

Elizabeth Yevich (01:01:41):

Wow.

Megan Sylvester (01:01:42):

Yeah. So

Elizabeth Yevich (01:01:43):

Much easier.

Megan Sylvester (01:01:45):

Yes. So they're putting some definitions on things. The thing that did not make it into this proposed rule is new housing construction as a simple eligibility. It's still eligible if you jump through a whole lot of loops in terms of going through a nonprofit partner and lot of other things like that. But new housing construction is something that HUD was discussing and chose not to put into this rule. So see there's a couple of exciting things for the comp plan. Not having to rely on newspapers for our publication is like actually being in the 21st Century. Yeah, we're getting there. Encouraging digital communication for effective outreach is now potentially written into the rules.

Elizabeth Yevich (01:02:37):

Of course these rules won't go into effect before the next con plan is due, which is July, 2025.

Megan Sylvester (01:02:42):

Correct. It will be a little while,

Elizabeth Yevich (01:02:44):

But can take it into consideration that that's what they're moving toward and

Megan Sylvester (01:02:50):

Maybe

Elizabeth Yevich (01:02:52):

Streamline

Megan Sylvester (01:02:53):

If y'all want to take a look at it. It's not a fun read, I mean, but there's some nuggets in there that are potentially effective. This group and we are going to need to talk about self-help center.

Bobby Wilkinson (01:03:09):

Does it cover DR too or just regular CDBG?

Megan Sylvester (01:03:12):

Just entitlement and state programs. The disaster has to go by, they have no permanent rule. They have to go by federal register notice for every separate section

Doni Green (01:03:26):

and they keep talking about making a permanent universal rule, a universal rule. Then the federal register notice would update parts of depending on the disaster, but they just haven't, it almost happened. I know it's so close, but a less

Bobby Wilkinson (01:03:43):

Cool. Any other points? Alright with that, we'll adjourn.