

THN TICH Update: April

VISTA Member Start Dates

Tarrant County: 04/23/2018

Travis County: 07/23/2018

Amended Employment Navigator Project Goals for 2018-2019

In addition to the previously stated goals of the THN-TICH project, THN will create a tool kit to help guide local Workforce Boards and Continuums of Care to coordinate and assist people experiencing homelessness in developing their careers. The tool kit will include the following:

- Workforce Staff Development Plan- This development plan would guide a Workforce Board on training its staff in best serving people experiencing homelessness.
- Employer Development Plan- This would assist the CoC or Workforce Board in creating local employer connections by enabling the entities to better discuss the needs and benefits when hiring individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Client Development Plan- Designed for the people experiencing homelessness, it would give clients insight into the application, hiring and job retention process. This plan will include training materials for presenters to present to clients, as well as, materials to received directly by clients.

Throughout the year VISTA members will create prototypes for their communities. At the end of their year, materials will be presented to THN who will then create a toolkit designed to replicate the best parts of each project throughout the state.

Texas Disaster Housing Task Force

Hurricane Harvey made all too clear that Texas would benefit from more coordinated efforts in response to natural and manmade disasters--particularly when it comes to gathering information about disaster victims and efficiently connecting them to housing providers.

Following Hurricane Katrina and several other major storms, Louisiana developed a Disaster Housing Strategy. We believe a similar official coordinated system can be developed for Texas.

In Louisiana's Disaster Housing Strategy, four state agencies have partnered with FEMA, the American Red Cross, and the state-level VOAD to form a core group that ensures a coordinated statewide disaster housing response. Although some agencies don't have direct translations between Louisiana and Texas, we believe that several agencies--such as TDHCA, GLO, or TX HHSC--could fulfill these core agency roles.

The Disaster Housing Task Force would also depend upon several dozen associate members, who would help broker connections between state-level disaster housing efforts and local, municipal, and regional disaster recovery plans.

The objectives of the Texas Disaster Housing Task Force would span from pre-event to long-term recovery, and include:

- a Identifying the types of disasters that require the TDHTF to activate
- a Coordinating pre-event mass evacuation and compliance with orders
- a Gauging potential severity and extent of housing stock damage, potential loss of critical infrastructure, and potential for harmful contaminants to linger in impacted areas
- a Assessing expected number of evacuees and potential for post-event evacuations
- a Forecasting housing stage needs and options
- a Coordinating the implementation of post-disaster housing solutions across multiple agencies
- a Ensuring displaced households receive accurate housing information, as well as appropriate case management services that will assist them in obtaining permanent housing solutions
- a Ensuring programs and resources are utilized for each stage of the housing continuum as needed

Natural and manmade disasters are not a matter of if, but when. A statewide Disaster Housing Plan, developed before an event occurs, would not only be material proof of coordinated efforts between state agencies, local governments, service providers, and nonprofits, but also have a direct impact on the safety and livelihood of untold many Texans recovering from catastrophe. This includes those made homeless by a disaster, those already experiencing homelessness who then endure a disaster, and those left far from home or in precarious shelter as a result of a disaster.