

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

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## **CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting**

March 30, 2021; 10:00AM to 12:00PM

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

**Purpose:** The Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) is a public/private partnership formed to assist and recommend to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills on public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the wellbeing of persons and families who are homeless.

### **HAB Members<sup>1</sup>**

Nicole Anderson (P)	Anna Kudrav (P)	Lea Etta Rhodes (P)
Damian Butler-Buccilli (P)	Joe Lagana (P)	Cynthia Shields (P)
Jane Downing (P)	John Lovelace (P)	Jessica Smith Perry
Laura Drogowski (P)	Jennifer McCurry	Katie Stohlberg (P)
Stuart Fisk (P)	Susie Puskar (P)	Gale Schwartz (P)
Pete Giacalone (P)	Christy Pietryga (P)	Kyona White
Knowledge Build Hudson (P)	Diana Reichenbach	Bethany Wingerson (P)

In addition to the below notes, the [meeting recording can be accessed here](#).

### **Minutes**

#### **1. Welcome—Gale Schwartz**

Gale Schwartz welcomed all HAB members and CoC participants, and HAB members introduced themselves.

#### ***January 2021 Meeting Minutes were approved by the HAB***

#### **2. COVID Relief Legislation Update—Kira Fatherree**

Kira Fatherree provided an overview of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, highlighting areas of particular relevance to the homelessness system. Presentation slides are provided in Appendix A.

#### **3. Committee Updates**

##### *CoC Analysis and Planning Committee—Pete Giacalone*

Pete Giacalone reported that in addition to the development of the Project Review and Ranking Tool that Jessica McKown would be presenting on shortly, the CoCAPC has been reviewing program and system outcomes in the context of CoC needs and gaps and will be continuing that review and planning working at the future meetings.

##### *Communication and Education Committee—Peter Harvey*

Peter Harvey presented the CEC updates, citing the Committees recent focus on the developing of a CoC webpage in consultation with DHS's Office of Equity and Engagement (which now includes the team previously named the Office of Community Relations). The group has been working to develop content for the webpage, and the next immediate focus for that work is soliciting stories and narratives from providers and the people they serve. The Committee has also been collaboration with the HOCC about trainings for providers, particular street outreach staff. Finally, the Committee has been collaborating with CoCAPC to review performance measures and other data that can be included and highlighted on the CoC webpage.

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<sup>1</sup> (P) indicates HAB members who were present for the meeting.

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## *Homeless Outreach Coordination Committee—Laura Drogowski*

Laura Drogowski reported that the HOCC's recent discussions had included: concerns and experiences around continued overdoses, including the increased complications from the pandemic; trainings to support the safety of individuals outside and the people who support them through direct service; and vaccine information and advocacy considerations.

## **4. IO Update—Cynthia Shields**

Cynthia Shields provided the following system and service updates:

- Allegheny County Emergency Rental Assistance applications are open, as well as providing links to other resources: <https://covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us/>
- Have started a partnership with County Magisterial District Judges (MDJs)—there are 46 MDJs across the county and each usually has a day dedicated to eviction. DHS is working with landlords and tenants to connect them with resources and try to stave off any convictions that can be.
- A new rapid rehousing (RRH) for transition age youth (TAY) just opened, through Center That Cares, which is a new provider to the youth homelessness space.
- Regarding some programming notes:
  - Winter Shelter will remain open through June
    - McKeesport Winter Shelter remained open every day from November through March, which was a new availability. That shelter will remain open through April 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - The hours for the winter shelters and some of the warming centers had been extended this year (though noting that the warming centers are closing March 31<sup>st</sup>)
  - Safe Haven shelter is also slated to remain open through June
    - Ongoing efforts to house those that have been staying in Safe Haven. There had been about 60 people who stayed at the Safe Haven because they were categorized high risk for COVID-19, but have been working to get them permanently housed and at the time of the meeting were down to 30.
  - Working with Mercy to connect our providers in Safe Haven with vaccines for all who qualify
  - Telehealth devices have been implemented at each of the shelters and three of our SROs
- Regarding the interest in exploring trainings for provider staff, some particular areas of focus include: Trauma Informed Care, SOGIE and MHFA. Additionally, the CoC was able to send 16 staff from 15 providers to the National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference. Those participants came together for a debrief and identified four areas to focus efforts over the coming months: Equity in Programs and Evaluation, Utilizing Medicaid Dollars, Shared Housing and Client Voice.
- The RFP for operation of the low-barrier shelter and drop-in center at Second Avenue Commons will be posted in April.
  - *Update since meeting: The RFP was posted on April 30<sup>th</sup> and responses are due by 3pm on Friday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. An information session is taking place Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Details and the full RFP can be found on the DHS Solicitations site: [https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-\(RFP/RFQ/RFI\).aspx](https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Resources/Doing-Business/Solicitations-(RFP/RFQ/RFI).aspx)*
- DHS is hiring for a new monitor, housing navigator, and hopefully a new field coordinator and homeless services and supports coordinator (HSSC).

## **5. Overview of NOFA Application Process—Hilary Scherer**

To orient HAB members to the upcoming annual CoC Program NOFA process, the following overview of NOFA steps was provided:

First there is the registration and Unified Funding Agency (UFA) application, which was submitted March 4, 2021. Registration includes submitting a list of CoC funded projects and indicating intent to apply for CoC Program funds. The UFA application is done every year, answering questions pertaining to DHS's ability to carry out UFA responsibilities (e.g., fiscal processes)

Once the actual NOFA is published, the CoC generally has 2 months to complete it. The application includes:

## Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

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- A ranking of all projects—Meeting participants received CoC Analysis and Planning Committee’s recommendations for the 2021 review and ranking tool, and Jessica McKown will be discussing that next. Once the tool is approved, data is entered into those tools for each project. Projects then review their tools and provide comment on scores and considerations for improvement plans. The Evaluation Committee reviews scores, considers any point adjustments, then proposes ranking based on scores—this review also includes consideration of things new to the NOFA. Additionally, we will have to wait and see what the NOFA specifically make available this year, but there are often opportunities for reallocating funds and bonus funds. While UFA status enables us to make funding adjustments throughout the funding cycle, the NOFA reallocation process supports full project readjustments, such as ending a low performing project and apply funds to another area. If in a position to apply for new projects to be added, we will put out an RFP and then an RFP Review Committee would recommend project(s) to include in our application. A proposed final ranking list will be posted for public comment and project appeal and the HAB will confirm the final ranking.
- Project Applications—A set of required forms and project descriptions for each project included.
- Written application responses—Responses to questions pertaining to the CoC’s governance, policies, processes, and performance.

### 6. Project Review and Ranking Proposal—Jessica McKown

The proposed 2021 Ranking Tool was developed through the HAB’s CoC Analysis and Planning Committee, utilizing the expertise of CoC members and an analysis of the effectiveness of previous ranking tools. The analysis of previous ranking tools included a review of previous Ranking Tool scores, including a review of mean, median and high/low scores, as well as the distribution of projects across scores, a review of system performance across measures, and a comparison of the measurements and point values utilized in previous tools.

The proposed 2021 tool is organized around the following performance measures: (a) unit utilization; (b) housing performance; (c) income, employment, health insurance and non-cash benefits outcomes; (d) length of time in program; (e) project serving hard to serve participants; (f) recidivism; (g) data quality (h) timeliness of data; (i) programmatic monitoring performance (j) fiscal administration; and (k) cost effectiveness. Data for each measure is scored and weighted to balance the ranking tool results around a consistent scale.

Data to populate the tool for each project will be extracted from HMIS, except for sections (i), (j) and (k). Fiscal data maintained through DHS will be used to complete sections (j) and (k), and 2020 monitoring documentation will be used to complete section (i).

Based on the CoC Analysis and Planning Committee’s analysis and discussion, the following changes from the 2020 Ranking Tool are recommended and are reflected in the proposed 2021 Ranking Tool:

- The 2020 Ranking Tool previously measured Utilization based on a point in time utilization of all units on the last Wednesday of every quarter (March, June, September & December). In response to provider concerns and the 2020 average utilization the proposed 2021 Ranking Tool will measure Utilization as an average for the calendar year of 2020. This proposed change will ensure that any fluctuations caused by the numerous challenges faced by the homeless services providers are addressed and accounted for.
- The measure Length of Time in Program for RRH programs was updated to consider the total number of households exiting within 18-24 months instead of 12 months. This proposed change for the 2021 Ranking Tool will take into consideration the HUD Waiver that was requested and granted for extensions in RRH programs.
- The Monitoring Scorecard was updated to reflect the risk analysis levels determined for the 2020 programmatic monitoring year. This includes a removal of specific case management metrics and focuses more closely on the risk level for each program. All programs were notified of their risk level during their 2020 virtual program monitoring.

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*The HAB approved the proposed 2021 Review and Ranking Tool.*

**7. Mental Health First Aid Training—Sue Martone, Christina Ruggiero, Emily Insalaco**

Allegheny County received a grant from SAMHSA which supports the provision of Mental Health First Aid training, with a particular focus on housing and homelessness prevention providers. Sue Martone, Christina Ruggiero, and Emily Insalaco provided an overview of the grant goals and activities—slides can be found in Appendix B, followed by a Mental Health First Aid one-pager.

Ms. Martone also noted the opening of Pathway to Care and Recovery, which can provide information, support or help with a drug or alcohol problem. The Pathway to Care and Recovery flyer is available in Appendix C.

**8. Public Comment**

- No comments.

**Next CoC Meeting**

May 25, 2021 from 10:00am to 12:00pm  
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Appendix A  
American Rescue Plan Act of 2020

# American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
Kira Fatherree

Homeless Advisory Board Meeting  
March 30, 2021

## Breaking news– Eviction moratorium extended

Yesterday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky signed an extension to the eviction moratorium further preventing the eviction of tenants who are unable to make rental payments. The moratorium that was scheduled to expire on March 31, 2021 is now **extended through June 30, 2021**.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/pdf/CDC-Eviction-Moratorium-03292021.pdf>

## Agenda– American Rescue Plan

1. Housing and homelessness specific provisions
2. Benefits and supports for individuals and families
3. Key human service and economic development investments

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## American Rescue Plan

- Enacted March 11, 2021 with \$1.9 trillion in new funding.
- Focuses on **supports to individuals and families** , with a specific focus on children – provisions promote economic equality and have potential to decrease child poverty by half.
- Messaging: “Shots in arms and money in pockets”
- Kicks off process of federal agencies interpreting and implementing changes and new programs.
- \*\* Funding levels shown are nationwide levels

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## Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

- ERAP created in December 2020 (Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021) and received \$25 billion
- Extends rental assistance funds enacted in December 2020 to **September 30, 2022** from December 31, 2021 (does not change clawback dates in law)
- Provides an **additional \$21.6 billion ERAP funds available until September 30, 2025**, with a reallocation process beginning March 31, 2022
- For the NEW funds:
  - **Allocation:** Uses same allocation as initial ERAP– Allegheny County DHS will receive funds directly from the US Treasury and through PA DHS’ allocation
  - **Timing of funds:** 40% within 60 days and additional amounts in “tranches in accordance with a procedure established by Treasury” requiring that jurisdictions have obligated at least 75 percent prior to disbursement of additional amounts
  - **Set-asides:** 15% for administrative costs and 10% for housing stability services

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## Homelessness Assistance and Supportive Services

\$5 billion for **homelessness assistance and supportive services program** for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program to help create housing and services for people experiencing or at -risk of homelessness

- Tenant-based rental assistance, development and support of affordable housing, & supportive services
  - The acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter units, all or a portion of which may — be converted to permanent affordable housing; be used as emergency shelter; be converted to permanent housing or remain as non-congregate shelter units.
- **Eligibility:** Families experiencing or at risk of homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, or veterans and families that include a veteran family member
- Organizations that receive funding may use up to 15% for administrative costs and up to 5% for operating costs

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## Housing and Homelessness Provisions

- **Child and Adult Care Food Program:** Meals and supplements for individuals under 25 in emergency shelters, through USDA, during the pandemic.
- \$5 billion for **emergency housing vouchers** for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- \$100 million for **housing counseling** to be administered by NeighborWorks, for grants to housing counseling providers to provide services to households facing housing instability, targeting neighborhoods that have high concentrations of minority and low income populations.
- \$10 billion **homeowner assistance fund**, administered by Treasury, to help homeowners behind on their mortgage and utility payments and avoid foreclosure and eviction.
- \$20 million for **fair housing activities** to investigate fair housing complaints, strengthen enforcement, and assist those who believe they have been victims of housing discrimination

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## Home Energy and Water Assistance

- \$4.5 billion for the **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**
- \$500 million for the **Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)**
  - The program was established in the December 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act with \$638 million in funding. ACF is still in the process of launching.

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## Other Supports

- \$400 million for **FEMA's emergency food and shelter program**
  - United Way serves as the National Board's Secretariat and Fiscal Agent, administering the program on a day-to-day basis.
- **Emergency Connectivity Fund to support children and families with internet connectivity and appropriate devices**
  - \$7.2 billion available through FFY 2030 for the FCC to create a program that enables schools and libraries to purchase devices and/or advanced telecommunications and information services

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## Direct supports for individuals and families

- Direct checks (i.e. stimulus payments)
- Expanding tax credit programs
- Extending unemployment benefits
- Additional rental and utility assistance
- Additional childcare subsidy funding and expanded eligibility
- Temporary increase to nutrition benefits
- \*\* FCC Broadband Benefit Program

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## More money directly to individuals and families

- **For individuals who make less than \$75,000**(\$112,500 max for heads of household \$112,500, and \$150,000 max for couples):
  - **Stimulus payments: One-time \$1,400 direct checks and \$1,400 per dependent**
    - Benefit stop for individuals earning more than \$80,000, 'Head of household' earning more than \$120,000, and joint filers earning more than \$160,000
  - **Child Tax Credit (CTC): "periodic payments" to families with children (0 -17) through 2021**
    - Temporarily provides eligibility to all individuals under the income threshold with children
    - Provides payments totaling \$3,600 or \$3,000 depending on age of child, an increase from \$2,000
- **Broadens and increases child and dependent care tax credits in 2021**

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## Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) changes benefit young adults

- In 2021, triples the benefit for individuals with no qualifying children to \$1,502
- For 2021, enables individuals without a child to **claim at age 19** and **eliminates upper age limit** (eligible ages range was 25 through 64)
  - Young people who were formerly in foster care or homeless are eligible at age 18
  - Students eligible at age 24
- Permits individuals who cannot meet child identification requirements to still claim EITC

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## Significant to Pennsylvanians

- **892,000 children under 17** will benefit from expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC)
- **140,000 children under 18** will be lifted above the poverty line by CTC expansion
- **697,000 workers without children** will benefit from the Earned Income Tax Credit expansion

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## Examples of what this means for families

### Single adult making minimum wage

- **With two children under age 6, additional \$9,525**
  - \$4,200 in direct payments and \$7,200, rather than \$1,875, from the increased CTC
- **Without children, additional \$2,309**
  - \$1,400 direct payment and a \$909 increase in the EITC at tax time next year
- **Over 64 years old, working part-time, additional \$2,445**
  - \$1,400 direct payment and \$1,045 through EITC at tax time next year.

### Married couple earning \$40,000

- **With a 4-year-old child, additional \$5,800**
  - \$4,200 in direct payments, plus a \$1,600 larger CTC.
- **With a 10-year-old child, additional \$5,200**
  - \$4,200 in direct payments plus a \$1,000 larger CTC.

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## Additional economic supports for individuals and families

- **Child care assistance**
  - Removes income criteria for essential workers
- **TANF Cash Assistance**
  - \$1 billion for Pandemic Emergency Assistance for states to provide to TANF beneficiaries for a shortterm benefit in the form of cash or other assistance
- **AmeriCorps members**
  - Increase living allowance
- **Temporarily excludes from taxes most forgiven student loan debt**
- **COVID-19 Funeral Assistance through FEMA**

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## Increases to food and nutrition program benefits

- **SNAP:** Extends 15% benefit increase through September 2021
  - Provides \$25 million to improve online purchasing and modernize EBT system.

### What this means in PA:

- ~ **1,810,000** SNAP participants in PA
- **\$25** average monthly benefit increase per person
- **\$46 million** estimated total monthly benefit increase statewide
- **25%** going to participants in households with income below 50% of federal poverty level
- **61%** going to participants who are in households with children

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## Increases food and nutrition program benefits

- **Extends Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) until the end of the pandemic and will extend through the summer**
- **Temporarily increases WIC voucher by \$35**
  - Also, provides \$390 million to conduct outreach and program modernization efforts to increase participation and redemption

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## Unemployment benefits extended

- **PUA, FPUC & PEUC extended through September 6, 2021**(would have expired March 14<sup>th</sup>)
  - Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, for gig workers, extended and number of weeks an individual can be eligible increasing from 50 to 79 weeks
  - Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program extending and continued \$300/week benefit
  - Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation extended and number of weeks an individual can be eligible increasing from 24 to 53 weeks
- **Makes benefits received through the Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC) program *not* count as income from Medicaid or CHIP eligibility**
- **Up to \$10,200 of unemployment benefits received in 2020 will be tax exempt**

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## Select Medicaid, CHIP & healthcare provisions

- Requirement that CHIP covers covid vaccine, testing and treatment
- Expansion to Health Insurance subsidies
- Subsidized premiums available during pandemic for COBRA

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## Providers –Loans and navigation

- Additional \$7.25 billion for the **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)**
  - Makes more non-profits eligible
- \$15 billion for **targeted Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) advance grants**
- \$175m **community navigator pilot program** to help current or prospective owners of eligible businesses access assistance programs and resources made available because of the pandemic

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## Other funding human service-related programs

1. Children and families
2. Education and schools
3. Older adults
4. Mental health and substance use disorders
5. Public health
6. Local economic supports

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## Children and families

- \$350 million for **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment (CAPTA)**
  - \$250m for community-based grants for prevention
  - \$100m for state grants for prevention
- \$200 million for **Family Violence Prevention**
  - Additionally, \$50 million for culturally specific community-based organizations to provide culturally specific activities for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, to address emergent needs resulting from the public health emergency
- \$150 million for the **Home Visiting program**

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## Early Education

- **\$15 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant**
  - Goes directly to providers as subsidies.
  - Waives requirement to limit assistance to low -income families, 70% towards direct services
  - Available through FFY 2023 with more flexible uses, including for essential workers without income cap
- **Child Care Stabilization Fund**
  - \$24 billion for personnel, rent, PPE, equipment/supplies for covid, goods/services to maintain/resume child care, mental health supports for children and employees
  - Can reimburse retroactively
  - Requires providers pay workers full compensation
- **Head Start**
  - \$1 billion, allocated based on child enrollment, available in FFY 2021

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## Funding for Schools

- **\$39.6 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund**
- **\$126 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund**
  - Grants directly to states & directs states to allocate at least 90% to local educational agencies
  - \$800 million to provide wraparound services for children and youth who are experiencing homelessness
  - At least 20% of funds shall be used to address **learning loss and populations traditionally underserved, including students experiencing homelessness**, through the implementation of evidence -based interventions targeting students' academic, social, and emotional needs.
  - PA will receive a \$5 billion allocation (\$4,996,953,151).

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## Older Adults and Grandfamilies (nationwide funding levels)

- \$10 million to create a **National Assistance Center on Grandfamilies and Kinship Families**
- \$1.7 billion to support **older Americans and their families** including for supportive services and vaccination education and outreach
- \$250 million to create **strike teams** able to deploy to skilled nursing facilities with diagnosed or suspected cases of COVID –19 for resident and employee safety

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## SAMHSA -\$3.8 billion to highlight

- \$3 billion for **Substance Use Prevention and Treatment and Community Mental Health Services**
- \$100 million total for **mental and behavioral health training** for health care professionals, paraprofessionals, and public safety officers and an awareness campaign encouraging healthy work conditions and use of mental and behavioral health services by health care professionals
- \$30 million for **community-based funding for local substance use disorder services** to support overdose prevention programs, syringe services programs, and other harm reduction services
- \$150 million in **community-based funding for local behavioral health needs and workforce education and training**
- \$50 million total for the **National Child Traumatic Stress Network Project AWARE, youth suicide prevention**
- \$8 million for **pediatric mental health care access**
- \$420 million for expansion grants for **certified community behavioral health clinics**

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## Medicaid Opportunity -Mobile Crisis Response

- State option enabling **Medicaid to cover mobile crisis response** to an individual not in a hospital or other facility, or experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis
  - \$15 million for state planning grants

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## Public Health– Vaccines and Testing

- \$7.5 billion for the **CDC** to plan, prepare for, promote, distribute, administer, monitor and track COVID -19 vaccines
- \$1 billion for **vaccine confidence activities** , administered by CDC to:
  - Strengthen vaccine confidence
  - Provide further information and education on vaccines
  - Improve rates of vaccinations
- \$48 billion for **testing, contact tracing and mitigation activities** , including by implementing a national evidence -based strategy
- \$500 million for **public health data surveillance and analytics** infrastructure modernization initiatives at CDC for forecasting and tracking

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## Public Health Infrastructure \$16 billion

- \$7.7 billion towards **public health workforce & medical reserve corps**
- \$7.6 billion for **community health centers and community care**
- \$800 million for the **National Health Service Corps**
- \$200 million for the **Nurse Corps**

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## Local Economic Supports

- \$25 billion for **Restaurant Revitalization Fund**
  - restaurants, bars, and other eligible providers of food and drink
- \$1.25 billion for **shuttered venue operators**
- \$30.5 billion for grants to **transit agencies** for operating expenses, including payroll and PPE costs.
- \$8 billion for **airports and airport concessions**

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Appendix B  
Mental Health First Aid



Allegheny County  
Department of  
Human Services



## Mental Health First Aid-SAMHSA Training Grant



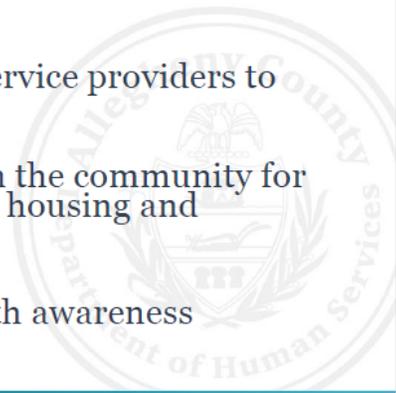
Allegheny County  
Department of  
Human Services



## Mental Health First Aid SAMHSA Training Grant

### Goals:

- Increase capacity of subsidized housing and homeless service providers to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental disorders, and appropriately and safely respond to individuals with mental disorders.
- Increase capacity of subsidized housing and homeless service providers to employ crisis de-escalation techniques.
- Educate individuals about resources that are available in the community for individuals with a mental disorder and equip subsidized housing and homeless service providers to make referrals.
- Build capacity to sustain community-based mental health awareness strategies to support the community of focus.





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Human Services



## Mental Health First Aid SAMHSA Training Grant

### Activities:

- Train staff/providers 540 in MHFA
- Train staff/providers to become instructors of MHFA to create sustainability and continue providing trainings
- First aiders connecting individuals to services/making referrals
- Social Marketing and Awareness campaign
- Advisory Committee

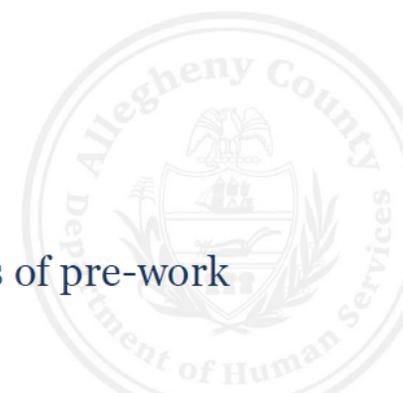


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## What is Mental Health First Aid?

- Gives non-clinicians the tools & confidence to respond to a behavioral health challenge
  - Akin to receiving CPR training
- Evidence-based program
  - 8 hours in-person
  - 6 hours blended / 6.5 hours virtual with 2hrs of pre-work





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## What is Mental Health First Aid?

- Outcomes:
  - Increases participants' knowledge of signs, symptoms and risk factors
  - Reduces stigmatizing attitudes
  - Helps participants identify support resources
  - Increases participants' confidence and likelihood of helping an someone in crisis
  - Enhances participants' own feelings of mental wellness



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## Discussion/Questions?

- Sue Martone – Department of Human Services – Behavioral Health
  - [Suzanne.Martone@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:Suzanne.Martone@AlleghenyCounty.US)
- Cristina Ruggiero – Allegheny HealthChoices, Inc.
  - [cruggiero@ahci.org](mailto:cruggiero@ahci.org)
- Emily Insalaco - Allegheny HealthChoices, Inc.
  - [einsalaco@ahci.org](mailto:einsalaco@ahci.org)



# MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

On average,  
**123**

people die by suicide each day.

- American Foundation for  
Suicide Prevention

From 1999 to 2016,

**630,000**

people died from drug overdose.

- Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention

Nearly

**1 IN 5**

U.S. adults lives with a  
Mental Illness.

- National Institute of Mental Health via the  
National Survey on Drug Use and Health  
and the Substance Abuse and Mental  
Health Services Administration

## Why Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. This training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.

### Virtual Learning Option

With COVID-19 affecting every avenue of daily business, The National Council for Behavioral Health has created a virtual course for First Aiders. You will complete a two-hour, self-paced, online class and then participate in a four-hour, instructor-led video conference.

### Who Should Take It?

- Employers
- Police officers
- Hospital Staff
- First Responders
- Faith Leaders
- Community Members
- Caring Individuals

### The course will teach you how to apply the ALGEE action plan:

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- **L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- **G**ive reassurance and information.
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

### What It Covers

- Common signs and symptoms of mental illness
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use
- How to interact with a person in crisis
- How to connect the person with help
- **NEW:** Expanded content on trauma, addiction and self-care



This program is a top-notch service to area communities like ours and we are so grateful for the opportunity to have this program." - **Nikki Carber**, Speak Out Against Suicide

TO LEARN MORE,  
VISIT [MentalHealthFirstAid.org](http://MentalHealthFirstAid.org) OR EMAIL [einsalaco@ahci.org](mailto:einsalaco@ahci.org).

**NATIONAL COUNCIL**  
FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

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## **Appendix C** **Pathways to Recovery**

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board



If you or someone you know needs information, support or help with a drug or alcohol problem, call 412-325-7550 or PA Get Help Now at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

326 Third Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222



Recovery is a journey. Each person takes their own path in their own time. When you need access to information and support for yourself or someone you know, or you are ready to begin your recovery journey, we are here for you.

365/24/7 – Call or walk in. Here you will find just care – no judgment.

**Services include:**

- Information
- Peer support
- Screening, level of care assessment, referral and support right up to admission
- Medication Assisted Treatment Education
- Case management
- Connection to other human services through warm hand-offs
- Mobile Response Teams
- Coordinated linkage to treatment and/or services

Anyone can make the call to start the process for someone they know—family members, friends, first responders, healthcare providers, teachers or faith group leaders.

**Call 412-325-7550 or PA Get Help Now at 1-800-662-HELP (4357)  
or visit our walk-in center at 326 Third Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

*a partnership between Renewal, Inc and Allegheny County | a program for Allegheny County residents*