

Re-housing Individuals Experiencing Homelessness Sheltering in COVID-Specific Non-Congregate Shelter

0:00:03.7 Cherita Claitt: Hello and welcome to the webinar. My name is Cherita Claitt, and I'm a TA provider with TDA Consulting. I'll be introducing today's webinar. The session is being recorded and will last 90 minutes, including time to answer questions from the chat box. During this webinar, all participants will be muted by default. If you are having trouble with your audio or want to ask the presenters a question, please do so in the chat box on the right-hand side of your screen. We will answer as many questions as possible during the Q&A portion of the webinar. After the webinar, please submit any outstanding questions to the HUD AAQ. Presentation slides and recording will be available in the coming weeks. I will now turn the presentation over to Norm for introduction.

0:00:56.8 Norm Suchar: Thank you very much, Cherita, and welcome everyone to the webinar today. We're very excited to present a bunch of information today for you about the process of helping people move from non-congregate sheltering into housing and safe and stable housing. So, we wanna talk quickly about the format of the discussion today, and I'll also introduce the speakers and then we'll jump right into our content. I do wanna say there's a bunch of time for question and answer here. If you have any questions during the session, you are welcome to type them into the chat window. It is helpful if the chat is set to everyone, that way we can all see the question, and we will try to respond either in the chat window to your question, or we may respond by asking out loud, the questions of our presenters today. You can ask questions at any time during the session, and we will try to figure out how to answer it the most appropriate time. The webinar, today, goes for about 90 minutes. We'll have about 10 minutes for questions, but again, you can type in the question into the chat window at any time.

0:02:09.9 NS: Everyone's muted by default, so there will not be an opportunity to ask your questions out loud. We'll try to get to as many questions as we can and as Cherita mentioned, you are welcome to submit questions... We encourage you to submit questions to the HUD AAQ if you have questions after this presentation. Can we move to the next slide, please?

0:02:34.7 NS: So, I wanna... I'm very excited to introduce our presenters today. It's a nice cross-community, cross-agency collaboration you are seeing here. So again, my name is Norm Suchar, I work at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the Office of Special Needs Assistance programs. We operate homeless assistance programs like the Continuum of Care, like the emergency Solutions Grant, the youth homelessness demonstration program, and several others. I will be joined by Brett Esders from the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs as well.

0:03:07.6 NS: We're also very pleased to have Mark Simpson from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA, who will be doing a presentation of some really helpful content related to how FEMA supports non-congregate sheltering. Let's move on to the next slide, and we have several other presenters who we'll be hearing from today. We'll be hearing from Katie Jennings from the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, who will be talking about some cross-agency resources. We have a great group from Indianapolis who's gonna provide a community example of how all this works in practice, so we're very excited about that. We'll have Chelsea Haring-Cozzi, Daniella [0:03:51.3] _____, and Jenny Folp, who will present from Indianapolis and talk about how they house people from their non-congregate sheltering program.

0:04:00.6 NS: And on this next slide, we have a great group from the State of Connecticut who will also be presenting. So, you see some names here, but I should mention we have Dan McLane, we

didn't get a chance to put his name up on the screen there, but he'll be presenting from FEMA. You'll also be hearing from Jim McPherson, Steve DiLella, Dr. Dalal, Cassandra Thomas, and Velma George. They're from a combination of FEMA and the Connecticut Department of Housing and the City of New Haven. So, we're very excited to hear these great presentations about how you do the actual work of housing people from non-congregate sheltering.

0:04:43.0 NS: Can we move forward to the next slide? Before I introduce our FEMA presentation, I do wanna start out with a couple overall remarks about the goal of this session and what we're trying to do here. So one thing that's really important to emphasize here is that non-congregate sheltering has saved many lives during the pandemic it has helped people who are at really high risk of dying or really terrible outcomes from COVID, and it helped people who had COVID not spread the disease to others in their community, so it's been a really life-saving resource.

0:05:25.9 NS: At the same time, we know that housing is the best place for people to be, to prevent the spread of COVID. So, we want to ensure that as people exit non-congregate sheltering, that we're trying to help them move into the most safe and stable place possible and we know that housing is the best outcome we can get for people, so that's why this webinar and the resources that we're gonna be talking about here are so, so important.

0:05:53.7 NS: We also recognize that communities are in very different places with respect to the spread of COVID currently, we have communities where COVID rates are spiking again. And they're in full sort of infection control mode, and where that's the entire focus of the community, and that's really important. In those communities, they may be sort of maintaining their level of non-congregate sheltering or even increasing their level of non-congregate sheltering to meet their needs. And then we have other communities that have much lower rates or falling rates of COVID and they're reducing... They may be reducing their level of non-congregate sheltering or really sort of planning to fully exit people from non-congregate sheltering. So, communities are in all different places, and we really encourage you to listen to your... And communicate with your public health officials and to be planning both in the short, medium, and long-term, about how you're going to be responding to COVID and to sort of think about how you do this process of exiting non-congregate sheltering and helping people move out of non-congregate sheltering, to do that in a thoughtful way.

0:07:09.5 NS: I should also mention that even if you are running a non-congregate sheltering program, it is... People are leaving non-congregate sheltering all the time, so you'll be housing people for say, 10, 14, 21 days, or whatever the appropriate amount of time is, and people are exiting all the time. So, this topic of helping people exit to good outcomes, to permanent housing whenever possible, is important all the time, not just when you're winding down your non-congregate sheltering operation, but really all the time. The last thing I wanna mention is we have been working jointly on a document with FEMA and other partners, and we plan to publish that in the coming days, the content of that document is very aligned with what you'll be seeing here in the presentation today, but we wanted you to be aware that that was gonna be coming. So, thank you all for indulging me here, I'm very pleased to introduce our good partner from FEMA, Mark Simpson, and he's going to give an overview of FEMA's role in non-concrete sheltering. Mark, I'm happy to turn it over to you.

0:08:28.6 Mark: Thanks, norm. Can you hear me okay?

0:08:33.5 NS: Yes, you sound great.

0:08:36.6 Mark: So, I'm gonna take a few minutes here and provide some information about who the eligible applicants are for FEMA public assistance, and specifically non-congregate sheltering, and how the work and cost eligibility is determined just to give folks a general understanding of that. There have been a lot of questions of that as we've gone through the past 18 months. Next slide, please.

0:09:00.1 Mark: So, I'm gonna give you just a quick high-level overview of the PA program, but then we'll dig into those issues of eligibility for applicants and cost and work. Next slide, please. Just so everybody has a good basis of understanding. FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides financial assistance to a host of government organization and certain types of non-profit organizations to support emergency response and community recovery whenever there is a presidential declared emergency or major disaster. And I'll speak a bit more to who those certain private non-profits are and what's eligible for them as we get into the following slides.

0:09:42.7 Mark: FEMA's public assistance grants are supplemental in nature, and they are based on the statutes and regs that you see on the slide now. The Robert T. Stafford Act is our primary authorizing legislation that determines what FEMA's authorities are, what we can do. The 44 Code of Federal Regulations, part 206 specifically addresses the public assistance program and essential emergency assistance that's provided. Because we are a grant program, we rely heavily to the Code of Federal Regulations on grants management, and then other important documents, the PA program, and Policy Guide, commonly referred to as the PAPPG. And we have other policies and guidance, specifically during COVID, we've had to put out incident-specific guidance that relates to COVID operations themselves. And of course, we're also then governed by executive orders, presidential memoranda coming from the White House. And there's been quite a lot of activity with that as we've worked through COVID. Next slide, please.

0:10:44.5 Mark: So, the applicant eligibility for this, there's several pieces you need to understand about it. We first look at eligibility to determine in PA who the applicant is, whether they're eligible, then is the facility that the funding is being requested for eligible, and then specifically the activity done in that facility is the work-eligible and are the costs for that work eligible? So, let's go to the next slide. And we talk about the PA Eligibility pyramid if you will, and I said that we start with the applicant. You'll notice on this slide, the facility is grayed out because for the activity of non-congregate sheltering, we're focused primarily on the service being provided primarily through hotel and motel accommodations, and then the work-in costs, but the way that we work from this is from the ground up is, is the applicant eligible.

0:11:32.6 Mark: And for the purpose of non-congregate sheltering COVID or non-COVID, the eligible applicant is a state, local, tribal, territorial government entity, 'cause those are the folks who have the legal responsibility to do non-congregate sheltering work. And so other entities that working within private non-profit partners, for-profit partners, the hotels and motels, they're working through those applicants in order to receive funding that may be coming through the Public Assistance Grant program. So, we figure out if the applicant is eligible, then we look at the working costs, and as I said, facility issues are not in play at this point, as we talk about non-congregate sheltering. Next slide, please.

0:12:15.6 Mark: And slightly, this is showing the difference between how we interact with the government entities and how we interact with private non-profit partners and that... You may not

consider yourself a PMP if you're a community-based organization who's not-for-profit, but that from a PA perspective, that's how we describe the not-for-profit sector in our policy and guidance, and you'll see there's just a difference here that they've combined applicant and facility and services together on the PMP side of it.

0:12:47.0 Mark: And what that means is that... And I mentioned that for non-congregate sheltering, only the government entities are eligible, they have the legal responsibility for sheltering during emergencies for the people living in their jurisdictions. A PMP partner might be the one providing the service, but they might not have the legal responsibility, and so they have to work through that eligible applicant in order to receive reimbursement for those services that they may be providing. And for PNP partners, and I'll just take an example of a food bank easily comes to mind, that food banks might be engaged in providing emergency feeding, but they would be doing that in support of the government who has that legal responsibility. But if the food bank's facility was actually damaged by the disaster, then they could come in as a specific and direct applicant for PA funding to address the disaster-caused damage to their facility. And if they are providing what's identified as a critical community service, and we have several different tables in the PAPPG that describe what are the critical services, what are the essential Community Services, and then there's also a table that clearly identifies ineligible services at the community level, they would then come in and make the same application as a PNP for things that are affecting our facility.

0:14:00.7 Mark: So, in COVID, we've had many community feeding organizations involved in supporting the activity, they would not be directly applying to FEMA, they'd be working through their state, local, tribal or territorial government entity under an agreement or a contract, and that entity would be the one applying to FEMA for the assistance. Next slide, please. Anne, let's go to the next slide.

0:14:25.2 Mark: So how do we figure out the work and costs? So, the work has to be required as a direct result of the declared event, so in this case, non-congregate sheltering is necessary to reduce transmission from COVID, and specifically, the FEMA guidance has been put out states that are primary purposes, isolation, and quarantine to reduce the spread of COVID. The work and facility must be located in the designated area for PA. Now, that's standard policy language, but I will tell you that since we're talking about COVID, emergency, and major disaster declarations that cover every part of the country, that's probably less of a relevant issue here. But think about a natural disaster, if you would down in Louisiana right now, several of the parishes there are a PA declared, if you will, but the sheltering activity could go on anywhere in the state, that's why that asterisk is there.

0:15:12.4 Mark: There is a specific exception for evacuation and sheltering that it can be done anywhere in the declared area, and that means a state, tribe, or territorial jurisdiction. The work has to be the legal responsibility of the eligible applicant. The emergency work, which is non-congregate, sheltering falls under the heading of emergency work, is generally the legal responsibility of government entities. So, as I said, PMPs are often doing work, but they're only eligible for emergency work related to and performed on eligible facilities that they own. If they're providing services in the community, they need to be working through that eligible government entity. And in that case, what we're looking for is that they would have a formal agreement or a contract with that SLTT, state, local, tribal, territorial government to provide services on the government's behalf. Next slide, please.

0:16:07.1 Mark: There's also a requirement that any contract issues are done in accordance with federal contracting requirements, and that applies to... And you'll see the term here, recipients and sub-recipients, though I said state, tribe, or territory request and receive a decoration, they are the recipient of the PA Grant funds. Sub-recipients, also synonymous with applicant, they're the folks who will be putting in requests for application through that recipient. And the applicants and the recipients can contract for the performance of an eligible work, they don't have to do it directly, and often that's the case with emergency work such as sheltering that it's being contracted or provided under agreement by a private non-profit partner or a private sector partner.

0:16:49.9 Mark: In order to be eligible, contract-related costs have to follow federal procurement requirements, they have to follow their own procedures, whatever those contracting procedures are, for that government entity, but they also have to be in compliance and meet all federal procurement requirements. And states and tribal government applications, territorial applicant's comply with the... 2 CFR 200.317 that you see there. There's a different section of the... The second Code of Federal... Consolidated federal regulations that deals with the tribal recipients slightly different because the tribes are autonomous nations, and so a slightly different way that they're dealt with in the federal regulations. And again, everybody has to comply with their own document of procurement requirements. They have to follow any applicable State laws and tribal, territorial, local government rules and regulations, and then they have to be in compliance with the 2 CFR, which governs federal procurement issues. Next slide, please.

0:17:53.7 Mark: Now, talking about the costs for the eligible. So, we've got an eligible applicant, the work they're doing is an approved emergency protective measure as it relates to COVID, because that's what's currently authorized under COVID. All of that is known as category B within FEMA. We have categories A through G of the types of work that can be done under public assistance. So, we've got an eligible applicant, the work is eligible, now the costs that are being claimed, they have to be necessary and reasonable for federal regulations. And I just lost my...

0:18:33.4 NS: Mark. I think we're having trouble hearing you here, so I wonder if you lost your connection maybe?

0:18:40.5 Mark: Can you hear me now?

0:18:40.9 NS: That's much better, thank you.

0:18:44.9 Mark: For some reason, my computer went dark, and my mute turned on by itself. Sorry about that. So the cost, it follows what has often been called the prudent person rule, so FEMA would be looking at the costs that are being submitted for reimbursement and comparing them to what we're receiving from other similar incidents, and determining whether they are necessary and reasonable. They have to conform to standard, VA program eligibility, and other federal requirements, so it's not as big an issue with non-congregate sheltering, but there are a host of other environmental and historical preservation statutes that any PA work has to be on the compliance with. The applicant has to be following our own established practices and policies and procedures that they have in place when federal funding is not available because public assistance grants are supplemental, so the work has to be done whether or not federal dollars are being provided to support it. And the cost has to be documented with sufficient detail specific to COVID, that means we have identified who's being housed and sheltered in non-congregate sheltering for how long and the justification for their being in this system if you will. Next slide, please.

0:19:57.1 Mark: And then there's also, particularly with COVID, we're seeing significant duplication of benefits issues there are so many funding sources out there right now that all of the federal agencies involved are doing coordination and collaboration to ensure that we're not duplicating benefits, and usually that has leaned in the past that we wouldn't pay for the same work. During COVID, what it's done, the duplication of benefits issue is, there might be two or more federal departments that pay for the same work, but what we won't do is pay for the same exact item of work. So, there might be multiple funding sources who are funding non-congregate sheltering, but only one of us can be funding non-Congress sheltering for a specific individual at any one time so that assistance could be provided by other federal departments or agencies. This is not as applicable to non-congregate sheltering, but there's always the issue of there are any actual insurance proceeds or other offsets that an individual receives that would be deducted from the amount that's reimbursable, and then any other source of funding. For example, HUD oversees the Community Development Block Grant, and for federal PA grants, there's a cost share of 75% federal, 25% state, local, tribal, territorial, that's the standard cost share at this point for the non-congregate sheltering activity under a presidential order.

0:21:18.6 Mark: We are at 100% federal cost share for the non-congregate sheltering activity, so there's not nearly as much of an issue for the duplication of benefits issue here, but I mentioned the CDBG funds, just so you can understand that, that's the one federal funding source that an applicant is allowed to use to offset the state, local or tribal or territorial cost share. And then the final funding reconciliation that will occur, there's always going to be that process at the end where literally they have to submit all of the documentation. VA has consolidated resource centers. We have four of them that cover the country. They will work with our regions to do that review of any costs submitted, they'll also do the work of coordinating with other federal agencies to make sure that only one of us is paying for a specific period of time, that someone stays in non-congregate sheltering, so that we don't have a duplication of benefits, and that's a statutory requirement on all federal departments and agencies.

0:22:17.0 Mark: Next slide. And then just the categories of work for public assistance, I mentioned that it goes A through G, but from this perspective, it's really only important to understand that the work that's being done is emergency work, and you'll see here, it mentions category A, that's debris removal and monitoring, again, not applicable to the COVID incident. The category B emergency protective measures are those things like sheltering and feeding, testing, vaccinations, there's a whole host of things that are authorized under the declarations for COVID. You can find that information on FEMA's COVID guidance website.

0:22:54.3 Mark: And the next slide, please. And then again, this is really just the emergency protective measures to go into what they are, they cover a host of issues. The important piece here is that evacuation and sheltering is one of the identified issues. You'll see supplies and commodities. The only reason I'm highlighting that one is the feeding activity that's been done, provision of food for people affected by a disaster, falls under the supplies and commodities, emergency protective measure, and so that's been critical during COVID as well, and has been used in order to provide feeding for folks in many of the non-congregate sheltering accommodations.

0:23:27.2 Mark: Next slide, please. And I was thinking that I might have gotten to the point where it's questions, and I will now pay attention to the chat. And Norm, if there are questions that I can answer now, I'll try to do that, otherwise, we may need to reply to some of the questions offline and

get back to folks after the webinar.

0:23:48.9 NS: Thank you so much, Mark, for a great presentation. I did have a follow-up question, I wanted to ask. So one of the questions people have is like, okay, if I'm a non-profit and I wanna do some non-congregate sheltering, people can't sort of just as a non-profit apply straight to FEMA to operate non-congregate sheltering. So can you talk about what should they do, who should they coordinate with in their community?

0:24:15.7 Mark: Certainly. They would, because as we said, the legally responsible applicant for non-congregate sheltering activity, and again, this is regular times or COVID, they would wanna work through their Emergency Management Agency, and that could be at the municipal, the county, parish, state level, or tribal and territorial because we do have COVID declarations affecting all of those types of jurisdictions, and it's gonna depend on how things are structured in that state. In some states, the state has been handling non-congregate sheltering, in other states, and often this comes down to whether it's a home rule issue and the delegated level of authority to authorize that activity may rest at the county or municipal level. They would wanna work with that Emergency Management Agency.

0:25:04.4 Mark: Ideally would have had an agreement in place at the outset, but none of us anticipated COVID, so people probably didn't have agreements in place. As long as they have an agreement in place to be doing the work, which reflects the fact that they've been asked by that responsible government, applicant for PA assistance to perform that work on their behalf, that's what that applicant needs to have in order to take the reimbursement, and then that provider in the community would be getting that reimbursement, not directly from FEMA, but they would be receiving that from whomever the funded applicant is. Again, state, tribal, territorial, or local.

0:25:44.7 NS: Great, thank you so much. And the other question that's come up is, I think a lot of people have the perception that FEMA support for non-congregate sheltering was going to end at the end of September, so can you talk about what's the current status of ending FEMA support for non-congregate sheltering.

0:26:06.0 Mark: Sure, well, at this point, there is no end date for FEMA non-congregate sheltering. Let me just be completely clear about that. I think the confusion around the September 30 date came in the fact that the 100% cost share for COVID emergency protective measures, which includes non-congregate sheltering was adjusted by the White House to 100%, and that's now retroactive to January 20th of 2020, and it was put in place, and when it was put in place through a executive order that identified the end date as September 30th for that 100% federal funding, that as of August 17th, the President extended that 100% federal cost share to December 31st, 2021.

0:26:50.3 Mark: And that doesn't mean that on that date, if the pandemic is still an issue, which we all imagine it probably will be, that that's the end date for the emergency protective measures ladder. It's just the cost share that's affected by that date. So after that date, if it's not extended, and there is still a need to be doing non-congregate sheltering and other COVID emergency protective measures, we would revert to whatever the cost share is defined in the declaration specific to the jurisdiction. So to my knowledge, all of the other emergency and major disaster declarations associated with COVID, absent a Presidential Authorization to go to a 100% would be at the standard 25% state, local, tribal, territorial share, 75% federal share. But we don't know what's gonna happen with that, but the President did extend it. It's good now through the end of this year,

that 100% federal share.

0:27:45.4 NS: Great, thank you so much, Mark. Great presentation. If you have a question for Mark, please feel free to go ahead and type it in the chat window. We're gonna move on to our next presenters here. I'm very happy to introduce Brett Esders from the SNAP's office and Katie Jennings from the US Interagency Council on Homelessness. And as you can see on the screen, they're gonna be talking about strategies to re-house individuals from non-congregate sheltering. Then I'm gonna turn things over to you, Brett.

0:28:16.4 Brett Esders: Great, thank you. Can you hear me?

0:28:19.3 CC: Yes, you sound loud and clear.

0:28:21.7 BE: Perfect, next slide, please. I'm gonna try and go through this quickly because I think the really interesting stuff is the information that Indianapolis and Connecticut are going to present, and just a reminder that there is a document coming, the document has all of this information in it, along with a bunch more information and other resources to help you implement these strategies, so it is all coming, hopefully soon but it's coming.

0:28:47.4 BE: So, when we talk about transitioning an individual from non-congregate shelter, this is, as Norm alluded to earlier, the process of exiting people who are sheltering there to, whenever possible, stable housing. It's avoiding exits to unsheltered homelessness whenever possible. And again, ideally helping house people into permanent housing. And as we've been saying since the beginning of the pandemic, communities need to have transition plans for housing or sheltering people who are sheltering in COVID-specific non-congregate shelter, and you should be implementing these transition plans all the time, because people are exiting non-congregate shelter all the time. People should not be getting stuck in non-congregate shelter, there should be flow, they should be moving to permanent housing.

0:29:40.1 BE: And over the next few slides, we're gonna go through some of those strategies that you should be incorporating into your work to re-house individuals, and then Katie will discuss some of the funding resources that are available to help support communities implement these strategies and house people in permanent housing. Next slide, please. So as with all of the work that we do, we really need to be centering racial equity in the re-housing process, it's important that during this process, we not perpetuate existing racial inequities as we re-house those who are sheltering in non-congregate shelter. This means that as a community you should be giving voice to underserved communities in the development and the implementation of your transition plan, to be tracking data on your re-housing efforts to ensure that people who are served in non-congregate shelter are re-housed in a manner that minimizes racial inequity in your outcome.

0:30:39.1 BE: You should get to know the people who are sheltering in your non-congregate shelters and you should understand their needs and their available resources. Some people may be able to be re-housed with family or friends or they could afford a unit without ongoing assistance, if they had a roommate. Others will need minimal support and others will need longer term support like a voucher or permanent support of housing. It's important that you start to learn this information about the people who are staying in your non-congregate shelters as soon as possible, so that you can start their permanent housing exit as soon as they enter the shelter. And often moving into housing, we all know requires someone to have certain documents, a license or a

Social Security card, and we know that COVID has delayed the time that it takes to get this paperwork, so start again, start this process as soon as possible for people who are staying in your non-congregate shelter and don't wait until the very end of their stay to start to think about helping them obtain these documents. This is a short period of time, in most cases, where they have a safe place to shelter, consistent place to shelter, and it's a good time to start getting the documents ready while they're there.

0:32:00.2 BE: And then you have to have landlords. So, there's a ton of resources coming online or actually online already, but you can't use them unless you have landlords. And so, in your community, you should be having a landlord recruitment strategy, recruit landlords with a diverse range of local landlords to ensure that there is an array of units available for people to move into and a variety of neighborhoods that people truly have choice in where they live when they exit non-congregate shelter.

0:32:36.8 BE: Next slide please. A lot of the people who are sheltering in non-congregate shelter are gonna need some sort of financial assistance to move into permanent housing. As I said earlier, it could be minimal one time assistance or it could be ongoing assistance. There are an abundance of resources out there right now, and as a community, you're gonna have to strategize and prioritize how these resources will be used and which ones are gonna be available to you to re-house households that are sheltering in non-congregate shelter. And then you're gonna wanna start to prioritize people for those resources. This is a matching exercise, and as we know most of the dedicated homeless resources are integrated into your CoCs, your Continuum of Cares coordinated entry process, so you'll wanna work with the CoC and their coordinated entry process, they may need to make some temporary changes to those processes in order to house people residing in non-congregate shelter and you'll wanna work through that with them. And then you also wanna make sure you're able to prioritize and access those resources that aren't going through coordinated entry.

0:33:51.5 BE: Next slide please. Find a way to provide housing search and navigation services to people experiencing homelessness that are sheltering in the non-congregate shelters. Navigating the private rental market can be challenging, especially now, so even if ongoing financial assistance isn't needed, provide those housing navigation and housing search services to those sheltering IN non-congregate shelter. There are several models, and we can put a link in the chat to a document that outlines some of those models, that's also in the document that's coming. Pick the one that works best for your community, but make sure that you are connecting people to housing search and navigation services and providing this can help increase exits to permanent housing. And then finally, it's gonna be important to connect people to supportive services to help maintain their housing. In some cases, these services will come with the voucher that they're receiving, if somebody's moving into permanent supportive housing, that's gonna come with wrap-around supportive services, but in other cases, it's most likely gonna be through connections to the mainstream service system and connecting people to those mainstream services, helping them fill out the paperwork to apply for those benefits before they leave non-congregate shelter.

0:35:18.5 BE: And again, you're gonna wanna have a diverse range of supportive services and a diverse range of providers, and this will help ensure that the referrals that you're making and the connections that you're making are actually services that the households who are sheltering in shelter will take advantage of and will help them maintain housing stability once they exit.

0:35:41.0 BE: Next slide please. So that's a lot. And... Nope, one back. One more back. Yep. And...

No, now one more forward. Key partners. That's a lot. And really, to make it work in your community, you're gonna have to have a lot of key partners come together and develop and implement this transition strategy, you're gonna want to involve not just the traditional housing and homelessness partners that at least on the homelessness side of the spectrum we're used to working with. Housing people from COVID-specific non-congregate shelter is going to take partnerships with emergency management and other organizations that traditionally respond to disaster scenarios, and you're gonna wanna keep in close contact with public health officials and make sure that you're doing all of this in line with public health guidelines. So now I'm gonna turn it to Katie and she's gonna talk about some of the funding available to support your transition plans, and then we will move to the community.

0:36:53.9 Katie Jennings: Great, thanks so much, Brett. Next slide, and I will just keep this super, super brief, because I wanna make sure that we give each of our communities their full 20 minutes to present. And so, I think the point of this slide is really just to encourage communities to really look at the full array of resources that are out there in their communities, both resources that were available before the pandemic, as well as resources that have been triggered as a result of the pandemic. Next slide.

0:37:27.8 KJ: Sorry, and then I just wanna take a minute to really plug, USICH recently released a guide to basically all of the provisions in the American Rescue Plan that are relevant to the work of preventing and ending homelessness. I'm gonna put the link in the chat as well, and really just wanna encourage you to take a look at that and share widely. I think most people are familiar with the five billion in home funding and the five billion in emergency housing choice vouchers for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. But I think some lesser known things we don't think about as much is that the Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance can actually be used for households that are currently homeless and don't yet have a lease, there's a little bit more paperwork that has to be done, it's a little bit trickier, but it can be done. The 350 billion for the Coronavirus, State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, I think that is a really, really flexible source of funding, and it can be used for housing and services, if you look in the fine print.

0:38:29.1 KJ: And then another thing I would just highlight is the 800 million that went to the Department of Education for the education for Homeless Children and Youth Program, which can also be used to provide wrap-around services, so maybe think about partnering with your school system as well to see what services they may be able to provide, it can also be used for things like paying for a temporary short-term motel space. So, I also just wanted to say that our regional coordinators, we have five of them that are available to help you and help you navigate all these resources and think about how to braid them together, so I'm gonna leave it there so that we can turn to our presenters and I'll turn it back to you, Norm.

0:39:11.8 NS: Thank you so much, Katie, and thank you, Brett. Great presentation, and let me just sort of echoes Katie's comments about the USICH document that she put in the chat window, it's a great overview of different funding sources, and just strongly recommend that people check that out. Also, we have on the HUD exchange a whole bunch of resources to help communities house people, really sort of in the COVID context, they can apply to housing people from non-congregate sheltering or other scenarios. So, strongly encourage you to take a look at hudexchange.info if you want even more resources. So with that, I wanna turn things over to our first community presentation, we're very excited to have some of our partners from Indianapolis talk to us about their work on re-housing individuals from non-congregate sheltering. So I'm gonna turn things over

to Chelsea Haring-Cozzi, and she's gonna kick us off. Chelsea?

0:40:14.6 Chelsea Haring-Cozzi: Thanks so much, Norm, can you hear me okay?

0:40:17.5 NS: Yes, you sound great.

0:40:19.7 CH: Excellent. Good afternoon everyone, my name is Chelsea Haring-Cozzi and I'm the Executive Director with CHIP. We are the backbone organization for the Indianapolis Continuum of Care, and also serve as a coordinated entry and HMIS lead, and it's lovely to be with all of you this afternoon in the space where we're doing some peer learning and sharing. We're really grateful for the opportunity to talk about what we've been doing and learning over the last 18 months here in Indianapolis around non-congregate sheltering and re-housing. Next slide please. On the screen here, you'll just kind of see what we hope to do an overview of in the next 20 minutes, and really hope this sparks further discussion and connections as 20 minutes is a lot to pack in, so really hope to have ongoing dialogue with those of you who are interested. Next slide please. So, I'm gonna kick us off this afternoon by providing a little grounding and context around our COVID non-congregate sheltering and re-housing responses and strategies.

0:41:20.8 CH: First by starting with a timeline, planning, some of the technical assistance received and the funding that's guided and supported our work these last 18 months, and then we'll move into specifically talking about our re-housing model, how we have used data and tools to support this and end with highlights, lessons learned and next steps as we are winding down our COVID non-congregate shelter here in Indianapolis. So, what you see on the screen before you right now is kind of a quick overview of a timeline starting back in March of 2020. And I hate to take everyone back to March of 2020, but I think that was really a significant and important milestone for a lot of us as we became acutely aware of the impact of COVID and the need to coordinate a homeless response to keep people experiencing homelessness safe, healthy, and alive.

0:42:08.0 CH: So, in March 2020, Indy started receiving HUD Disaster Response Technical Assistance, with a focus on de-compressing our congregate shelters, establishing quarantine and isolation sites, and bringing together key stakeholders to strategically respond to the public health crisis for those most vulnerable in our community. From March to June, the big push was really on setting up new Crisis Response Facilities, overflow locations for hotels to reduce their shelter populations, quarantine and isolation sites for people who have been... Tested positive or have symptoms to be able to isolate, and then non-congregate space for those at highest risk based on age, health condition, and all of the risk areas that the CDC laid out. And that was reaffirmed by our local health department in Public Health Order Number Eight.

0:42:58.2 CH: So, our first non-congregate shelter was established over a year ago. May and June, we then started talking about re-housing, and how to really leverage the funding coming from the CARES Act to strategically connect those in the non-congregate shelter to a re-housing strategy. We made a promise and commitment that those going into non-congregate shelters would not come back to congregate shelters or to the streets, that they would go into permanent housing. And so, we took advantage of another round of HUD Technical Assistance and peer learning, specific to Coordinated Investment Planning and COVID Prioritization through Coordinated Entry to figure out how we really, kind of, connect these things and match people. In June, we got our Blueprint Council, our COC Governing Board, and our city to target almost all of the ESG-CV funding coming to Indianapolis for Rapid Re-Housing. And began a coordinated and strategic planning

process in preparation of that ESG-CV allocation, to directly connect rapid re-housing resources to those in non-congregate shelters and on the street.

0:44:04.3 CH: June through December, we really started expanding and filling the non-congregate shelter, and began working on a multi-pronged Rapid Re-Housing Strategy for everyone in the non-congregate. And we've been building out... And started building out a new component in our system, specific to housing acquisition. And creating a centralized entity that was responsible for the administration of all that rental assistance, called HomeNow Indy. In January through May, we had a huge push to start staffing up across agencies, as we shifted from crisis response to re-housing, and to start filling the positions necessary to do this re-housing work. We'll hear... You'll hear a little more about that in a minute. We also began to work to expand housing inventory to meet the demand for those who needed permanent housing.

0:44:56.6 CH: And so, with the millions of dollars that we were targeting to Rapid Re-Housing, we knew we needed lots more units and new landlord partners. So, during this kind of ramp-up time, we did not see a whole lot of flow out of our non-congregate shelter. We were building the infrastructure, we had the funding, but we were struggling to really execute at-scale. And May 2021 is when we really started to see things change, and we'll highlight that here in just one minute. Next slide, please. This next slide, I won't go through everything, but we really kind of approached our COVID response and re-housing work in phases, as guided by the framework for Equitable COVID-19 Homeless Response that was put out by several of our national partners. So, phase one was really that coordinated planning effort. We brought together some HUD TA folks from our State Department of Family and Social Services, City of Indianapolis, our County Health Department, and homeless service providers.

0:45:50.7 CH: We had daily coordination calls, we had weekly community calls that are still going on to this day, and started really implementing immediate protective measures and crisis response. Phase two, we started expanding our non-congregate sheltering, and really focused on those in those high-risk categories under FEMA eligibility. We then started changing our coordinated entry COVID prioritization, adding addendums to making sure we were prioritizing those most vulnerable in the midst of this pandemic, and started strategic planning around a re-housing surge. Next slide, please. Phase three, we started, again, scaling and refining our non-congregate sheltering, putting together the operational plans, policies, procedures, roles of different entities, and we started targeting funding to the MCS and to those living unsheltered, primarily around rapid re-housing, rental assistance, and services.

0:46:49.8 CH: We started solidifying this infrastructure, and, again, really kind of re-orienting our system away from crisis response to re-housing. We also did a lot of training at this time around housing problem-solving and rapid resolution for those who didn't necessarily need the rental assistance, to really kind of try to tease that out a little bit more. And where we are now is shifting again, really to re-housing and re-orienting our system. We are planning to sunset our large non-congregate shelter at the end of this month. And so, trying to really scale that re-housing, and are leveraging all of the additional resources coming to the table.

0:47:23.9 CH: If you could go to the next slide, please. Part of our strategy a year ago was to set some large community goals. We thought that setting goals was really key in focusing this work and centering it as a COVID response. That housing is a public health response, and that's why we were prioritizing those at highest risk through the non-congregate shelter. And so, here are some of

the goals that we set to re-house 350 people out of these non-congregate shelter site, and re-house those who are living unsheltered who may not come into non-congregate shelters, but who are still highly vulnerable. Next slide, please. We really tuned into the guidance coming out of national experts about how communities should approach this opportunity to end homelessness through permanent solutions, and re-housing those experiencing homelessness now and who are at-risk became our primary number one goal as we were thinking about what to do with non-congregate sheltering.

0:48:21.7 CH: Next slide, please. This kind of piggybacks on what Mark was talking about from FEMA. In order to do this, Indianapolis really committed to understanding and leveraging all of the multiple funding sources to support the non-congregate sheltering and re-housing strategies, and to be strategic and coordinated in the way we did that. So, this slide is really illustrative of the kinds of braided funding that we've done to support this work. In addition to the public dollars, we've been able to leverage our philanthropic community, and they've come to the table in really amazing ways to support re-housing strategies, fill gaps. Including providing funding for unit holds fees, furniture, application fees, paying off arrears, and the type of flexible funding we know is necessary to overcome these kinds of financial obstacles in housing.

0:49:09.1 CH: Next slide, please. So, this goes into, then, how do we actually kind of start to execute on this non-congregate shelter re-housing model. Next slide, please. The first was a huge call to action. We advocated to get some assistance. Again, we recognize the value of HUD Technical Assistance. We knew we had all of the necessary components, but we needed help bringing it all together. So, we were offered another round of intensive, on the ground, HUD Technical Assistance, and we took full advantage of it. We leveraged the support of our Mayor's Office and our city to issue a call to action. You can see there, the Mayor sent out a letter to all of our service providers to rally around this re-housing strategy. And we launched an in-person community kick-off in May with more than 50 homeless service providers to really introduce a new systemized core re-housing model that would launch on-site at the non-congregate shelter, and we began asking agencies to dedicate and/or re-deploy staff to this effort. So, here's more about what that looks like from Danielle.

0:50:15.6 Danielle: Hello. So, really, we broke our re-housing down into three main components, which I know we've already talked about a little bit in this call. Housing navigation, housing acquisition, which we call our Housing Acquisition Team HAT for short, and housing case management. For us, housing navigation... You really can... You can kind of where housing navigation starts and where housing case management begins, that hand-off is kind of flexible, and can also cause the roles to be blurred, if not careful. But, for us, we've really tweaked this over the last few months. And, for us, housing navigation is really doing that intake and eligibility, doing that basic document collection, if it's not already there, and then doing the housing search and an application.

0:51:02.5 Danielle: So, once somebody is able to find a unit and apply to that, that's kind of where we do the hand-off, then, to case management. Our Housing Acquisition Team is a new team that was formed specifically in a response to COVID, it was something we already had in the works, and we were able to utilize the CARES Act funding to help ignite that and get that on the ground running. So, we do have three full-time positions that were created specifically for unit acquisition. Their whole job is to go and to meet landlords, to build those relationships, to talk about incentives, to utilize unit hold fees, to reduce barriers for clients entering. So, reducing criminal history

background, that kind of stuff, to be able to bring more units into our system. I think we all know it's a tight market right now, and so this team has been absolutely vital to our efforts with re-housing. And then housing case management, that support once... Before they move in, so at... Once they apply to a unit, we assign them to a case manager, and that person will work with them on cleaning up any kind of arrears that they might have, working to get furniture arranged and scheduled for move in, helping them get familiar with the neighborhood that they're going to be moving to.

0:52:11.8 Danielle: Working on a housing stability plan, and already talking about what success looks like for that client before they even get their keys to their apartment. And then, supporting them all through the process through lease signing. Next slide. To support our re-housing team, it really required a larger infrastructure. It wasn't enough just to have case managers and navigators, we really needed support of the entire community to help... To lift up this on the ground re-housing team. We've had more than 14 entities come together to organize a systems-level approach to this. And so, we have multiple teams that have been formed specifically for our re-housing efforts out of the MCS. Our core re-housing team and case management team, I've already mentioned kind of what they do. We have a full team meeting every single week where we celebrate successes, we do peer-to-peer learning, we're able to offer formal trainings, and we can really dive deep into our by-name-list of everyone that's at the non-congregate shelter, and make sure that everyone is connected to housing.

0:53:14.4 Danielle: We have a performance and data management and Coordi entry team, which has been vital in developing re-housing metrics, supporting the data management process within HMIS, refining our assessment and referral processes and ensuring there's a consistent flow of referrals through Coordi Entry System, building some really phenomenal tools within our HMIS. And then, we also have our housing acquisition team, which meets regularly. And then, a hotel operations team is definitely vital to ensuring the health and safety and security of the guests at our non-congregate sites, coordinating all of the logistics around intakes and exits and contracting with folks to operate the sites. And then, we have a leadership team that meets weekly that really is that political will and public-facing communication around our HomeNow re-housing efforts.

0:54:03.1 Danielle: They're able to convene and engage agency leadership as needed, identify and acquire resources that the housing teams need, identify what the issues are, elevate them, and, really, figure out, "How do we bring in new resources if necessary to overcome obstacles?" Next slide. So, we mentioned housing inventory, and I've seen a few things in the chat around new units, as well. Our housing acquisition team has been, like I said, really vital to this. We are using Pagation, which is a really cool platform for us to be able to manage a close system and a inventory list of units that have been pre-negotiated by our housing acquisition team. That allows us really to view available pre-negotiated units, to apply for the units right through that... Through the platform, clients are able to log in and see tenant screening criteria, they can message the property owner right from the platform, they can view pictures of the units, they can look at a map to see where it's at. They can do that all right from Pagation, which all of our housing navigators and case managers have access to. So, they just sit down with a navigator, log into this, and they can see those units that are available right in our system.

0:55:15.2 Danielle: We knew that landlords, obviously, are key to this re-housing effort. The business sense of partnering with us wasn't necessarily making sense anymore. The financial... It's such a tight market, they could rent to anybody at this point. But we were able to bring... We're able

to bring more things. We're able to bring a comprehensive benefit package, we're able to bring the support of our housing acquisition team, the tenancy supports that we're providing. An easy leasing process, and having clients, and knowing that even if somebody isn't able to maintain their unit, we have more people lined up right behind them to fulfill that unit. Next slide. In addition to the re-housing team, capacity became a huge need all around.

0:55:58.4 Danielle: And so, there was additional areas that we identified that we needed capacity. So on-site, when we launched our re-housing team, prior to May, we were kind of... People were popping in and out. But in May 17th, we launched and we said, "Everybody we want on-site. We want you there. We want all of the navigators, all the case managers, on-site." So, we really created this hub, this central location. We worked with the service provider that was already on-site that had built phenomenal relationships with the clients already, had already been connecting them to mainstream resources, and getting to know them. Documentation has always been a barrier, I think, for many of our programs. If you're sitting there waiting on an ID or waiting on a Social Security card to come in, that just is precious time that's unavoidable at times.

0:56:47.7 Danielle: So, we were able to create four new systems-facing positions that are just document specialists, we call them the Doc Squad, and they're very phenomenal. They go around, they collect IDs, birth certificates, Social Security cards. They've also been able to do a lot in the criminal justice realm with helping to clear open warrants, helping to move cases up, helping to get people through that process so that they can get into housing. That team's been really vital to our system. Furniture is definitely a need. This was a response to landlords' concerns that clients were moving in with absolutely nothing, and they were worried about that and they didn't wanna work with our programs if we weren't gonna... Able to help them get a complete move-in package. Case managers also had concerns. I mean, we want somebody to move into their unit, we want them to feel like it's home, we want them to wanna stay there, and for it to be their own. So, we were able to pull together some funding to have furniture and move-in packages for every single person leaving the non-Congregate site. So, they have a fully furnished apartment to move into. To be really honest, like this was a huge heavy lift capacity-wise. This is something that...

0:57:56.0 Danielle: Unfortunately, one person on our team said, "You know, I don't have a lot to do right now." Well, this is your thing now. You get to manage all of this furniture and move-in packages. And I think she regrets saying that, because it has been a heavy lift and it's kind of that other duties, as assigned. But it was really important that we had somebody with really phenomenal organization skills that could work on moving 15, 20 people in a week, and work with movers, work with the storage unit, work with furniture supply companies. So, we've really been asking people to do different things and to do things differently, and I think that's the most important takeaway from this. It wasn't okay... It wasn't enough to just do what we've been doing, we had to do things differently and we had to do different things. I'm gonna turn it back to... Oh, actually, no, I'm gonna go to the next slide. First, I'll share a little bit about our data and some of the other tools that we've built to really help us understand and intervene to make changes along the way. Next slide. When we first started our response to COVID, our focus was really on our Coordi Entry System. Prior to COVID-19, we had just started piloting the use of a call-in option for our Coordi entry assessments. Everything prior to that was in-person.

0:59:10.6 Danielle: Obviously, that doesn't work when we're all working remotely or we're all quarantined or we're shut down. So, we really quickly had to create some policies and procedures around conducting assessments virtually or via telephone, and push out communication content to

the community of how to access our system remotely. So, that was one of our first things that we looked at. Once our Coordi entry prioritization addendum went into effect, we really wanted to make sure that we were not creating any additional disparities within our system, particularly racial disparities. So, we were continually monitoring housing referrals and placement to ensure equity. We had an ad-hoc work group create additional action steps to ensure that Black households were being assessed and referred in our system, and making sure that our shelter system had adequate access to our Coordi Entry System for the connection to housing. Next slide. We also looked at our data at our non-congregate site. So, at first we were just looking at our site that was FEMA reimbursed, and looking at that by race, as well, to be really aware of who was entering and exiting our hotel, who was going to permanent housing, who was leaving to unsheltered destinations. And then, the dashboard on the right is our current dashboard that we're using, and we are using this...

1:00:26.4 Danielle: We had to make sure that all of our non-congregate sites were in HMIS, 'cause they weren't all in HMIS first. And it's really hard to know who to house when they're not in your system. So, we did some additional training and increased our access to HMIS for our non-congregate partners to ensure that we had data on who was at the sites. We're continually looking at who has IDs on file, who has birth certificates... Our Doc Squad is looking at that. And then, looking at our housing placements. And so, it's really good to see that go up and our census go down. Next slide. I mentioned that we had more than 14 different entities that we're working together across multiple agencies, sometimes many teams within an agency, so communication really is essential in this process. We're not just working with one organization, we're working with many different people.

1:01:18.2 Danielle: So, we built an intranet of sorts to be able to communicate back-and-forth to each other. We can post documents and resources, we can see who's on-site each day, there's a chat feature. So, we use that. And then, we also built an HMIS Housing Status Tracker, which is a really phenomenal tool that has really helped us throughout this process. It's our by-name-list, of sorts, of everyone that's at the MCS. And we can keep track of who's applied for a unit, who has not applied for a unit, who has applied and been approved, who needs to get a move-in date scheduled. And then, we can assign case managers, we can see notes to each other. We use this every single day in our daily stand-ops, so that we can really see who scheduled to move-in, who still needs to be assigned to a case manager, who are we just waiting for a unit to open up for. So, that's a really cool tool that we built in our system. I'm gonna turn it back to Chelsea now for some highlights, lessons learned, and opportunities.

1:02:20.7 CH: And I'm gonna wrap it up as quickly as possible, 'cause I wanna make sure our colleagues at Connecticut have a chance to talk about their work. So, next slide, please. Just some quick highlights about our work, and it's still in progress. It's still a work in progress. We are housing people, and we are doing it in a way that is committed to equity. You can see here some of the highlights. What we're doing at the NCS under the core re-housing model and housing hub will expand beyond the MCS. All of the things we're learning, we can take out into the community and continue doing this work in other places. We've learned to think differently and more creatively and ask questions that get us to, "Yes, let's try that. Let's do this, let's see how it goes." And we are thinking and acting more like a re-housing system. It made my heart happy this morning on our community call when one of our providers, [1:03:07.3] ____ said, "Hey, my organization might have hired these Doc squad specialists, but there's a community specialist. They don't live with us, they live with the community, and I hardly even see them."

1:03:19.2 CH: That was great. That's the kind of thing that we are building and looking for. Next slide and last slide. What we've learned and what we're continuing to learn, it's messy. It's not easy work. We've experienced stalls, we've had to re-group, we've had to re-infuse some energy, we've had to make changes when maybe partners haven't worked or when there's a misalignment between skills and values. It's really important that those doing the work, share the values around Housing First, around harm reduction, around trauma-informed care and inclusivity. There are burnout issues and capacity issues, and we have to continue to learn and adjust and name those things. We've learned to be housing-focused from day one. Shelters, no matter what kind of shelters, non-congregate or not, are not destinations.

1:04:05.5 CH: They have to be pathways to housing and that conversation should start day one. On-site operations matter, as is the relationship between operations and providers at non-congregate. There needs to be role clarity, shared values and space for critical dialogue and refinement. And I think Brett said this earlier, communication with the residents is key. They are part of this process, they are part of the solution, and they should be engaged throughout it all. And so last slide and we'll turn it over. As I said, we are starting to wind down our large non-congregate shelter this month. We have recognized not everyone will be housed, but we are working on a way to bridge those who have been referred and maybe are just waiting on that move-in date or unit past the 30th. We're working on alternative safe sheltering options for those who are not ready yet or maybe not responding. And we're still problem-solving for the handful of people that have criminal histories that our systems are just not serving well. We'll keep advocating being creative and focusing on housing as a public health response, and we, again, hope this opens up continuous dialogue, and happy to connect further. Thanks so much for your time for listening, and back to your, Norm.

1:05:24.0 NS: Thank you so much. That was just a fantastic presentation, chock-full of great information, and we're just really... It's just great to see such good outcomes of the work you're doing, and I know you all have put in a lot of time and effort at the frontend to make it work well and really sort of follow through, and it's just great to see those great outcomes. I wanna ask one quick question. Landlords is a big sort of common theme that we're hearing concerns about. Can you talk about just, or maybe give an example of some of the landlord incentives that you use to help get landlords to participate in the program?

1:06:07.5 CH: Sure. I think beyond just some of the one-on-one relationship-building and having a dedicated team that's there to kind of answer landlord questions, concerns, troubleshoot, mitigate issues, we've been able to bring unit hold funds to the table, so as soon as a unit vacancy comes open, we wanna, "Hey, give it to us, we'll hold it, we'll pay you for it." We've done some signing bonuses, we've done double security deposits, we have a landlord risk mitigation fund. Something goes wrong in the unit, somebody leaves, there's damage done, we wanna help make you whole, and there's a fund you can access to do that. So those are some of the tools that we're using. And then the other part is we're asking landlords, "What would be helpful? What would make you wanna work with us to learn more about these programs that we're working with and kind of listening to what they have to say as well.

1:06:57.9 NS: Great, thank you so much. If you have any questions about the great work going on in Indianapolis, please feel free to type it in the chat. But we're gonna move on to our next presentation 'cause we have even more good community stuff coming. So I'm very happy to introduce our partners in Connecticut to talk about their work on housing people from non-

congregate sheltering. So I'm gonna just turn things over to Dan McElhinney from FEMA's Region One, and he's gonna walk us through this or at least get it started. Dan, over to you.

1:07:33.1 Dan McElhinney: Thanks, Norm, and that's exactly right, I'm gonna get us started and we're gonna let the state of Connecticut, in the city of New Haven, give you the details. So the COVID-19 pandemic led to immediate economic health and housing impact very early on, that's what Jim McPherson labeled as the second wave or the second COVID disaster for us, the economic recovery. And so our FCO at the time spin up the long-term recovery. Normally, that's activated later in a disaster, but it was essential that we did it early on as we did. Next slide, please. So our long-term recovery projects including the one in Connecticut, the housing investment, a state-led, this is very important, state-led, locally executed and federally supported.

1:08:33.5 DM: Next slide. So what's FEMA's role? FEMA's role is to support the state and their local partners in meeting their outcomes. We bring federal philanthropic and other civil society partners to the table with their resources to get the project done. This presentation will show how we are assisting the state of Connecticut and the city of New Haven. No one agency can fix this problem. They promise to explore all federal resources, the wraparound services to include our federal partners in HHS, the Department of Labor, Department of Justice, ANSER, the Veterans Administration, USDA, Department of Education and FEMA. So at this point, let me turn it over to the state of Connecticut to give us the details on this project in New Haven.

[pause]

1:09:40.2 NS: We can't hear you, Steve. Might be something with your microphone or you might be on mute.

1:09:44.0 Steve DiLella: Thanks no, I didn't hit the mute button. So thank you with my friends over at FEMA for introducing us. And my name is Steve DiLella from the Connecticut Department of Housing, and our role is really to facilitate the response at the statewide level to homelessness here in the state of Connecticut. And I think a lot of the lessons learned or a lot of the information that you heard from Indiana resonated with me, 'cause a lot of those same effects happened in Connecticut. So really, when you look at when the pandemic arose, I think we really approached it in a similar response as Indiana or Indianapolis. We really looked at it as a two-pronged approach; one is health and safety, and one is housing. So when the pandemic really hit us in March, I think we responded really quickly noting that COVID would have very, very tragic effect on our homeless population due to the congregate living situation and due to our folks having multiple comorbid conditions that can lead to poor outcomes. So we really started our non-congregate sheltering with state dollars within the first week of the pandemic, and we were certainly gratified when the federal government really stepped in and provided FEMA resources for us to continue the non-congregate sheltering.

1:10:50.4 SD: We really even looked at a whole bunch of different types of housing that would be appropriate, whether it was college dorms because they were close, whether it was state buildings that we had access to, that were also under-utilized. We really determined that hoteling really was the best option. That really gave an opportunity to provide the safe space in terms of social distancing, and also allowed for us to really work with the folks on the individual level, and it really started helping us to prepare to move folks on to permanent housing from there. So when we looked at the resources that were coming our way, we really leverage a wide variety of resources to make

this happen. Clearly, FEMA was able to pay for the actual hotel rooms as well as some services, but we really wanted to look also at our ESG resources to ensure that both our staff as well as the folks that we serve have access to PPE and all other sorts of materials that would make sure that they're safe and not get sick from the COVID virus. We also understood that we needed to engage more people that were living outside. We really wanted to bring them in and bring them into our non-congregate facilities because this was also an opportunity really to engage with them in a different level for the first time.

1:12:04.4 SD: We also were able to do really interesting access to gain more coordination with our healthcare system. We use non-congregate sheltering as a center place to be able to work and expand access to testing, as well as vaccines. So when you really look at our hoteling approach, we did have vaccine clinics and we were able to get as many folks that vaccine as possible. So we're really excited about those opportunities. We do understand that there's still a great vaccine hesitancy throughout our system, but really, by able to have our case management staff as well as our folks in the hotels, it really provided a great opportunity to work on that, to provide and ensure that people are safe from the virus. The next slide, please. So we just discussed about our health and safety issues, but really the housing is really the big piece. We in Connecticut are committed to reducing and ending homelessness, and we really wanted to bring a wide variety of resources to the table to do this. While we had folks in a non-congregate situation, we really were able to work on case management strategies to really work with them to understand what their housing needs are and try to bring them into permanent housing.

1:13:18.1 SD: There are a wide variety of options for folks. We didn't really settle within one option. We really were able to bring a coordinated entry system directly into our non-congregate situations and really work with all of our providers to really determine what resources would be best suited for those who are in that non-congregate situation. So we were able to identify the strengths and the barriers for folks being able to enter into permanent housing again, and we really wanted to look at the resources we had. So with the CARES Act funding through ESG, we also did have a large block dedicated to the Rapid Rehousing Program, so we were really able to expand that almost four times, so we quadrupled our resources there. We also really wanted to prevent people from actually entering into our system, so we were able to create a new homeless prevention program, which really has been replaced by the emergency rental assistance program called UniteCT in Connecticut, which is really excellent because then we're able to really work and re-allocate our ESG resources back for more rapid rehousing, so we can really assist additional folks, while at the same time, being able to provide shorter-term rental assistance through our ERA program.

1:14:28.3 SD: We also really looked at our diversion program because we really wanted to make sure that even though we had non-congregate sheltering in place, even though we have the opportunities to provide safe shelter, we really wanted to stop people from entering into our system. So we were really able to leverage some resources and some flexible funding to be able to help people stay where they were so they didn't have to enter into homelessness. And we do have a single point of entry through our 211 United Way system, really where we're able to identify folks right from the get-go and then set up appointments as soon as we have. And ironically, COVID allowed us to do that quicker through a lot of tele-work technology, we were able to make direct connections through iPad so we can actually start working on a diversion plan right there when somebody's presenting with us, so we don't actually [1:15:12.8] ____ them in... During time while waiting for appointments. But Rapid Rehousing was not our only access point for housing. We also

had some mainstream resources, mainstream vouchers that were still available to us that we really were able to leverage.

1:15:29.2 SD: And clearly, our Emergency Housing Vouchers that have come online in the past few months have really been able to expand our permanent housing options through over 380 folks here at the Department of Housing, but also we're leveraging our resources with our public housing authority partners to really hope we get over 500 of our folks in non-congregate shelter and house permanently in the community. We also really started to build out our shared housing initiative because we know that oftentimes that... Even though we have great resources on our hand right now, it still was not enough to be able to meet the total demand of folks within our system. So we tried to create creative models and innovative models that work with, "How do we figure out how to work with those folks that may be able to live together, a shared housing model?" So I know New Haven certainly has been a leader on that, and we're certainly excited at some of the work that they've been ever to do, and that way we can pair resources and pair funding sources that were able to get people back in the community, even without a voucher but they're able to live independently.

1:16:29.9 SD: I think we all know that some of our biggest struggles right now is actually accessing units. We have been able to build good relationships with our landlords through years and years of hard work. However, the actual stock in Connecticut is really low, and I'm sure that is the case with many of the folks on this call. When you work at eviction moratorium, which are an incredible thing, it also does stop movement within our system. And so we really did see that we don't have very many vacant units, so it has become quite a challenge to find those. So when you look at some of our performance measures, [1:17:02.8] ____ certainly has increased as a result of this, however, we certainly are pushing forward in getting people housed as quickly as we can with a wide variety of resources. Next like please.

1:17:16.1 SD: And some of the additional resources that are coming our way, we certainly know that we've been able to use a lot of that CARES Act funding and we're really looking forward to some of the ARP resources. Clearly, we talked about using these emergency housing vouchers and those have already gotten off the [1:17:29.3] ____ and were already housing people in the community. We also were really interested in using some of these home funds and some of our CDBG funds to actually convert hotels that we use for non-congregate shelter into either permanent shelters that is more pandemic-safe as well as into permanent housing. So we've actually been able to do that in one of our communities so far. It is a community where our shelter system actually disintegrated upon COVID because we didn't really have strong state support there. It was really a lot of private non-profits that did not receive any government funding.

1:18:00.6 SD: So when COVID came, they said, "We've really tried to help the community, but we're done." So we were lucky enough to step in with non-congregate shelter and really set up a system in that community that works, and we actually are using our hotel there as the basis for that. So it's a really exciting new model. We're also gonna place some permanent housing in there because we realized that that there are some folks that actually would choose to have an SRO component. So that is actually a model that we did not have in this community, so it's actually really exciting to add a different way and a different choice of permanent housing. So now we can give individuals within our system and that community multiple different options to really choose what they believe is best for them. Clearly, we are also anticipating using this funding to expand permanent housing options and permanent supportive housing options through our traditional development processes. I clearly spoke about the lack of access to housing, specifically affordable

housing previously, and really through some of these home dollars we were able to build additional units to really be able to provide some of that extra support and the extra units so that we can house more folks.

1:19:05.6 SD: We've really been as creative as possible trying to leverage other resources, whether it's the low-income housing tax credit program, whether it's state fund dollars, to be able to fund as much housing or to build as much housing as possible. And in Connecticut, we also are lucky enough to have our own rental assistance program. So based on the wide variety of resources that the federal government gave us that actually allowed us to leverage some of our rental assistance, to actually put state dollars in in which we actually offered 150 rental vouchers for all of our families that were currently in shelter in non-congregate shelter. So we're currently in the process of housing that as well, so we're super excited about the potential reduction of family homelessness here in the state of Connecticut. And I'll move on to my final slide before I pass it on to New Haven.

1:19:49.4 SD: To say really... It really is about collaboration here in Connecticut. You can see as all of these different logos pop up, we cannot do this alone at DOH. It's not one single state agency that does this. We have great partnerships with our mental health and substance abuse providers. We have great relationships with our social services. And we're proud to report that our governor just announced that we have, just today, that we launched a Medicaid waiver for our homeless population to provide some additional permanent supportive housing services. So we're really looking forward to continue our relationship with our federal partners. Clearly, SAMHSA will provide some services. HUD has been absolutely phenomenal and the support that they have given us. And this has really been a great opportunity for us really to deal with the first time with our State Department Emergency Management and our FEMA folks. It's been quite impressive how we've been able to come together so quickly, and really provide a level of support to our most vulnerable citizens.

1:20:44.6 SD: So we're certainly gonna take these lessons that we've learned and move forward and really build out these relationships with the ultimate effect of providing holistic support to those folks within our homeless service system. Like I said it's not just DOH's problem, but if we can provide mental health and substance abuse treatment, if we can provide early childhood education, access to schools, access to veteran services, employment and education, we all win. So with that, I'll turn it over to our partners in New Haven who actually do a lot of the hard work on the ground and so the great work that they've been able to do. Thank you.

1:21:22.5 Dr. Mehul Dalal: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Dr. Mehul Dalal, I oversee Health and Human Services for the city of New Haven. Steve, really appreciate the partnership for the last year and a half, and appreciate the Department of Housing being very proactive in this space. Again, really, really appreciate FEMA being proactive, reaching out to us at the local level and engaging us and engaging the federal partners of this effort. We're very, very thankful and grateful and excited to work with the partners, so I appreciate that. So what I'm gonna talk about is just some of our forward-thinking about how we will bounce back from the pandemic, and that kind of revert to business as usual in the old ways and how we can leverage the lessons learned from the pandemic and also take advantage of new resources that are coming our way, whether through ARPA, through the new home funds. And what I'll share initially is our vision for a five-year program to address homelessness in the city, and I think this effort on coordinated services from the federal to state level is very, very much in sync with that, so it's very timely. And then I'll turn it over to our Office of Housing and Homeless Coordinator, Velma George to go over some of the details on that. So...

1:22:44.0 DD: I don't know if you switch slides. I'm sorry, I had little technical issues getting on Adobe, so I hope you're on the slide that is titled City of New Havens Five Year Housing Plan. Basically, what we're looking to do on a grant big picture is transform the way the city invests in programs to address homelessness as opposed to managing homelessness on a year-to-year basis. What that means is a pivot to developing deeply affordable units however we can find them, a multiple strategy Prong strategy there, which Velma will describe later. And then capitalize on the incoming funds from home and other sources. We also, in conjunction, want to increase our low barrier service capacity, including the shower and laundry facilities. We have the substantial number of unsheltered and rough sleepers in New Haven, and we know that we need to address the spectrum of care and engage those individuals where they are, in order to then put them on the pathway, whether that's the shelter or a permanent housing, but we really wanna make sure we have a robust outreach system in place for the unsheltered. And another highlight is we do propose to create 500 states and deeply affordable regional housing units for people experiencing homelessness.

1:23:53.4 DD: Next slide please. I wanna share with you some of our just drilled down data on what we're looking at in the Greater New Haven region in terms of our population. GNH stands for Greater New Haven, BNM is the By Name List, and what you see here is a break down in terms of whether single male, single females, youth, veterans and families, you can see the large proportion of our population is single males followed by single females.

1:24:26.6 DD: Next slide. This just gives you an idea of the racial break down among those individuals on the By Name List. We have kind of an equal proportion of White, non-Hispanic and Black or African-American. And we don't have to... Sorry, we don't have the break down from Latinx Hispanic on this slide, but I know that data is available to us and we can get it to you if there's interest. Next slide. This slide I think just really emphasizes the importance of coming up with a coordinated service plan, whatever housing options and choices are available to the population, whether that's shelter, whether that's permanent supportive housing, SROs or scattered site or permanent, deeply affordable. Because what this shows is the number of individuals who have scored a certain amount on our assessment scale, they have a mental health score of one or more, assessment T Score of one or more incarceration history, and we see of the 395 individuals and households on the By Name List, we have a significant proportion of them scoring on those assessments. So, our strategy here is really around making sure there's coordinated services.

1:26:04.4 DD: And before I turn it over to Velma, I do want to just... This is not on the slide, but I do wanna cut out another important point that signifies our commitment to this population is that we are undergoing at the city level, a proposed reorganization of services, which will for the first time in our city create a department... A department head is a high-level position in the city that would report directly to me as the Health and Human Services chief. A department level position that would address the common factors and situations that impact populations that have been made vulnerable by the pandemic, and even years beyond that, made vulnerable overall through various disadvantages they faced over many years. So what that means practically is that there will be a coordinated effort to address issues of homelessness, incarceration, violence, mental health and trauma-informed care, all situated under a single organizational department. Now this isn't proposed, but I think I mentioned it because it is so really well-aligned with the coordinated approach that the federal partners and the state is bringing to the table on this. So Velma with that I'll turn it over to you to take over the next slide.

1:27:29.1 Velma George: Thank you Dr. Dalal. My name is Velma George and I'm the Coordinator for Homelessness with the City of New Haven. As we go forward, this plan that Dr. Dalal mentioned was really informed by the Federal COVID-19 Framework for Equity for Homelessness, and so that was really helpful in our planning of our five-year housing plan. So, as we went through the pandemic and also recognizing the eviction moratorium, we knew that there would be a rise in housing insecurity, un-sheltered homelessness, and continued shortage of deeply affordable housing. To that end we created this five-year plan. Within our five-year plan, our goal is to garner regional support with our stakeholders to create some kind of commitment for about 500 deeply affordable unit, and usually we make it a point to say deeply affordable, because we know that most of our clients subsist on... About \$700 a month income. And so it's pretty difficult to find a decent rent. And so we're looking to... Through this plan, we're looking to create deeply affordable housing option. To that end, in the city our planing department work, we work in concert with our planning department to create policies around deeply...

1:29:16.2 VG: Excuse me, around Accessory Dwelling Units, ADUs as an option for deeply affordable rent. And what a ADU could look like is possibly in a in-law apartment or an apartment over the garage, something that's a little smaller, non-traditional, but that would allow people to enjoy more affordable rent, so that was a key thing that our planning department was instrumental in bringing forth. Also our goal is to create at least 50 ADUs in the region, and these ADUs could look... We're looking at tiny house communities throughout our region. And the reason we're looking at regional is because within New Haven, we are experiencing a shortage of deeply affordable housing, plus we're pretty land-locked at this point, and not a whole lot of buildable lots available, and so we're gonna be looking to surrounding communities to work with us in that regard. We're also looking to expand the use of shared housing units for our clients, and one of the things that we found in shared housing units was not only that they were affordable, but shared housing also helped combat isolation among our individuals.

1:30:54.4 VG: We found in New Haven that there were lots of people that were housed and they would always hang out downtown on our green, and when looking into it further and talking with the clients, we realized that they were pretty lonely in their apartment that they had, and so they would come downtown to hang out with whoever they could, so that has created impetus for us in the shared housing market also. The other thing we're looking to do is expand permanent supportive housing option with 24 hour staffing and additional wrap-around services for our more acute clients. We're also looking to create single room occupancy units, also with wrap-around services for clients that are a little more independent. Next slide.

1:31:57.0 VG: In the meantime, as we look at accelerating the path to permanent housing, currently, we have allocated 1.2 million in CARES Act funds to rapidly re-house 200 households. We've also enhanced landlord engagement efforts by implementing landlord incentives such as mitigation funds and double security deposits as our friends in Indiana mentioned. We also host monthly landlord engagement meeting, and it's a way of recruiting new landlords and also equipping the landlords with tools such as helping them to navigate through city departments. Sometimes we have landlords that may be having problems with inspections or even with tax bills or whatever it is, and we basically try to provide them with opportunities to empower the landlords as well. In addition, we've created what we call Landlord Advisory Board, which is also comprised of some of our local landlords as a way of building relationship and a way of strategizing how as providers we best interface with landlords, and we have a very thriving group of landlords that have

really been invested in the process and have really helped us to up our game when it came to building new relationships with our other landlords.

1:33:55.1 VG: The other thing is we've implemented a navigation hub, it's not on the slide, but we've implemented navigation hubs in strategic places within our city and within these hubs what we do is we work to provide services to our unsheltered population, and in these hubs, we provide anything from showers, meals, apartment searches, getting connected to services, getting connected to case workers, even job training, job searches, all these different things, the unsheltered population could connect and receive services.

1:34:40.5 VG: Next slide. So in just closing just wanted to share that as part... When we began, we talked about this federally supported, state led, locally implemented initiative, we're currently exploring several options to utilize our American Rescue Plan fund, and some of the options that were... Well, there are three options that we've been exploring currently are, first one is acquiring a hotel for non-congregate shelter, with future conversion to a PSH, again with wrap-around services, because we've learned over this past 18 months that through our... In the hotels, we realized that the acuity of the clients that are in these hotels, in the hotel rooms that the level of services that they need to be able to be successful. And so whatever we do, we will definitely be including wrap-around services. The other option we are exploring is repurposing a decommissioned school or city-owned building to again convert into permanent supportive housing with additional wrap-around services. And at the end of the day, what we're looking to do is to leverage funds for the development of deeply affordable housing units with wrap-around services, because again, like most places, we have a shortage of affordable housing, and so we are committed as the city to create deeply affordable housing units for our clients. Thank you.

1:36:37.7 NS: Thank you so much friends and... Sorry. Thank you so much for a great presentation. And I just wanna close real quick, and unless... Did you all from Connecticut have more slides you needed to cover? Oh, I apologize, I thought we were on the last slide there. Please go ahead.

1:37:01.1 BE: Norm it's okay if you...

1:37:06.5 NS: No, please go ahead.

1:37:08.5 S12: Okay, so Norm, this is just a continuation on the theme of what Velma was talking about of, how FEMA is here to federally support the transition from non-congregate sheltering to permanent housing solutions and working with New Haven and the state of Connecticut. And those three sites that have been identified. So working with the agencies on providing those wrap-around services to those that are gonna be moved into those alternative sites once they're converted.

1:37:44.1 S12: Next slide, please. So this is just an illustration of some of those services that we can bring from the Federal family. Next slide please. So one for families and one for individuals, veterans, just some of the agencies that we've been working with and talking to. Next slide. Because in the end, we don't wanna do housing warehousing, we wanna bring housing, we don't wanna just have people sit in apartments, just like Velma and Dr. Dalal were talking about. We wanna bring... Reduce the vulnerability overall, knowing that there's maybe other pandemics and disasters coming down the road.

1:38:35.4 S12: Next slide, please. And this is gonna integrate with the long-term recovery process

that we have developed with the state of Connecticut with the other economic development and health and housing projects, so we're looking at the community and how these housing projects are gonna, in relation to those other projects and working with the region to [1:38:58.0] _____ committee, and in that regional approach that Velma was talking about, so it's not just in isolation, it's part of the economic strategy for the region as well as the state. So on that I'll close and allow any questions, so thank you. And these are just some of the resources. Thank you.

1:39:25.3 NS: Thank you so much. That was actually a perfect note to close on, I definitely appreciate that and very much appreciate and wanna echo the message of that we're in the business of housing and not just warehousing here, so... Thank you. I wanna just give a, just a great, tremendous amount of thanks to all our presenters, especially our community presenters today, and from Indianapolis and Connecticut, you guys are knocking it out of the park with your work, and we're just deeply appreciative, and thank you for sharing this with every other community so they can replicate some of your great ideas. And I also wanna thank our partners at FEMA for working with us on this webinar, but also working together on making sure non-congregate sheltering is as effective and transformative as possible. So thank you. And lastly, I wanna thank everyone who participated and attended the session today. If you have any follow-up questions, please feel free to reach out to us through the AAQ on HUD Exchange, or if you're interested in some technical assistance to help you...