

**Atlanta Continuum of Care
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2020
Zoom Meeting
10 am- 12 pm**

❖ **Welcome and Introductions, Cathryn Marchman**

❖ **Lead Agency Updates**

- COVID-19 Situation Discussion, Cathryn Marchman
 - Please see slide deck for details.
 - The high-level overview details include Non-Congregate and Isolation Hotels, testing, outreach and food distribution, and transportation.
 - The Non-Congregate and Isolation Hotels are open and receiving guests. The Non-Congregate is receiving individuals who are high risk and Isolation is receiving those that have tested positive for COVID-19, both homeless and displaced individuals. Both are operating out of the downtown area.
 - For isolation we have capacity for 170 individuals. The hotel is currently at a very low census- under 10 individuals. At the highest, the census was 45.
 - At the Non-Congregate Hotel, the capacity is 250. Current census is 118. Intakes will continue to get up to capacity once safety and security issues at hotel are resolved. Priority is for individuals at the airport and at certain unsheltered locations.
 - The testing effort was spearheaded by Mercy Care, the CDC, and local Department of Public Health.
 - Over 3,000 individuals have been tested to date. Out of this testing, 36 positives were identified among clients and approximately 10 among staff.
 - As positive individuals are being identified they are being sent to isolation. There are currently conversations to identify a strategy to have ongoing testing on a regular basis.
 - Outreach and food distribution is happening 7 days/week, upwards of 1,200-1,500 meals per day to shelters who have had challenges with food supply as well as unsheltered individuals and encampments.
 - Food insecurity issues have been addressed through a partnership of Atlanta Community Food Bank, Proof of the Pudding, as well as Empire State South.
 - A food war room was stood up to coordinate supply and demand.
 - Outreach began with education. Ongoing work includes sanitation and supplies as well as identifying high-risk individuals.
 - All these different components are linked through transportation by Grady.
 - Sanitation and supply work is ongoing. Masks and hand sanitizer have been provided to the community.
 - A weekly call is held with the community on Fridays at 8:30 am. Zoom information is available on our website.
 - Current needs include staffing and volunteering opportunities. See PfH website for details.

- Food Distribution: <https://volunteer.handsonatlanta.org/opportunity/a0C1H00001c9dPAUAY>
 - Meal Prep: <https://volunteer.handsonatlanta.org/opportunity/a0C1H00001c9edIUAA>
- Agencies that are in need of supplies can communicate those needs to PfH. PfH is working to coordinate those needs as requests come in.
- Prevention work is up and coming for those that are at risk of becoming homeless. Work is being done to coordinate prevention efforts, including all dollars in one place.
- PIT Update, Cathryn Marchman
 - HUD pushed back the deadline for PIT and Housing Inventory Count to June 30th. Agencies that have not responded to requests about housing inventory, follow up with Abby Burgess as soon as possible.
 - Full report out on PIT data is not ready but will be ready by next CoC meeting. Currently overall number has decreased while there has been a slight increase in the unsheltered population.
- Current RFP Updates, Jen Williams
 - Outreach and Housing Navigation RFP was \$403,250 for a one-year grant. Two proposals were submitted and are in the final review stages. Final review may also include a virtual visit. Please note that more attention to detail needs to be given when writing proposals. Final recommendation for this RFP will be sent to the Allocation Committee this month.
 - Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Exit was a \$574,915 for a one-year grant. PfH is in the first stages of review. Follow-up questions and virtual visits may be included as well.
 - Please note that virtual visits or meetings with providers is anticipated to become standard for RFPs going forward.
 - New applicants are encouraged for upcoming RFPs. Please make sure that proposals are substantive and realistic.
- Remote Assessment Updates, Melissa Austin
 - Through COVID and DCA, telephonic assessments were launched 2- 3 weeks ago and are in the testing phase. Gateway started the process last week. Issues around telephonic assessments included consent to share information.
 - Currently this is a 90-day trial period. Guidance has been provided about how to acquire consent to share information. If the situation continues, 90 day trial will be extended until more formal policies are in place. HMIS Steering Committee statewide is looking into how to have this implemented past the 90-day trial period.
 - Gateway Center has been using telephonic assessments as overflow, amounting to 2 or 3 per day. Final touches are being added and will be sent out to CoC. Any feedback about how to roll this out is appreciated.
- Grievance Policy, Jen Williams
 - PfH was advised to create a complaint and grievance policy and procedure. The plan is to send out this policy to the Executive Directors of funded agencies for feedback. Once feedback has been received and addressed, this policy will be submitted to the Governing Council for approval. Once

- approved by the Governing Council, the policy will be sent out to funded providers.
- 2020 Data Standards- CE Roll Out, Abby Burgess
 - Data standards were updated in October 2019, but HUD mandated that Coordinated Entry (CE) portion could be delayed until April 2020. The deadline to be compliant with CE standards has been pushed back to October 1, 2020.
 - Data Quality Training, Abby Burgess
 - Please note that DCA has changed this end user process has changed.
 - Trainings are posted on the training calendar on ICA's website (<https://icalliances.org/atlanta-georgia>). ClientTrack 101 is twice a month. HUD data quality training will also be offered again in early June.
 - Pipeline Update, Chelsea Arkin
 - Please see slide deck for details.
 - There is still funding available for developers that are interested in braided funds. Contact Chelsea Arkin for more information (carkin@partnersforhome.org)
 - 4 applications are still pending approval. 3 are under review through Atlanta Housing and 1 is under review from PfH. 1 new application was received a month ago.
 - Funding Opportunities, Cathryn Marchman
 - COVID-19 Funds and FY21 Regular Entitlement are available through the City of Atlanta. COVID-19 Funds application are due May 15. FY21 Regular Entitlement grant application is due in June.
 - <https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/grants-and-community-development>
 - The National UW Emergency Food and Shelter Program has received funding from the CARES Act and Phase 37. This currently open for applications from agencies that provide emergency food and shelter programs.
 - Application materials can be found at www.efsp-atl.org/phase-37 and the CARES Act questionnaire can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/uwatlcare>. The Phase 37 application and CARES Act questionnaire are due no later than Friday, May 15 at 5pm. For further information contact Charles Sterne at 404-527-7202 or csterne@unitedwayatlanta.org.

❖ Presentations

- Housing Inventory Discussion- Matt Hurd, Open Doors
 - There are three main areas to be focused on: rent payments over past few months/occupancy and eviction rates, new unit availability in May and June, and what agencies can expect when assisting clients to apply, approved, and turnaround time for new units.
 - 78% of households in rental situations across all classes paid rent fully and on time. This is a 5% drop from a year ago. Within Atlanta, across all classes, was in the 80%. Within class c apartments, average was around 74%, which is a 5-10% drop from this time last year.

- For occupancy rates, over the past 3 years, were peaking in mid-2018 and dropping in 2019. Currently in all time low for b, c, and d class properties. However, rent has been increasing steadily during that time.
- As shelter in place and restrictions has been ending, demand has increased, and rent will increase with the demand over the next 30- 60 days.
- The eviction rate is unknown due to the evictions not being processed through the emergency judicial order. This order will be lifted on June 12. When this is lifted, eviction rate will increase. Properties have been filed but not processed.
- PfH, Open Doors, Atlanta Apartment Association, and Atlanta Housing are participating in a large-scale unit campaign to get new units that are willing to work with voucher recipients specifically in the COA. Open Doors is also partnering with the Apartment Association for a large unit campaign in metro Atlanta to get new properties to work with individuals who receive subsidies. Numbers of new units that have been approved to received vouchers will be provided to the CoC.
- In the current situation, not much has changed with regards how individuals are being approved. Clients will need PPE items with them to enter property management offices. Due to increased demand, income is being looked at closely. It is important going forward to make sure individuals have steady income stream or can prove they have a plan for income. Additionally, responsiveness has been a barrier around getting applications completed.
- A question as was as to whether Open Doors (or the COC) has comparative data on the incentives that landlords in Atlanta get with an AH voucher partnership vs. other jurisdictions.
 - Please note that Ashlee Starr from Atlanta Housing will be checking on this information.
 - Choice vouchers do pay up to market rent. There is flexibility with choice vouchers since they will pay above FMR.
- Open Doors currently has a program called Redbridge that is able to cover rent for April/May for anyone who was housed through Open Doors in the past year. Please email Open Doors for more information (info@opendoorsatl.org)
- PfH is continuing to monitor housing placements. PfH is partnering with Open Doors and other partners to break down barriers. They are also working with the city to alleviate barriers to identification.

❖ Announcements/Agency Round Robin

- PfH is working on coordinating a training with Mercy Care and the CDC for providers and their staff on COVID response, PPE, debunking myths, etc. More information will be sent through the listserv.