



Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
Quarterly Meeting – May 21, 2024
Meeting Minutes

A transcript from the electronic recording of the meeting may be found here:
<https://www.tdhca.texas.gov/texas-interagency-council-homeless-tich>

Members present:

#	Member Agency	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Office of the Governor appointee, Cornerstone Network (TICH Chair)	Mike Doyle	Yes
2	Office of the Lt. Governor	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
3	Office of the Speaker of the House	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
4	Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)	Brittany Hinton	Yes
5	HHSC	Robert Hetzel	No
6	HHSC	Claire Irwin	Yes
7	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)	Sherri Cogbill	No
8	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)	Valinda Bolton	Yes
9	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), Housing Finance representative	Brooke Boston	Yes
10	TDHCA, Community Affairs representative	Naomi Cantu	Yes
11	Texas Education Agency (TEA)	Desiree Viramontes	No
12	Texas Department of Juvenile Justice (TJJJ)	Marqus Butler	Yes
13	Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)	Blake Harris	No
14	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)	Kelly Davis	Yes
15	Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)	Joshua Hutchison	No

<There are currently 13 filled seats so quorum is 7>

Advisory Members present:

#	Advisory Member Organization	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS)	Fedora Galasso	No
2	TNOYS	Ann-Charlotte Proffitt	Yes
3	TNOYS	Lauren Rose	No
4	Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute	Darilynn Cardona-Beiler	No
5	Texas Homeless Network (THN)	Eric Samuels	Yes
6	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	Mike Wilt	Yes
7	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	David Long	Yes
8	Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)	Molly Thibodeaux	No
9	Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)	Lisa Medina	Yes

Administrative support: Sean Lonergan (TDHCA)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Mike Doyle called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., and confirmed that a quorum was present.

II. Remarks from the Chair

Chair Doyle introduced TDHCA Executive Director Bobby Wilkinson and Office of the Governor Budget and Policy Advisor Gabe De Ochoa. He also remarked that he has experienced some health complications that prevented him from chairing the winter TICH quarterly meeting, but that he is feeling better now.

III. Approval of Minutes from the January 24, 2024 TICH Meeting (*Voting Item*)

Chair Doyle called for a motion to approve the January 24, 2024, minutes. Naomi Cantu made a motion to approve the minutes, and Brooke Boston seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no comments.

IV. Updates from Member Agencies

(a) Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

i. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Overview

Gavin Reid of the Community Affairs division of TDHCA next provided an overview of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program. Mr. Reid explained that the CSBG program, funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is intended to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities and empower low income Texans to become self-sufficient. TDHCA was allocated \$37 million in CSBG funds in 2023, and it is expected to receive closer to \$38 million in 2024. Total CSBG funding is determined by a formula primarily based on the poverty population in a given state. All 254 Texas

counties are served through 38 sub-recipient organizations (e.g., nonprofits, units of local government, council of governments) by this program. Eligible recipients must be at or below 125% of the federal poverty guideline, though this threshold was increased to 200% during the Covid-19 pandemic. Each sub-recipient must submit a plan to TDHCA explaining how it plans to serve its service area. The array of eligible services is broad, including education, employment, housing, and case management services.

Mr. Reid stated that 2023 CSBG funds assisted approximately 320,000 Texans. Approximately 880 of these individuals achieved incomes above the income threshold on their way to self-sufficiency, meaning they retained an income level above 125% of the federal poverty guideline for 90 days or more. Mr. Reid next explained how Council participants can search for a CSBG provider on the TDHCA website, also mentioning that they can contact [Rita Gonzalez-Garza](#) of TDHCA if they have any further questions. The overview sheet listing CSBG eligible entities and other information on the CSBG program that Mr. Reid presented can be found [here](#).

Chair Doyle asked whether CSBG sub-recipients circulate grant requests for another entity to distribute allocated funds or if they distribute the funds themselves. Mr. Reid responded that the latter is true. Chair Doyle followed up with a question regarding the extent to which CSBG funding is expected to increase this next fiscal year. Mr. Reid responded that it is expected to increase \$300,000 to \$500,000 compared to last fiscal year.

ii. **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Annual Funds, ESG through the CARES Act Funds (ESG-CV), Youth and Young Adult Homeless Program**

Rosy Falcon of TDHCA next provided an update on the Ending Homelessness (EH) Fund, ESG, ESG-CV, and Youth and Young Adult Homeless programs. Ms. Falcon first announced that she and her team are in the close out phase of the ESG-CV program. She and her team have expended 99.67% of their allocation, with approximately \$300,000 remaining to expend before June 30, 2024. She next explained the breakdown of how ESG-CV funds have been expended. Most funds are directed towards direct services such as street outreach, homeless prevention, rapid rehousing and emergency shelter. The lowest share of these funds are allocated towards administration costs, at approximately 6% of total funds.

As of April 2024, Ms. Falcon also explained that approximately 100,000 individuals have been served by the ESG-CV program. While most funds were spent in homeless prevention and rapid rehousing, the majority of individuals served were under emergency shelter. There is still one TDHCA staff administrator working to fulfill contractual obligations for the program.

Ms. Falcon next provided an update on the ESG Annual Program. She announced that TDHCA's Fiscal Year 2024 allocation decreased by about 2% compared to the previous fiscal year for a total of \$9,723,237, and that competition for these funds opens Friday, May 24, 2024. After subtracting 4.5% of TDHCA's total allocation, \$9,285,691 is available for award, and funds are allocated through a regional formula based on Census, Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, and other subpopulation data. She stated that some allocations across Texas' 11 Continuums of Care (CoCs) may have decreased due to incomplete sheltered and unsheltered PIT Count data.

ESG funds are distributed through two set-asides: 75% of funds are distributed through a non-competitive continuing awards set-aside, while remaining funds are allocated on a competitive basis, the amount of which is finalized by May 31, 2024. Ms. Falcon specified that this 75-25 division of funds is subject to change based on the number of continuing awards recipients that qualify. For example, three Texas CoCs do not have continuing award sub-recipients, therefore TDHCA does not adjust the 75-25 ratio in these jurisdictions based on continuing awards.

Chair Doyle asked why these entities became ineligible. Ms. Falcon responded that these entities did not meet all five criteria to be eligible for continuing ESG awards, which include not administering at least three out the last four ESG allocations and insufficient expenditure rates. General discussion ensued regarding how participating entities can stay apprised on their ESG eligibility, including an application webinar and quarterly expenditure reports administered by TDHCA.

Bobby Wilkinson [Executive Director of TDHCA](#) asked whether an entity not eligible for continuing awards can still compete for competitive awards and whether this CoC funding allocation remains in the same region regardless. Ms. Falcon affirmed that they can still compete and funding remains in the same CoC region, with the exception that competitive funds can be re-allocated to a statewide competition if certain criteria are met (e.g., demonstrated need for eligible ESG activity that has met the federal cap among high-performing sub-recipients, more than \$30,000 in funds remaining).

Ms. Falcon last provided an update on a new funding opportunity for the creation of a program providing youth and young adult homeless housing and services in Fort Bend County. This opportunity was established through an appropriation by the 88th Texas Legislature of approximately \$1 million in supplemental funds earmarked for Fort Bend County. Ms. Falcon remarked that this pot of funding is flexible and intended for sub-recipients in Fort Bend County seeking to serve youth and young adults experiencing homelessness that need funding.

Following Andre Adams' update, Marqus Butler of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) asked whether TDHCA is taking applications for this program from young people experiencing homelessness or organizations seeking to provide services in Fort Bend County. Ms. Falcon clarified that applications would need to come from either local units of government or nonprofit organizations that deliver services in Fort Bend County. A fact sheet providing more information on this program and details on the rest of Ms. Falcon's presentation can be found [here](#).

iii. **Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) Program**

Andre Adams of TDHCA next provided an update on the EHV program. Mr. Adams first noted that the EHV program has achieved 96.2% lease up with 764 families who have secured housing and 24 vouchers remaining that are moving towards lease up status. Mr. Adams mentioned that administration of the EHV program has occurred in collaboration with community partners Texas Homeless Network (THN), Waco's Heart of Texas Homeless Coalition, and Tarrant County Homeless Coalition. He expressed his desire for TDHCA to continue leasing these vouchers in the future.

Eric Samuels of THN thanked TDHCA for its partnership with THN in administering the EHV program. He also expressed his gratitude for the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) for its assistance with housing survivors of family violence through the EHV program.

iv. **HOME-American Rescue Plan (ARP)**

Naomi Cantu, HOME-ARP Director at TDHCA, next provided an update on the HOME-ARP program. Ms. Cantu summarized that \$121 million in HOME-ARP funds are programmed into three activities: rental development, nonprofit capacity building and operating, and non-congregate shelter development. A total of \$43 million in rental development funds have been awarded with 280 rental units obligated under contract and in development. The nonprofit capacity building and operating funds were contracted to The Other Ones Foundation this past April.

Ms. Cantu and her team are seeking to have the application for an anticipated \$56 million in non-congregate shelter funds prepared for approval by the June TDHCA Board meeting. This application would be made available only to recipients of nonprofit capacity building and operating funds, which is only comprised of The Other Ones Foundation currently, but Ms. Cantu anticipates that additional funds in this category may be awarded in the future. She closed by highlighting that the HOME-ARP target population is vulnerable populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness and at-risk of homelessness.

v. **New Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness Update**

Elizabeth Yevich, Housing Resource Center Director at TDHCA, next provided an update on the new TICH State Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness (the Plan) on behalf of Sean Lonergan. Ms. Yevich stated that the draft Plan is still under internal review, and that there were no additional updates to provide. Mr. Lonergan confirmed the same.

Ms. Yevich also announced that Mr. Lonergan will be leaving TDHCA in August, but that he will serve as administrative support for the summer TICH quarterly meeting if it is held in July.

(b) Other Member Agency Updates

Ann-Charlotte Proffitt of Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS) provided an update following Jim Ward's update. Ms. Proffitt announced that TNOYS's Statewide Collaborative on Youth Homelessness (SCYH) will hold its quarterly meeting in person this June at the TNOYS Annual Conference in Houston. She elaborated that the SCYH, comprised of over 200 members, is a statewide work group that TNOYS convenes to focus on the need of Texas youth and young adults who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. The group meets regularly to share resources and collaborate on solutions to prevent and end youth homelessness. Ms. Proffitt extended an invitation to all TICH participants, as attendees do not need to be registered for the TNOYS Annual Conference. She added that the meeting will also include updates from state agency leaders from the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), TJJD, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), TDHCA, and the Office of the Governor's Child Sex Trafficking Team. She stated the meeting would be held on Friday, June 7 from 8:00am-9:00am at the Omni Hotel Houston.

V. Update from Texas Homeless Network (THN)

Eric Samuels and Anja Taylor of THN next provided a general THN update and an update on the Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network (THDSN) project. Mr. Samuels began with a general update on THN, stating that THN's Annual Conference on Ending Homelessness will be held September 11-13, 2024, in Houston at the Omni Galleria. He also mentioned that HUD's Fort Worth and Houston office representatives will be holding a start-up training the day before the annual conference starts on September 10.

(a) Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network Project

Anja Taylor next provided an update on THDSN. She first provided an update on the data dashboard for quarter one of 2024 with the qualifier that the Austin/ Travis County CoC data is incomplete due to HMIS upload issues. Ms. Taylor announced that THDSN has identified 19,635 unique individuals or 16,902 households serviced across participating CoCs, 19% of whom were unsheltered. Ms. Taylor qualified that, taking into account the absence of the Austin/ Travis County CoC, these totals are similar to last year's during the same period.

Ms. Taylor transitioned to discussing a recent report published by THN analyzing homelessness data trends from 2018 onward. She encouraged Council participants to review this report and share it with others as a resource. The link to this report can be found [here](#). She also announced that a similar report analyzing homelessness trends among the veteran population is expected to be published in early June.

Ms. Taylor last mentioned that THN is submitting applications for grant opportunities through the Meadows Foundation and Amazon Web Services, but continues to be open to any ideas or suggestions for additional funding opportunities.

Chair Doyle asked whether the apparent decline in individuals serviced by CoCs from 2022 (about 80,000) to 2023 (about 60,000) was legitimate. Ms. Taylor clarified that the surge in 2022 is attributable to challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, as more individuals were seeking assistance from CoCs at that time and CoCs had an influx of Covid-19 relief funding to serve and gather data on these individuals.

Michael Wilt of the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC) asked whether all nine CoCs currently participating in THDSN reported all their data from 2018 to 2023 to THDSN. Ms. Taylor confirmed that participating CoCs have uploaded data dating back to 2012. General discussion ensued.

Mr. Wilt also asked Ms. Taylor to clarify the race breakdown in the circulated THN handout, emphasizing that the Hispanic numbers seem low. Ms. Taylor clarified that this discrepancy is attributable to new HMIS data standards released by HUD in 2023 that changed the way in which race and ethnicity is collected for clients accessing services. Mr. Wilt followed up with an additional question regarding whether CoCs are collecting data on LGBTQIA plus populations. Ms. Taylor responded that CoCs collect gender data but not sexual orientation data.

(b) Texas Balance of State Continuum of Care Update

Jim Ward of THN next provided an update on the Texas Balance of State (BoS) CoC, of which THN is the lead agency. After providing a brief overview of the geographic composition of the CoC (covering 215 of Texas' 254 counties, or approximately 84% of the state's land mass), Mr.

Ward relayed an update on the BoS CoC Board's exploration of regionalizing the CoC. HUD assigned Cloudburst Consulting as technical assistance providers to facilitate this exploration, and they have been meeting with THN since January 2024 for discussions on the matter. Namely, they are exploring the logistics of splitting the existing Bos CoC into two or more CoCs. One factor guiding this discussion is the additional capacity this split would bring. For example, a split could mean an increase in HUD planning funding by as much as \$1.3 million over the current \$1.5 million annual allocation the BoS CoC receives.

As part of this process, THN is gathering input from its stakeholders, including the BoS CoC Board, local homeless coalition leadership, and local governments. They are also seeking community input ahead of bringing this matter back to the CoC Board in September 2024. Mr. Samuels clarified that part of the reason that THN is bringing the question of CoC regionalization to the Council is because the BoS CoC was born out of the Council nearly twenty years ago. A slide deck providing more information on the BoS CoC regionalization process can be found [here](#).

Bobby Wilkinson of TDHCA asked who decides whether the BoS CoC splits. Mr. Ward responded that a number of criteria need to be met for a CoC to be a recognized planning body, such as whether there is a functional coordinated entry system and HMIS in place. The BoS CoC also faces unique challenges related to its geographic spread that the CoC Board and general membership must consider when deciding whether to regionalize.

Mr. Wilkinson followed up with a question asking in which direction the CoC Board plans to divide the existing CoC's geographic boundaries. Mr. Ward responded that they plan to divide it along a north-south axis. Mr. Samuels added that this division provided representative breakdown for funding and support. Mr. Ward reiterated that this split provides increased capacity in communities that need more support in the existing BoS CoC service area.

Michael Wilt asked whether THN and its partners have examined geographically spread CoCs in other states that are predominately rural as potential templates for the BoS CoC's regionalization. Mr. Ward responded that there are a number of similarly structured balance of state CoCs across the country. Mr. Wilt clarified that he was curious whether any Western states have a CoC structure mirroring Texas' BoS CoC. Mr. Ward responded that he is aware of states such as Pennsylvania that have CoCs divided along directional axes, but that no other states have BoS CoCs large enough to regionalize. General discussion ensued.

VII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VIII. Closing Comments

Chair Doyle commended Council participants for their continued great work, acknowledging that it can be challenging and frustrating at times. He also announced that the next TICH quarterly meeting will likely be held in July, and that the fall TICH quarterly meeting will be held Wednesday, September 11 at the Omni Galleria in Houston during the THN Annual Conference.

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.