

Title: California's Homelessness Crisis & Policy Response

Date: Sep 03, 2025 13:10:05

Short Summary:

California officials and advocates discussed state efforts, federal policy impacts, and new data tools for homelessness.

Long Summary:

California officials and partners discussed state-level strategies to combat homelessness, including the new SAFE task force. They addressed significant challenges from federal policies like HR1 and an executive order undermining California's Housing First approach. New data dashboards for the HELP Act, focusing on domestic violence survivors and unaccompanied women, were presented. Individuals with lived experience shared harsh realities, highlighting the criminalization of homelessness and advocating for systemic change and better funding allocation.

State Initiatives on Housing and Homelessness

- The Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) will be dissolved by July 1, 2026, to create a new, more effective agency for a coordinated, all-state approach to the housing and homelessness crisis.
- A new SAFE (State Action for Facilitation on Encampments) task force has been announced.
 - Led by CalOES in partnership with CalTrans, BCSH, and HHS.
 - Aims to strategically and urgently address encampments across the state in a dignified manner, using established best practices.

Impact of Federal Policy Changes

- **HR1 (Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act):**
 - Expected to have wide-ranging harmful impacts on public benefits like Medi-Cal and CalFresh.
 - A new work requirement is anticipated to create significant administrative burdens and lead to a loss of benefits for vulnerable populations.
 - Estimates suggest up to 3 million Californians could lose Medi-Cal and 300,000 could lose CalFresh access.
- **Executive Order on Homelessness:**
 - Titled "On Ending Crime and Disorder on American Streets," it directs federal partners to address visible homelessness.
 - The order signals a shift away from California's established Housing First and harm reduction models.
 - It currently only directs federal agencies to begin rulemaking, with no immediate action required from state or local entities. California is monitoring for future implications.

SAFE Task Force Discussion

- Council members expressed concerns about the task force's goals in a budget-constrained

environment where effective local programs are sunseting.

- There is a risk of placing an undue burden on local jurisdictions without providing new funding.
- Members urged the task force to build on existing, successful encampment projects rather than starting new initiatives.
- Key principles for success were highlighted:
 - **Funding and Time:** Effective encampment resolution requires significant financial resources and time; rushing the process undermines trust.
 - **Real Outcomes:** The focus should be on moving people into permanent housing, not just shuffling them to other locations or into the justice system.

Advisory and Lived Experience Reports

- **Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB):**
 - Reported that current encampment sweeps are often abrupt, punitive, and conducted without ensuring shelter options are available.
 - Personal belongings are frequently discarded, violating Cal ICH guidelines and causing re-traumatization.
 - Highlighted the "incarceration to homelessness pipeline," noting that incarceration increases the risk of homelessness by 10-13 times.
 - Criminalizing homelessness fuels this cycle and creates significant barriers to re-entry, housing, and employment.
- **Advisory Committee:**
 - Stressed the dire situation on the ground, with local agencies closing and services being rolled back.
 - Emphasized the need for the SAFE task force to lean on the expertise of people with on-the-ground experience.

Cal ICH Updates and Governance

- **Working Groups:**
 - Cal ICH has paused its five working groups (e.g., Youth, Racial Equity, Re-entry) to conduct a gaps analysis.
 - The goal is to reassess their purpose and structure to better align with council priorities and reduce duplication of efforts.
- **Council Charter Approval:**
 - The council voted to approve updates to its charter.
 - Key changes include establishing a single governance structure for the council and its advisory committee, clarifying the Executive Officer's accountability, and setting rules for designee participation at meetings.

HELP Act Data and Dashboards

- Cal ICH launched new public-facing dashboards to implement the HELP Act (SB-914), which focuses on survivors of domestic violence, their children, and unaccompanied women.
- **Key Findings:**
 - Outcomes for these populations are consistently worse than for the general homeless

population, with higher rates of returning to homelessness and lower rates of exiting to permanent housing.

- Survivors and unaccompanied women over 45 tend to access services for longer periods before finding permanent housing.

- Qualitative feedback revealed that shelters are often experienced as unsafe and re-traumatizing, and cross-system coordination is critically lacking.

- ****Call to Action:****

- Council departments are encouraged to use the new data to identify disparities, guide culturally responsive policy, and align program goals.

- A suggestion was made to add disability status to the data collection, as women with disabilities are disproportionately affected by domestic violence.

Transcriptions:

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:13:08

... coordinated, and we want to be able to make sure we are taking an all-state government approach to addressing our crisis of housing and homelessness. Um, so really excited about that work. This is the beginning of our process. The BCSH will officially dissolve on July 1st of 2026, so we have some time to work with this council and all of you, um, to make sure that we are, uh, creating, um, an agency that is responsive to our stakeholders, that is transparent, and frankly, that is much more effective and efficient in delivering services to the people that we, that we serve. So I'm, I'm-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:13:48

... Very excited to be leading on this effort, uh, in partnership with all of my departments, uh, and partners, uh, which include all of you. So thank you for your, for your leadership there. Um, the second announcement I wanted to make was about, um, the governor's announcement of the new SAFE task force, which is, uh, stands for the State Action for Facilitation on Encampments. Um, and this task force is really, I think, a representative of the urgency that we know exists in our communities when our brothers and sisters are experiencing, um, unsheltered homelessness and how we can-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:14:28

... use our best practices, the guidance of ICH, CalTrans, and others to really respond to our encampments in a dignified way, the way we know how, the California way. Um, so in partnership with, with, uh, CalOES, um, under Director Ward's leadership, CalTrans, BCSH, um, HHS, we are really trying to figure out how we can be strategic around en- addressing, uh, encampments across the state and making sure that, um, we are doing that, um, as quickly and urgently as possible, but knowing the best practices that we need to apply.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:15:08

... to, to resolving encampments across the state. So, just wanted to take a moment to acknowledge that. The work is just beginning. Um, uh, Cal OES is really sort of the organizing

partner for how we are coming together, uh, in partnership with, with all of us. So, uh, we're ready to roll our sleeves up. I just want to thank Megan for her leadership in keeping the council apprised to what's going on and really leaning in to supporting, um, the taskforce and standing up the work. Um, so thank you more than anything, but those are the two updates I wanted to share with the council. And again, just looking forward to just-

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:15:52

To today's conversation, I'll turn it over to Corinne.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:15:57

Hi folks, Corrin Buchanan standing in for Secretary Johnson today and I'm happy to come back because I actually used to be on the pre-existing housing and homeless... Housing? What did it use to be? HCF, the Housing Coordinating and Financing Council which I used to be a member of. So I'm really happy to be back and have long worked closely with this team. So just a couple updates. First of all I wanted to acknowledge Frank Caplan who was here last time. I hope some of you met him but he is our new Deputy Secretary for Policy and Strategic Planning at CalHHS and working closely with-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:16:37

Hi, folks. Corrin Buchanan standing in for Secretary Johnson today, and I'm happy to come back because I actually used to be on the, the preexisting, um, Housing and Homeless and... Housing? What, what did it used to be? HCF see the housing with many of you in our work to, um, end and address homelessness. So thanks, Brian, for being here virtually. Um, one update I wanted to share, um, is around, uh, the impacts of HR1 or what is often referred to as Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which was signed into law on, uh, July 4th. And one of...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:16:47

... just highlight some of those- how th- that bill, um, will i- impact, um, many vulnerable populations, including people experiencing homelessness here in California. So, um, HR 1 has really quite harmful and wide-ranging impacts on public benefits here in California, namely, um, Medi-Cal and, uh, CalFresh. Um, and the policy consequences for people experiencing homelessness are- are going to be significant because these are populations that already experience barriers to accessing these programs. As I mentioned, the policy changes are wide ranging. One I'll highlight here is a new requirement, um, for work requirements for both programs. Um, and as you can imagine...

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:17:05

To today's conversation, I'll turn it over to Corrin.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:17:27

And, um, what is cha- one of the big challenges related to work requirements is going to be the ability to document, um, whether someone is engaging in educational opportunities, volunteering, or work. Um, and we, we understand that, um, based on experiences in other

states, oftentimes what this does is... Policies like this don't lead to better employment outcomes, but they do lead to, um, significant administrative burden and loss of benefits for populations, especially those who may, um, have a challenge in completing all of these new administrative requirements. So, we're gonna have a lot of work cut out for us in terms of trying to help, um, our populations c- maintain their access...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:18:08

... to benefits. Um, our Department of Healthcare Services, um, Director Basta's department estimates we may have as many as three million Californians who lose access, and our Department of Social Services is estimating as many as 300,000 Californians who could lose access th- uh, to MediCal and CalPERS respectively. So we have a lot of work to do, um, and I- I'm really proud of the- the way the departments have come together. We are working closely with our county partners, with providers, with our managed care plans, um, with our advocate community, with um, you all, with people with lived expertise, and our- um, our beneficiaries themselves to try to figure out what we can do in California to mitigate the impacts and the-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:18:47

... and we look forward to inviting your input and continue to keep you apprised, um, of this work ahead. The other thing I wanted to highlight, uh, second thing is, um, I think many of you have been tracking Trump's, um, executive order that, uh, addresses homelessness, which is called On Ending Crime and Disorder on American Streets. Um, so the inflammatory language doesn't end with the title, um, but continues throughout the executive order, and it directs federal partners, um, to take actions to address, uh, visible homelessness, um, shifts away from housing first and harm reduction, and, um, pushes for institutionalization.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:19:27

So, um, there is-- where I want-- what I-- what the message-- a couple of messages I want to share today. And the first one is, um, that this executive order, of course, flies in the face of California's best practices, which are leading to really fantastic results in our community. Um, we've been really leading the way and showing how you can bend the growth curve on increases in homelessness here in California because of our state's, um, commitment in law to Housing First, um, and our strong, uh, harm reduction-related programs that we administer across many of the departments who are represented here today. Um, I want you all to know-- so that's the first thing, uh, what we've been doing here in California has been showing great promise. Second thing, I want to make sure that people are-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:20:06

... tracking is that this executive order doesn't direct, um, any non-federal actors to take any immediate action. So, um, it doesn't direct us as state entities to take any actions at this point. It does not direct, um, non-profits or their providers. So we're look- looking out for the chilling effect right now. But right now, it just directs federal, um, actors to begin making rulemaking, guidance, grant changes, and that is what we are monitoring closely, um, to understand the implications of any future actions which may take place. And, um, we'll share more about how,

how California might respond to any future actions. Um, and, uh, I wanna also highlight...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:20:46

... that many of the, uh, the- the things that we administer here in California that have been a part of helping us move the needle are not federally funded. And just one example of that is, uh, Prop 1, uh, which made changes to the MHSA, which is now the Behavioral Health Services Act, um, which is an example of one of the many programs that are administered with state funding. And then just one quick note, um, uh, to follow up on what Secretary Moss shared around the Safe Tasks Force is just to share that I think one of the things that, um, I keep turning to as we've been having these discussions... And I happen to just be sitting next to Dr. Ghoshal. Um, a- the one thing I've been turning to as we've, um, been engaged in this- this new task force is there really...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:21:27

... wonderful UCSF, um, toolkit and guide on encampment resolutions. So I feel so lucky, um, to have some great thinkers about how we do this work, um, with dignity and, um, using best practices. So thanks to UCSF for making that available. Um, if you haven't seen it yet, it's a really good toolkit. It's like t- it's just a really, um, didactic and helpful tool- toolkit. Um, wanna also just highlight the importance of, of coordination with locals, which we'll be doing, um, in an arm's length kind of way across the administration as we roll out this task force. Um, and want to, to highlight, um, the importance of assessing for needs of individuals who are impacted.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 13:22:06

... including, um, partnering with our locals to assess for unmet, um, physical health and behavioral health needs, um, social services needs. So we look forward to working together to, to, um, look towards long term the, um, keeping our eye on the prize of long term housing stability and paths to recovery for the individuals who are, um, uh, to be impacted by these, um, these efforts. And, and, uh, so with that, I will turn it over to Mayor Marshall. Thanks.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:22:37

Council member Lewis-

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:22:39

Thank you for the updates, and, um-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:22:44

The state's commitment to doing what we know works, right, and is, um, person-centered, I'll say it that way. Uh, regarding the Safe Task Force, I think, you know, there's been some amazing work done across the state over the last particular three to five years related to, um, moving people indoors and ultimately into permanent housing, including, um, income resolution.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:23:07

... et cetera. But, if- if possible, can you say a little bit more about what is, what the task force is

actually meant to accomplish? I did see the email that came from Megan because as I'm thinking about all of the great work, many of the ERF programs that were affected, the money, they're- they're sunseting, um, right now or in the next, uh, nine months and there's no additional funding. There's reduction in federal, state, and local resources to do a lot of that work, so I'm just really curious... Well, I'm- I'm optimistically cautious that you- there will be undue burden on local jurisdictions to do things that they no longer have funding to do. Um, and also just curious to know, like, what is-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:23:46

... the actual intended outcome and output given the realities of the funding landscape including again the reduction or, uh, non-renewal of some of the most effective encampment-related, um, special projects in the state.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:24:31

...state. And so, part of our commitment, uh, at BCSH and ICH is to understand what the needs are, I think Corrin said this explicitly, that the locals have relative to the partnership with the state in resolving encampments that are identified in partnership with CalTrans. So, I think this feels both iterative and a partnership with our local partners to make sure that, you know, w- we understand that we are in a budget constrained environment, and yet we want to make sure that we are leveraging our resources the best we can to serve the, the folks who are most in need.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:25:05

And so all that to say to be determined, and we intend to keep this council and others up-to-date as the work unfolds. But we literally just, uh, kicked off the taskforce this week. So, um, more, (laughs) more to come.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:25:23

One of the oth— only other thing I'll say is that I hope that one of the early assessments done by the task force is to not continue to start and stop new projects, um, 'cause we understand that—the need to have time-limited funding, but we know some of the encampment work has done a lot of great work and I'm really...

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:25:45

... initiatives to do a different version or different iteration. So I hope that that's part of the early assessment of the taskforce. Like, what has worked? Is there a way to make sure we don't just start something else new and different and have to stand up infrastructure for a whole new type of sys- um, and that we can build on or continue and expand on funding that otherwise will have gone away, 'cause I think that's one of the challenges as we try to do this work. We just keep trying, trying new things and not committing to sustaining the things that have worked from the pilots four years ago.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:26:26

I'll share the goal of bringing people indoors. Nobody, including the people outdoors, wanna be

outdoors, and it is absolutely a crisis and a shame. I think we should just be careful about a few things, and one is obviously doing this well takes money, and there's no shortcut around that. And I would say the other thing it takes is time, and the, the, one of the things that made me a little nervous was some, like, time things on it. Because what we have learned as best practice is that you can't do this well if you are under time pressure, because we have destroyed a lot of trust with the people living outstore, outdoors, and that trust can be rebuilt. But if you-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:27:05

... try to put some external clock on it, you really run the risk of failure and obviously what I think none of us wanna see is people move from Caltrain, state land, to city or county land. That would not be a success-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:27:32

... so I hope that we're also tracking metrics that we're not filling our jails, we're not moving people from one place to the other, and that we're taking advantage of all the learning that we've done with the ERF plans. Like, some of it- some of it worked better than others, and so we should lean into what worked better. Um, but I would say this can be done. It takes money, it takes best practice, and it takes time, and it takes a commitment to looking at real outcomes.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:27:45

... real outcomes here that people are indoors and on a path to permanency, and that the people are not in jail, and that people are not just shuffled around. And I think California can do this, but I think we just need to, like, have that type of mind as we do this.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:28:04

Thank you for that discussion, Council members, um, and good afternoon. Let me advance the slides. Um, I'm Meagan Marshall, the Executive Officer for Cal ICH, and I want to begin by acknowledging a gaping hole on the Cal ICH team today. We are absent a fantastic, uh, facilitator and thought partner in Cody Zeger, who I think may be-- uh, may have made an appearance online. But I just want to acknowledge that Cody has, uh, accepted and I think officially begun a new position, um... And Dr. Kushel's nodding her head yes, so I think that means he's there, um, but in Alameda County. So he is working with a fantastic team there, um, with Jonathan Russel and folks.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:28:45

And doing the fun stuff and figuring out how to use \$1.4 billion in local revenue to address, um, uh, homelessness in that community. So I just want to, uh, acknowledge Cody, all of the fantastic things he's accomplished on behalf of Cal ICH and very much look forward to continuing to see the good things that he accomplishes in, in, uh, in county partnership. But, uh, all that to say, uh, we are missing Cody Zeger, the fantastic facilitator. And so you all have Megan Marshall, uh, and, and also a fantastic team behind me, but just wanted to acknowledge, bear with us as we're, we're sort of getting our sea legs without our, our emcee. So, um...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:29:24

Just on my list of updates is that as the council is aware, our authorizing statute not only establishes this body and the advisory committee, but also allows for the creation of working groups or sub-entities. Um, our three-year action plan identifies five working groups specifically, and those include the state funding and program working group, the youth and young adult working group, the transition and re-entry working group, the racial equity working group, and the yet to be established employment working group. Um, over time, the scope of these groups has expanded a little bit beyond, uh, their original intention, and so we're taking a step back, um, and reassessing the purpose-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:30:04

... The structure and to ensure that there's alignment with the council's priorities. Uh, so to that end, we are pausing the working groups, uh, and conducting a gaps analysis, uh, and will return to the council in December with recommendations on areas of focus that we can, uh, lean into or we feel perhaps could be accomplished by, um, by establishing a working group or re-upping a working group that has already existed, um, in some instances for, for multiple years. So, um, part of that gaps analysis, um, is doing sort of a lay of the land. What exists in state partnerships now? Uh, so for example, I've...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:30:44

... personally just become aware of a youth empowerment commission, uh, and that entity is tasked with, among its priorities, is tasked with addressing youth homelessness. Uh, and so would like to have conversations with those folks. We have our first introductory meeting, I think it's this Friday, um, to sort of lean in, um, and lean on one another to see what we can accomplish in reducing silos and de-duplicating efforts. So, um, do wanna note that our recommendations in December may include asking council members to designate staff resources and support, uh, to ensure that we're meeting the full scope, um, and, and possibility of stakeholder...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:31:24

... engagement. So, looking forward to coming back to you all in December with that gaps analysis and recommendations. Um, non-state members of the working groups have already been invited to, uh, discussion sessions to share with me their perspectives, concerns, and ideas about the continuation or the, the pause of these working groups. So we're looking forward to having that conversation with folks in October, and then returning to you all in December. Before I move on, any questions about the working groups? I know many of you have had staff who participated, so I do just wanna take a, a quick pause.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:32:04

Next on my update-- so in your packets, uh, you will find the comprehensive quarterly department and agency update document. You all participate in those updates as well. Uh, I just want to highlight a few updates from Cal ICH specifically and this is more in the realm of, of comms and, uh, communication strategies uplifting all of our commitments to serving

Californians. Um, we've established months of acknowledgments, uh, and hope you will join us in amplifying these messages. I do want to highlight, for example, we have October as, uh, d-designated as Bullying Prevention Month and we're uplifting communities that are ensuring homelessness resources are equitably-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:32:44

...distributed and rooted in belonging, and trying to, to address sort of the, the NIMBYism that, that occurs in, in many parts of California.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:32:53

All right, um, so before moving to our next item, just a-another reminder that we are moving towards a standardized agenda for these council meetings, so, uh, moving forward consistently, you can always expect to hear, uh, directly from our advisory committee co-chairs or members of the Lived Experience Advisory Board and, uh, from standing business items that reflect our council priorities. So, as I introduce this next item, I want to underscore that the advisory committee is your-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:33:24

... Advisory Committee. Uh, its purpose is to inform and support the work of this council, and a special thank you to the council members who participated in the recruitment efforts, uh, for this new advisory committee. So with that, please join me in warmly welcoming your Advisory Committee co-chairs, Alex Basoski from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and Roxann Wilson, Monterey County's Director of Homeless Services. As co-chairs, we're very excited to hear from you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:34:09

Good afternoon, everybody. As mentioned, my name is Roxanne Wilson and I am the County of Monterey's Homeless Services Director. Um, the first one, so we're treading new waters over there in Monterey County, I'm ready.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:34:24

From and, and continue to learn from. Um, so appreciate the opportunity, uh, to, to connect with you all o- on a regular basis. Um, just, just to talk a little bit about the formation of th- this next iteration of the advisory council. Um, so as you all know, the role of the advisory council is to ensure that the work of this c-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:35:52

...council is effective and informed by experts across the field of homelessness. Um, the initial advisory council formed a little over two years ago. Um, and there was inclusion at that time of a number of key roles designated by statute, including people with lived experience of homelessness. Um, but this body here, the, the council requested additional roles to make sure that the advisory committee was even more inclusive, even more reflective of the breadth of folks experiencing homelessness and the breadth of folks working on homelessness, including,

uh, folks from tribal communities, um, folks from, um...

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:32

... communities. Um, so really want to commend you all on-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:38

I like this chair too, by the way. I don't know how to do that.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:38

... kind of taking that step to, to expand the advisory committee and ensure that those voices were at the table. Um, additionally, um, those of us that were on the, that, that first iteration of the advisory council, um, myself ...

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:51

Yeah, sorry.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:53

Um, the only problem with this-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:57

Oh.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:58

It comes through easily, and I tried to sew it up a little-

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:36:58

... is this button.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:03

... to make the hole smaller but it can come out.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:07

Sorry, that's being taped live.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:09

If we can make that a little bit less likely then I'd wear them.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:11

Yeah, I don't know how to do that.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:12

... I don't either so I, I-

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:15

I'm gonna wear 'em. I'm gonna take these.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:17

See, the other ones have the big pockets that sorta stick way out like you got wings. (laughs)

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:27

Yeah, but, but their buckles, like, would be thumb-in.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:31

Okay, all right. No, that's fine.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:32

... Roxanne and myself have the privilege of being those first advisory committee co-chairs. So there's a lot that we're really excited to dig into in the coming months. Um, on the advisory committee, we're excited to dig into the action plan and talk more about how do we implement the action plan and, and how do we stay committed to the goals of this action plan even as external forces, um, which have been averted to, uh, change? Uh, I think another piece that we're really eager to dig into, um, as mentioned by, uh, Deputy Secretary Gannon is how does California respond to and approach federal changes coming down the pike, right? This is a state that-

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:33

I'm gonna take all three.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:37

Oh, okay.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:38

Okay?

[A] Sep 03, 2025 13:37:38

All right.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:38:12

You know, has a long way to go on homelessness, but we also need to take stock of what has worked well here in California, right. Uh, through HAP alone, we've seen 83,000 permanent housing placements since the beginning of 2023. Um, between 2023 and 2024, we saw homelessness rise eight times faster outside of California than it did within California. That's because of the resources that the state has devoted, that's because of that commitment, right, to a Housing First approach. Um, so, you know, I don't think it's any secret that we'll see strong pressures coming from the federal government, uh, to change that approach, uh, to adopt a different approaches. So-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:38:52

You know, we're eager at the advisory council to talk about how do we continue to, to stay the course, stick with what is working? What are the areas where maybe we bend a little bit? What are the areas where we maneuver all in service, uh, of the end goal, of course, of, of ensuring there are adequate services and housing for folks experiencing homelessness. Um, and then I will hand the baton over to Roxanne to take us home.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:39:25

Thank you. Um, it's important for me to share with you guys that we are not okay on the ground, and it is important for you to hear directly that-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:39:32

While we as a council, I mean, I'm sorry, as a committee and also all of the different committees we serve on a local level, we truly believe in accountability. We truly believe in making sure that we are doing what the state is paying us to do, but we are asking for your consideration of all of the changes that are happening locally. Agencies are closing, services are rolling back. It is, like, detrimental on what's happening on the ground. So, I do hope that this relationship between the council and the committee grows and flourishes, and also just know that we are just a phone call or Zoom call away.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:40:12

And when, when you're implementing the, uh, task force, please lean into the expertise of the people who are on the ground. As mentioned, there are a lot of successful encampment resolution grants. I have a few. Um, so we have some experience. We know what works, what doesn't work. We know exactly how it impacts people, and, um, I do look forward to working with you, um, for this next year. Thank you.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:40:39

Thank you, advisory committee co-chairs. I appreciate that. And, and thank you, Roxanne, for that, that glimpse into reality. Um, you know, personally, um, I look forward to, to supporting the, the cities but the counties as well who we will certainly be calling on, um, a- as it relates to our work on the safe task force, um, but I appreciate your, your words. Thank you.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:06

And with that, we will now hear from, um... We refer to them in Cal ICH as supports, but they operate very similar, uh, to, to the co-chair model that we have established in the council, as well as for the advisory committee, um, but are two supports from our Lived Experience Advisory Board. Um, and they are both virtual, so if somebody can help me ensure that they are on-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:32

... camera and ready to go. (microphone shuffles)

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:36

Yeah, we're on camera.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:37

Great, fantastic. Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:38

Is it okay to start, Megan?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:42

You're good, Melanie. Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:41:43

You're welcome. Members of the council, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Melanie Robledo, and I'm joined by my peer and fellow LEAP support, Monique Guerra. Both of us are proud to serve on the inaugural Lived Experience Advisory Board, also known as LEAB, established in 2023.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:42:11

- domestic violence. Beyond that role, Monique and I also serve as lead supports, working together to create clear pathways of communication between the advisory committee and the league. As part of this collaboration, the advisory committee will now include two designated lead seats, ensuring that lived experience is represented in decision-making. In addition, as Megan mentioned, um, at each council meeting, you will hear directly from the lead supports, so you have an on-the-ground view of how policy is impacting the very people we are here to serve. With that, I'd now like to turn it over to Monique to share some of the experiences of our peers elected during our most recent meeting a few weeks ago.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:42:55

Hello, everyone and council members. Hope everyone can hear me well. (clears throat) As one of the lead supports, I'm here to bring forward serious concerns raised by members who are witnessing firsthand the harmful effects of current homelessness response practices in their communities. Carissa, one of our members, has emphasized the troubling way encampment removals are being handled. Decisions are often made abruptly, with no planning or coordination, and critically, without ensuring that there are shelter options available for those being displaced. With shelters already at capacity, people are left with nowhere to go. Even more distressing is the mishandling of personal belongings during these sweeps. People's possessions are frequently discarded rather than stored, in direct violation of Cal ICH's guidelines that call for humane treatment. What we are seeing is not thoughtful responses to homelessness, but rather a reactive and punitive approach that criminalizes people simply for surviving outdoors. Mary has shared equal serious concern around relocation and enforcement and how that's being carried out. She describes a pattern of aggressive, even violent raids led

by code enforcement, where individuals are not only displaced but treated without dignity or respect. These interactions are often traumatic and escalate tensions rather than offering any form of constructive support. According to best practices and basic human decency, if relocation is to occur, individuals must often have appropriate shelter and services. That is a critical step, step (clears throat) , inconsistently being overlooked. Building on these experiences, Pixie adds that these encampment clearings are not only harmful but also extremely costly and largely ineffective. There is little to no oversight to ensure these actions are carried out ethically or in alignment with policy guidelines. What's missing from these decisions is the integration of lived experience alongside data. When we fail to include the voices of those directly impacted, we create policies that harm rather than help. Before I pass it to Melanie, I ask that you truly reflect-

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:44:53

What if it were you, or someone you love surviving on the streets, holding onto a few personal items and the hope of a better future? Most of us would be outraged if someone came and threw away everything in our home, yet this is exactly what happens to unhoused people during sweeps. No warnings, no storage, no dignity. I've watched my parents struggle for decades, and I've held so much faith in the systems of care, believing they were built to help. But the faith has often been met with disappointment. Picture a mother in an encampment holding onto three photos of her children, her only anchor to hope finally making progress with a consistent, supportive case worker. Then a sweep happens. She's gone. So are her belongings. So is the hope she fought for.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 13:45:43

Guidance alone is not enough. We need real investments in affordable, accessible housing. We need oversight and we need to stop punishing people for being poor. This is not morally correct to create systems that measure if you deserve housing and supportive services. As leaders, you all have power to act now. With that, I'll pass it over to Melany to continue to speak on criminalization, how it intersects with incarceration. Thank you, Melany. Thank you, council.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:46:14

Thank you, Monique. California's vision is to make homelessness rare one time and brief. I know we can all agree on that. But criminalizing homelessness drives us in the opposite direction. National research shows that people who experience incarceration are 10 times more likely to become homeless. And for those who cycle in and out of jails, the risk rises to 13 times. Every year, nearly nine million people turn through the US jail systems. Many arrested for low-level offenses such as trespassing. Acts not tied to violence, but to having nowhere else to go. And when released, they are sent right back into the very circumstances that drove their arrest to begin with. Stable housing is one of the strongest predictors of reduced recidivism, improved public safety, and better health outcomes. Yet our policies are creating barriers instead of bridges. Picture this experience, an individual walks out of jail with nothing. Sometimes, as I did, in a black paper suit and shoes without laces, criminalized simply for the circumstances of being unhoused. They are consumed with the feeling that they must find housing immediately to avoid a violation. But shelters are full. Transportation to a local office is

out of reach, and what floods them is not opportunity, but fear. How will I survive tonight? And if I do survive, I am then met with the 40,000 collateral consequences of conviction. Legal barriers that make it difficult to secure employment, reunite with family and children, overcome the stigma of a criminal record, navigate discriminatory practices, or even access assistant programs. All of this while facing the crushing cost of housing and a lack of affordable options. By criminalizing homelessness, we're not solving the crisis, we're extending it. Fueling the very incarceration to homelessness pipeline we claim we want to end. In fact, to Monique's point about spending, California's current proposed budget allocates \$13.9 billion to corrections, prisons. Which is more than 10 times the annual budget for homelessness. The criminalization of homelessness doesn't just harm individuals. It also directly impacts human service agencies, including continuums of care. Under current HUD definitions, after just 90 days of incarceration, a person loses their chronic homelessness status and is technically considered stably housed. This creates a false narrative in our data, undermines the a-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:48:53

... accuracy of how homelessness is measured, and ultimately jeopardizes resources and services for those in need. Together, our voices reflect an urgent call for change. The current practices are not working. They're re-traumatizing, they're costly, and they're often unlawful. LEAD members are not just asking to be heard, but to see their insight translated into action, accountability, and compassion in state-level decision-making. Thank you, Councilmembers, for your time and for this space. We know that we're better when we build together.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:49:32

Thank you for the work and thank you for your time, Melanie and Monique. Um, just for the, the sake of the Council, want to remind, uh, you all that you have access to, uh, the LEAB. Uh, we have a very sophisticated, I'll call it, request process where if you have an initiative, a policy or project, um, that you would like, and we would encourage you to seek, um, the, the expertise of our Lived Experience Advisory Board, um, there's a way for you to connect directly with us and, and for that, that proposal to be put in for, uh, put forward to the LEAB, um, including, uh, just trying to highlight quickly off the top of my head, I think we've had Department of Social Services who have presented changes to Housing Support Program as an example for you all. Like, so that was, that was a significant policy change that CDSS was considering. They, they, they brought that policy recommendation to the Lived Experience Advisory Board, they provided feedback. So just wanting to, again, encourage, uh, us to, to work outside of our, our, our departments or what is immediately available perhaps within agency structure, and as a reminder of this, uh, as I said, the advisory committee is your advisory committee. The Lived Experience Advisory Board is also your Lived Experience Advisory Board, so please connect with us on, on those requests. But, um, Melanie and Monique, thank you both so much. Um, Giselle, I'll ask you to put the presentation back up so I don't inadvertently mess with the screen. So, Ziegler. Oh, those slides are not advancing.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:51:30

Thank you. All right, council members, so next on the agenda, we'll, uh, we'll review the council

charter. As this is- this is an action item, we will open up for public comment at the end of this presentation and request that a council motion to approve the charter. Um, updates were reviewed with council members who participated in their briefing ahead of this meeting and it was included as part of your briefing materials. The charter establishes the council and advisory committee governance structure, defines membership, um, as is- as is required by statute and lays out how we conduct business in alignment with those statutory requirements. So today, we'll review key updates that require council adoption. Uh, each update is presented on one slide with the goal, uh, of the change on- on one portion and the updated charter language on the- the- the other. All right. So apologies for the amount of text on this, uh, this particular slide, but, um, as we review the changes, just wanna remind the council that there are portions of the charter that are established in statute and cannot be changed. Um, our enabling statute establishes, uh, what you see there listed, but they include our goals, the council as a public body, the advisory committee, requires the council to engage with the advisory committee a minimum of twice per year, also establishes core membership for the advisory committee. The statute also specifies council membership at the cabinet secretary and department director level with the exception of the flexi-flexible appointments that are listed here, um, but they include a senate committee appointment, a speaker of the assembly appointment, a representative from the State Department of Education, as well as higher education.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:53:37

Oh, no. That's not what I wanted to happen. Cody Zeger, I'll say it again, should have stood three feet away from the computer to avoid this very thing from happening. Slide 16. Thank you, Giselle. I'll stand three and a half feet away. All right. So the- the first recommended update includes, uh, or really again, grounding ourselves in the goal here, the goal of this particular update, um, is to establish regular and meaningful connection with the advisory committee, which is a body of experts established in statute. Um, so the updated language, uh, is included here, and oh boy, this is gonna be fun. Okay.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:54:29

Confident. All right. So the updated language is in Article Four, and again, council members, this is in your packet, uh, but it, uh, allows for the co-chairs of our council, uh, so again, this is Secretary Moss and Secretary Johnson, uh, and their ability to appoint two members, uh, to the ad- of the advisory committee to serve in one-year term as co-chairs to the advisory committee. Um, it also, uh, sort of memorializes that the roles of expertise voted on by the council can be changed through a proposal and a vote. So for those of you who were on our council in March, you remember, we had a, we had a presentation to you all with recommendations to expand areas of, of certain expertise on our advisory committee. We wanted to memorialize that process in the charter, which is the update that you see there. The second, uh, recommendation for adoption is, uh, with the goal of establishing consistency and clarity across the council advisory committee and any sub-entity that is created. Um, the updated language is in Article Five in your pocket. Um, I will not read verbatim what is written here, but, uh, the intention of this is to establish the charter as the governance structure for both the council and the advisory committee. Previously, the advisory committee had an independent charter, and that made

governance very challenging. And so wanted... Because it is the advisory committee to the council, wanted to have one governance structure in place. Um, s- and we're noting here that when we use the term bodies in the charter, we're referring collectively to the council and the advisory committee, and other... Uh, unless otherwise specified, the provisions of the charter apply, uh, to all meeting requirements, including public meetings, quorum voting, participation, and responsibilities. The goal of the next change is to strengthen accountability by making the executive officer explicitly responsible for ensuring the charter is implemented and followed across all bodies. So, uh, this change, the updated language is in Article Six of your packet and says, essentially, I will ensure that we are all following the rules of, of public meeting requirements.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:56:43

The goal of the next change is to comply with the statutory intent of having cabinet level secretaries and department directors guiding the state's work to prevent and end homelessness. This is the most significant update, uh, in, it is in Article VII of your, of your packet, but you, uh, council members who are unable to attend a meeting may send a designee to attend council meetings in their place. But we have established, uh, the appropriate level of designation. So this designation must be added, deputy director, assistant director, or equivalent executive level official authorized to speak and discuss topics on the member's behalf. Um, this, the second bullet here under participation has always been true, but we're memorializing it here. Designees may participate in discussions, but do not count towards quorum and may not vote in action items. Um, staff below the executive level can, are more than welcome... We have many here in the room with us today... are more than welcome to join us in person for the meeting, but cannot participate in deliberations on behalf of their department director, or our council member rather. The same is true for the advisory committee. The only caveat here is that we have designations on the advisory committee for individuals with certain areas of expertise, and then we have entities that are appointed. So an example, uh, is we have a managed care plan that's represented on our advisory committee. That managed care plan can send anybody within their team to represent their managed care plan, but a person with lived experience of gender-based violence could not have somebody speak to their personal experience of violence. And with that, I will open it up for council member discussions before I pass it to Giselle to open for public comment.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:58:39

Hearing none, I will pass it to Giselle to open for public comment.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:58:43

All right. (clears throat) Since this is an action item that will result in a vote, we will now open up to public comment. Please speak, please keep comments to the council charter only. If your comment is not related to this agenda item, there will be time for public comment at the end of the meeting. If you're connected through Zoom, select the raise hand icon. For those joining us by phone, please press star nine to indicate you'd like to comment, and if you're joining us in person, please raise your hand if you have a comment.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:59:15

I'm seeing no comments. Uh, would anyone like to motion to approve the council charter? Thank you. Is there a second? Thank you. All right, uh, we have a motion to adopt. We will be voting through raised hands. The category will be as followed. Yes, no, and abstain. For those voting yes, please raise your hands. Thank you. For those voting no, please raise your hands. For, uh, those abstaining, please

[D] Sep 03, 2025 13:59:48

raise your hands. Thank you. The motion passes, the council charter is approved. I will now pass it to Megan for the next agenda item.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 13:59:56

Thank you, Giselle, and thank you, council members. And in the, uh, the, the memory of Cody Zeiger, I will say now is my favorite time to, uh, this is my favorite thing to do, which is to pass it to somebody else to speak. Uh, secretary, if you wouldn't, uh, if you wouldn't mind introducing our next item, if I can advance the slides.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:00:44

All right, this is gonna be our art data section of standing business.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:00:51

Yes, thank you, Meghan, and, um, thank you Council for that previous vote. I think it's been really helpful to, um, get all of our policies and practices aligned with our statutory requirements. Just feels clean, it feels, um, clear what our roles are, what our responsibilities are, so thank you for- for your leadership there and- and staff for organizing us in that way. Um, so I just wanted to introduce, uh, this item because I am a little bit of a data nerd or something, (laughs) um, but to me, what the council's biggest asset is, is our ability to, uh, gather data from our local jurisdictions, coordinate that data and use the information to improve the outcomes of our programs and practices. So to me, it's not just, you know, we heard in our earlier discussion how important and Dr. Kushel, thank you for sort of those guiding principles for how we need to be thinking about encampment resolution, but it's not just about data points. It's about how do we use data to make sure that our resources, our programs and our policies are doing what they say they need to do. And I've just been so pleased with the council's focus and, um, attention to our data and research because it really, to me, is how it guides all of state government and how we're doing, um, our work on housing and homelessness. And so really excited, um, to-

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:02:49

... to people served, we see that in our action plan. And so I'm just really thrilled, um, to, to, to get a preview and, and have the council see, uh, the new dashboards that the team has been working on, but most importantly, how do we translate this data into, um, not just knowing the information but doing things differently informed by the data. So just wanted to introduce, uh, Sydney, our Director of Research and Data. Thanks, Sydney.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:03:45

Thank you, Secretary. We have a data double feature today, so first I have a quick preview of updates that we made to the quarterly data report since our last council meeting, and then we'll get to the dashboard that the Secretary was speaking about. Uh, before talking about the data report, I wanted to highlight the excellent work of our staff members, Molly Miller and Emery Rysnider, on the development of the report. You'll see it was included in your, uh, materials that there have been significant expansions of the report since our last council meeting based on all of your feedback. Uh, the report now includes, um, breakdowns by race and ethnicity, age group and household composition, and disability, chronic homelessness, and veteran status for all of the charts, uh, in the report, including for the action plan goals, and I'll share an example of that in a minute, as well as more detailed project types for the AB977 projects. So we now have data separated for prevention, permanent housing, interim housing, street outreach, day shelter, coordinated entry, and services-only projects. Um, so this is the, the new and improved version since what you saw last council meeting.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:04:36

So here's an example from action plan goal one, which is helping more people leave unsheltered homelessness. The data now includes all of these disaggregations as comparison to all people experiencing homelessness while accessing services in California. We hope that this approach assists council members in identifying disparities between groups in the general populations, exploring barriers that need to be addressed for certain groups in our work, as well as highlighting promising practices that could be scaled or adapted. Um, as you'll see here for an example, veterans have the highest rates of exits from unsheltered homelessness. This suggests that programs serving veterans may offer effective strategies that could be applied to other populations. We have the same chart for each of the action plan goals that are calculated using the ECIS data, but we'll only show this one for the sake of time today. We also have an example of the new age and household categories, uh, that were discussed at the last council meeting. So this shows exit destinations for our AB977 projects, which is a subset of the state-funded homelessness investments, and you'll see the percentage of people in each household who exited to permanent destinations, homelessness temporary destinations, institutional destinations, as well as unknown destinations. You'll see, we see that families, uh, are more likely to exit to permanent housing than individuals not in families. That would include housing both inside and outside of the homelessness response system. We also see that individuals of all age groups are more likely to exit back to homelessness from our state-funded programs than to permanent destinations, which highlights the need for the important work of this council, and in implementing the action plan to help more people move into housing.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:06:43

The full report that was sent to council members is also posted to Cal ICH's website for any members of the public or others who are viewing and would like to see this data. I will pause here for questions before we switch to talking about the-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:06:47

... dashboards. Still stuck with me, uh, for a second? Second item, I'm also here to share an update on Cal ICH's implementation of the HELP Act, also known as SB-914, and to demonstrate new dashboards that have been developed to measure progress towards preventing and ending homelessness for survivors of domestic violence, their children, and unaccompanied women. Also wanted to highlight the excellent work of Tina Del Carpio, Molly Miller, and Jing Li on the development of these dashboards, alongside our colleagues Gwen Beebe and Grant Drode from ICF.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:07:32

Molly is here with us today, who worked on both the council report and 914 to assist with the demonstration. This presentation includes content related to experiences of survivors of domestic violence, which may bring up strong emotions or difficult memories. We encourage all listeners to care for their wellbeing in whatever way feels appropriate, which may include stepping away for a moment or taking a break at any time. We thank you for approaching this topic with care and sensitivity.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:08:10

In 2024, over 74,000 survivors of domestic violence, 24,000 children of survivors, and 98,000 women not accompanied by children accessed services while experiencing homelessness in California. This comes out to one in five of people accessing services in California identifying as a survivor of domestic violence, and 18% of those survivors accessed services with a child. One in four people accessing services was a woman not iden- accompanied by children or, in the legislative language, an unaccompanied women. Recognizing the unique needs of these populations, California passed the HELP Act. The act ensures the state's response to homelessness includes tailored strategies for survivors of domestic violence, their children, and unaccompanied women. The data we'll be sharing today will, will showcase some of our work in this area.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:09:11

Before digging in, I just wanted to share some information about the definition of these populations, which all come from the statutory language. Unaccompanied women are defined as adult women who are experiencing homelessness in a household without any children. We know that many unaccompanied women have children that they do not live with or they are not accessing services with. This includes children living with other family members, or who may have been removed by child protective services and placed in foster care. While this is not measurable in our data, we want to acknowledge that these women have specific needs related to their children. When we speak about women, we're referring to anyone who identified as a woman as one of their gender identities, so that includes cis-gender women, transgender women, as well as gender non-conforming individuals who identified as women. Domestic violence survivors includes anyone who identified as a survivor of domestic violence, whether they're currently fleeing domestic violence or they previously experienced domestic violence, but are not currently fleeing. Our participants and community engagement emphasize that all

survivors have unique service needs regardless of if they are currently fleeing. Children of survivors is defined as minors experiencing homelessness or accessing services in a household with a survivor.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:10:35

The Health Act aims to reduce homelessness among these populations by improving coordination and partnerships between homelessness services, domestic violence services, and other systems that serve these groups. It also aims to reduce barriers to accessing services, exiting homelessness, and maintaining housing stability.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:10:57

Local response to homelessness addresses the specific needs of these groups.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:11:04

...requires Cal ICH to set and measure progress towards goals that reduce the number, frequency, and duration of homelessness among these populations as well as to set goals to reduce barriers to services and promote cross-systems partnerships between social services, domestic violence services, mental health, and housing services. And it also requires Cal ICH to evaluate these goals every two years. We'll be showing the dashboards that we're using for that purpose.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:11:37

Cal ICH when funding is available to provide technical assistance to cities, counties, and continuums of care. This TA will support the development of local programs and plans that address the needs of the target populations.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:11:51

LICH completed the first phase of this project last year, in which we analyzed existing data and reviewed research on these populations, conducted extensive stakeholder engagements and formal tribal consultation, and calculated baseline measures for the Health Act goals. Today, we're proud to launch the Health Act Dashboard at this council meeting. The public-facing dashboard displays progress towards...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:12:17

...to the health pack goals. We have also been analyzing barriers to accessing services for these populations and are working on a best practices checklist of local actions for decreasing barriers and increasing cross-system partnerships.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:12:33

This slide highlights the community engagement that Cal I-C-H conducted to inform our work to implement the HELP Act. This included focus groups of people with lived experience, as well as consulting with Cal I-C-H's lead, engagement sessions with service providers and continuums of care, key informant interviews, including with staff of some of the departments we have

represented on the...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:12:57

...council today. We also solicited formal tribal consultation from the 109 federally recognized tribes, and we have additional efforts this year and next year to engage tribal communities on this project.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:13:11

Before we get to the quantitative data, which I promise we have lots of, I wanted to highlight some of the stories that we heard from our community engagement sessions so that we can continue to center the people whose lives are comprising these measures. This qualitative research that Cal ICH conducted ensured that lived expertise was meaningfully incorporated into the development of these goals. Cal ICH staff, Molly...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:13:37

... - and Pearl Vaxey conducted Cali SAGE's first-ever large-scale qualitative analysis project, coding and analyzing hundreds of pages of interview transcripts to meaningfully incorporate the voices of those with live experience as well as service providers into these goals. I will be sharing a few of the quotes today that represent themes that came up over and over with participants among barriers to accessing services. Survivors expressed that they experienced shelters as physically and emotionally unsafe, and found experiences in sh- in shelters were often re-traumatizing. One survivor shared, "That's why for a lot of us it's like a revolving door. We'll leave a-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:14:17

One shelter, we'll go to another. We'll keep bouncing around from shelter to shelter, you know, or we'll rush to leave. And abusive situations are why we come back because we're trying to find the lesser devil between the two, right? So do I stay in the shelter and deal with all of this or do I just go back out here and keep living the same cycle until maybe one day something changes? So we keep having to choose to find something that makes us feel safe.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:14:44

Survivors also expressed a strong desire for homelessness service providers, victim service providers, hospitals, law enforcement, and social services to work together more effectively. One participant shared, "When you come into the system under domestic violence, the privacy part locks you out from the system being able to talk to each other, and so they really can't see you moving through multiple systems. It makes it even harder to get concurrent services because of privacy protections, which is still a hindrance at the same time."

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:15:17

Improving cross-systems coordination is a core goal of the Health Act and an area where the state can play a role in supporting local coordination and cross-systems partnerships. Cal ICH is currently developing technical assistance materials to help communities strengthen these

connections. Cal ICH also heard from women not accompanied by children that they felt that they were low priority or not seen by the system. They felt that the housing system prioritizes women with children. One participant shared, "There were no resources available for single women like me with no children. It was like they didn't know what to do with me or where to put me, and I was turned away."

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:15:57

...way from a lot of different agencies because I didn't fit their requirements and a few of the other young ladies said I wasn't accompanied with any children, and it was very traumatizing. (paper rustles)

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:16:10

By combining the statutory requirements as well as feedback from community engagements, Cal ICH developed the following goals. Goals one through three come from the statutory language of the Health Act. Goal number one looks at mea- measurably decreasing the number of survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness. This is measured among the population accessing service-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:16:36

- while experiencing homelessness because we don't have the data available on the overall number of people in these populations experiencing homelessness. Goal 2A measures the duration of experiences of homelessness, which is the days someone is accessing services while experiencing homelessness before they move into permanent housing. Goal 2B measures the frequency of experiences of homelessness, which is calculated as the percent of people who are returning to homelessness services within six months of exiting to a permanent destination. Goal three is focused on decreasing barriers to services through promoting cross-systems partnerships.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:17:15

To support this goal, as mentioned previously, we are developing a policy checklist of best practices that can be used by localities to better serve these populations. This is one of the ways Cal ICH is leveraging the qualitative research that I previously shared to inform our work. Cal ICH also included two more goals based on our community engagements which also align with the action plan. Goal four is the percent of people exiting to permanent housing, and goal five is the percent moving into shelter or housing after experiencing unsheltered homelessness. And we'll show some of these in the dashboard in a few minutes. The charts in the dashboard use data from Cal-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:17:55

I.C.J.'s Homeless Data Integration System, or HDIS. HDIS compiles information entered by service providers in the 44 California Continuums of Care, or CSCs, through their local Homeless Management Information Systems, or HMIS. That's a lot of acronyms. Um, the data does not capture indivi- all individuals who experience homelessness. For example, it does not

include those who are not accessing any services, and it includes people, excludes people who receive services from providers that don't use HMIS, notably from federally recognized tribes, as well as from victim service providers.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:18:35

Victim Service Providers are organizations whose primary mission is to serve survivors of domestic violence, including through housing and shelter. One reason the Health Act emphasizes cross-systems partnerships is because survivors often receive help and support through VSPs and not always through the mainstream homelessness system. VSPs are legally prohibited from reporting data into HMIS and are often not fully integrated into a CoC's coordinated entry system. This restriction enhances survivor safety, but also creates barriers to accessing services. The Health Act website includes supplemental data on people...

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:19:15

Certified DSPs that are funded through CalOES programs, including the Domestic Violence Housing First and Domestic Violence Assistance Programs. We thank our partners at CalOES for sharing this data with us. The Health Act Dashboard shows data to help the state track progress towards each of these goals and is intended to be a tool that can help local communities, including service providers, advocates, city and county leadership, and continuums of care in collaborating to develop plans that meet the needs of these groups. Later in the presentation, I will demonstrate features of the dashboard that enable users to track progress over time, analyze local level outcomes, compare trends across loc-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:19:55

...disparities by race and ethnicity, gender, age, and household composition.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:20:02

This is the last, uh, slide before the demo, but we did want to share a few takeaways, um, before we're diving into the dashboard itself. We are seeing the outcomes for these populations are worse than for the overall population accessing homelessness services in California. Survivors and unaccompanied women consistently return to homelessness services at higher rates, and exit homelessness at lower rates.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:20:29

We also see that three in 10 survivors of domestic violence accessing services are men, and that male survivors exit to permanent destinations at a lower rate. Survivors and unaccompanied women over 45 tend to access services for longer before exiting to permanent housing. This highlights the importance of our response to older adult homelessness, including targeted interventions for these pop-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:20:55

One in ten unaccompanied women were accessing services with another adult, providing a more complete picture of the varied household and family structures that encompass the

population of unaccompanied women. We will now transition to a live demonstration of the dashboards. These dashboards can be accessed on Cal I.C.H.'s website. Uh, it's linked in the What's New section right up top so that they're very easy to find.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:21:22

First, we'll show goal one, which is reducing the number of survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness. I don't think we're seeing the whole dashboard. Let me share it.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:21:37

Yeah.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:21:54

The chart you'll see momentarily shows the number of people in each group accessing services for each year from 2020 to 2024.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:22:05

Users can select sta- statewide numbers or numbers for a CoC.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:22:10

By hovering over a bar, you can see the percentage by which the measure has changed over time. Using the hover text descriptors, we see that from 2020 to 2024, the number of survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women accessing homelessness services grew faster than the rate for all Californians.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:22:34

...53% for unaccompanied women, compared to 46% for all people experiencing homelessness in California. This trend underscores the importance of a tailored response to meet the needs of these populations. It's important to highlight that the number of people accessing services is determined in part by how many services are available to them, and not just based on the needs. The increase in service access is not necessarily a negative. It could reflect that service providers are doing a better job reaching these populations and connecting them with the services they need. For survivors, it may indicate there, that they're increasingly accessing mainstream homelessness services.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:23:13

Next, we'll show goal four. The dashboard contains charts for each of these goals, but for the sake of time, we'll just show a few today. Goal four is increasing the percentage of survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women exiting homelessness into housing, including housing inside and outside the homelessness system.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:23:35

... has been steady but decreasing slightly for all groups in the most recent full year. It also

shows that the per-centage of survivors and unaccompanied women who exit homelessness each year is consistently a bit lower than the percentage for all Californians, while it's a little bit higher... Well, a go-good amount higher for children of survivors.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:23:58

And then next, we have goal five, which is the percentage of people in each group exiting from unsheltered homelessness by moving into shelter or housing that might seem familiar because it's aligned with goal one of the action plan. This percentage is decreasing a bit for all groups, but hovered around 40% for each in the most recent full year. In addition to these overview charts, we have detailed population specific charts for each of the three health bo- health act populations. For example, today we'll look at the ...

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:35

D- I sent you an email this morning back to Herr Court.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:43

I didn't get it, so- I haven't looked at it. Is it important that I do? O-o-okay, I'll look at it. Thank you very much.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:50

I'm going shopping and I'll be back.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:53

Okay. Thank you very much.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:54

Some clothes are here.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:56

This summarizes the filter selection, so here it says California for 2024, but that will change dynamically as you filter. On the left, there's a map of California where you can hover and see the location that corresponds to the CoC. On the right, there's a text summary of the locations data for each goal, and the headers to remind you what the goal is, while the text under each, um, is the data for that goal. For example, goal 2A is decreasing the duration of experiences of homelessness for unaccompanied women. So in 2024, we see that was 211 days before exiting to permanent housing. This allows users to quickly see the imp-

[A] Sep 03, 2025 14:24:56

Thank you very much.

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:25:35

... (pause) For all the Numerical Health Act calls at once, for a specific population and location. There's also a details tab, so if you go from clicking that overview to the details button, which

shows data for the sub-population. There's the following sub-population options here, so we have race and ethnicity, gender, age, household size, and for fleeing domestic violence. The filters are the same as on the overview tab, except that you can actually compare to a third COC. Today, we'll be using, ah, the age tab as an example. You'll notice a section for each of the Numerical Health Act-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:26:15

... goals, and we'll look at goal 2B for the sake of time today, but there's a section for each goal. Uh, and so goal 2B is reducing the frequency of homelessness among unaccompanied women. The bottom of each chart shows what's being measured. So here, it's returns to homelessness, and then to the left of the chart are the categories of people being shown. Uh, the first group is all members of the population for comparison, in this case, unaccompanied women, and then all of the categories. There are a number of bars based on the Detail tab you're looking at. So since this is age, you'll see different age breakdowns. For each bar, there's a yellow reference line showing what-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:26:55

... the data was for the previous year. Since we're looking at 2024 data, the yellow bar shows 2023. This allows you to easily compare trends over time without having to always switch back and forth. Hovering over the bar displays a de- text description of the data that bar represents and the prior year's value. This view can be used to compare outcomes for a health act population to outcomes for the subpopulations. For example, how does outcomes for all unaccompanied women compare to outcomes for unaccompanied women age 65 and over? That concludes our demo for today, but we hope you all take a look at the other information-

[C] Sep 03, 2025 14:27:35

-ention contained in the dashboard, and I will pass it to Megan to share some concluding thoughts and facilitate some discussion.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:27:43

Thank you, Sydney. Thank you, Molly, for that fantastic walkthrough. Fingers crossed that somebody can get me back to the PowerPoint presentation. Thank you, Molly.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:27:56

Dziękuję.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:28:35

This is a... Um, this is probably one of the more... Thank you, I appreciate it. This is probably one of the more, uh, damaging examples of, uh, results of working in silos. Um, what we heard from community partners, uh, both on the government side of things and the, the service provider thing, um, side of things is that the two systems are not talking to one another, so we know continuums of care, um, are, are challenged in their ability to establish relationships with victim service providers and vice versa. Uh, and so for the first time, I believe it was in HAP

round five, uh, as part of the regional plan that, um, HAP grantees were, uh-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:29:14

... Were required to submit. We required that they incorporate victim service providers as part of their, their regional planning efforts. And so, it's something that we, um, had an opportunity to address with, with one of the state's many investments in housing and homelessness, but wanna talk a little bit about how we turn, you know, as, as Secretary Ma said, like, how do we use this data to, as a call to action? And so, I wanna go over a few opportunities that we will share with, uh, just to inspire thought, uh, to council member departments, uh, on how you and your teams, uh, can use this data to, to inform all of the wonderful programs that you all operate. Um, so first, starting with service...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:29:54

... (0.5 sec pause) uh, of course. So using filters for your, uh, for regions that are, are re-receiving your, your program dollars and subpopulations to identify disparities in access or outcomes. Uh, targeting by equity indicators, so leveraging demographic breakdowns by race, gender, age, veteran status, et cetera, to guide culturally responsive policy and resource allocation; monitor progress over time, uh, by tracking CoC and statewide trends to evaluate policy interventions and adjust strategies dynamically; and, uh, I would say lastly and almost most importantly is, is aligning your, uh, your, your, your program scope...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:30:34

...um, the goals of your, your individual programs as much as is possible, uh, with those, uh, that we've established in the HELP Act. So using, using this, this common, these common goals, uh, to measure and monitor progress, um, within your, your individual programs.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:30:52

All right, so with that we'll move to the discussion portion of this presentation. Uh, we have some, some questions meant to guide the conversation, but first we'll start with any questions that council members might have, while I still have the brain trust of Sydney Bennett and team up here with me.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:31:14

Um, I have a thought. I don't know if it's a question, but, you know, given how comprehensive, um, this work is, it does feel like maybe there's an opportunity for our ICH's data team to do some training and education with council members' data teams on how to leverage this data, how to use it with other datasets you might be collecting. I know many of us get asked from the legislature or the administration on data points regarding certain subpopulations of those experiencing homelessness, and just wondering-

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:31:56

... If that might be a possibility or interest, um, to any of our council members of, 'cause it's a lot to digest-

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:32:08

... and it's, and I, I also want folks to be able to navigate the dashboards in a way that's very useful to them, so just thinking about both TA and, and support around that.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:32:30

Yeah, and thank you for that, that comment, Secretary. I'll say that it, it is a matter of, um, of resource, but also interest, right? If there is interest from any one council member department to have a deeper dive into the data and how we can, um, support sort of a systems alignment, we're absolutely happy to have those conversations. Unfortunately, it's sort of a, a, must-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:32:34

...be requested of us at this point. We don't have capacity to reach out to each one of the departments to off- proactively offer that, but if there is interest, um, in, in that alignment for a particular program and a councilmember department, absolutely we're, we're happy to, to have those conversations.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:32:57

All right. Well, uh, we are very ahead of schedule. Um, I don't know how that happened with all of the technical issues I've been experiencing up here, and it's just me apparently. Sydney and team did just fine, so I won't take it personally. Um, but just, just to hopefully inspire some conversation, um, with council members, wanna pose these, these two questions. So, you know, how can your department use the Help Act goals as a framework to assess, uh, programs that are, are targeting survivors of domestic violence or children and unaccompanied women? Um, you know, and for those, those broader pro-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:33:34

... programs or the more flexible programs that are not determined by eligibility necessarily. I mean, HAP has now incorporated language for this population, but can certainly see potential for, um, for calling out and, and really, um, highlighting these populations and, and other councilmember programs as well. So, any immediate thoughts or inspiration on how these Health Ag goals can be incorporated into, to, uh, to the work of our council? Yes. Do we have a microphone over there for you by the way? Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:34:13

There it is.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:34:14

There you go.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:34:16

Okay. Um, yeah. So since Callaway S was, um, involved in giving some of this data, um, this is great to see that this is available. Um, just thinking, you know, I'll, I'll take this back to the team

and discuss it, but, um, some of our progress reports that collect the data, um, have been longstanding. So, we could potentially see if there's any way to add some questions that would be more helpful in determining, um, domestic violence victims and children and around homelessness, um-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:34:53

And I'm sure that many of the agencies we fund have more data than what we collect because they're working with other systems, um, but just thinking about that, um, if we can update, uh, progress reports to collect something that would be more helpful for this.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:35:21

Yeah, very much appreciate that. And, and some of, some of the, the more like low-hanging fruit is, is just in the contract language, right? Like, um, one of the, the next items in my, uh, in, in this portion of the agenda, we'll talk about the Housing First survey that all of our councilmember departments participated in. Um, but some of that work is just ensuring that the language exists, and NOFA is...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:35:35

Um, in, in contracts. So those are immediate opportunities for us to start to weave in, um, this inter-agency work. So appreciate that.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:35:52

Yeah, and just t- in regards to Housing First, um, we had w- you know, we had it as a requirement, uh, for the programs. However, we have made progress in actually putting language in the funding opportunities so that it's in there, so...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:36:00

I can confirm OES has in fact made progress because we had, uh, responses to the survey, so thank you so much for, uh, for your participation there. Um, any, any final thoughts on the held back dashboard before we, we move along? Yes, Council Member Rutledge.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:36:21

I noticed in the data that is being collected right now that disability is not included in that, and we know that women with disabilities are disproportionately represented among people who, um, experience domestic violence. So I would like to see that also included in the dashboard.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:36:44

We can certainly add that in. Thank you for that suggestion. Council Member Lewis?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:37:12

-fact honestly, but just thinking about the comments I think from Melanie, from Nelida, and then I'm, I'm constantly trying to push more coordination at the intersection of folks that are cycling in and out or re-entering back from incarceration and, um, homelessness 'cause there's still some

significant gaps. Just thinking about, um, that and, and Melanie's comments, like, uh, there is a, um, overlap with in, you know-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:37:39

... how genders experience domestic violence, but obviously there's a higher proportion of women. Um, and so there is an overlap in terms of folks that are cycling in and out. I'm just curious to know, I know that, um, (clicks tongue) the Department of Corrections is not a part of HDIS, right? And so we're just thinking about is there g- going to be any thought into... I don't think they're a part of HDIS, but looking at-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:38:12

Um, uh... a cross-system issue there.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:38:17

... acknowledge that, uh, we've recently finalized a data sharing agreement with the Department of, um, of re- of Corrections and Rehabilitation. And so we're really excited to dig into where those, those opportunities exist. Um, we have also had a few discussions on, on incorporating, um, formerly incarcerated popula- like exits from, um, from state facilities and entering into homelessness, um, as a way for us to measure prevention. Uh, so that is something that, uh, we're, we're hoping we'll have more details on-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:38:52

...once we, we, we begin, uh, data sharing with our colleagues at CDCR. I appreciate that CDCR is but one institution. Uh, county jail exits are, are much higher, um, uh, for, for this population, I would say. We know that the numbers are, are reducing, um, for, for women who are exiting e- eh- state prison facilities, but they're increasing, um, in, in, in many cases for, for, um, county jail. So, a lot of work still to be done, but opportunity, um, within this council to, to address some of that data disparity.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:39:32

... right? Um, college age students in particular. I believe there's a- so is there any, um, plan to look at that data or, or more so from a prevention strategy potentially where there's a lot of, um, inter-pregnant gender-based violence among students as well?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:39:51

Okay, and then the only other, um, sub-population ?????? I'm looking at the goals about my... is, um, students.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:39:54

Yeah. So, you know, what we have right now is the, the filter for, for age by these, these different populations within the Health Act, but as we start to get, um, more sophisticated in our data coordination with our council member departments, I can see, uh, an...

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:40:12

-opportunity for us to, to, to begin to dig into, for example, uh, not just youth, but students who are, are, are having these experiences.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:40:33

Okay. And then my final comment is more so to the council members who are agency and department heads, that the council members who are not connected to HDIS in terms of what is related to, I think your second bullet, but thinking about, is there support? I mean, I think this is kind of what Secretary Moss just said, but like, support for departments whose data is not going to be captured in HDIS to really start to think about, um, this population in a different way, and being... I know that eventually, especially now that you all are doing a lot of work entirely at the CalHHS, soon-to-be department, um, you all are trying to think about what it looks like to capture data outside of HDIS, but given that this is a specific initiative, just, you know, curious to hear any thoughts from any of the- the departments and agen- who do not a- uh, enter into HDIS, and if you've made any movements towards trying to support this effort.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:41:32

Hello? Carmina Baralez from the California Department of Education representing, um, board member, William McGee, who is online. Um, but, uh, thank you, um, Council Member Lewis for bringing up students. Um, the California Department of Education is open to discussing any data sharing or opportunities. Um, we don't report in HDIS or HDMS, um, but we do collect data around, um, students who are identified actually as unaccompanied but that's, um, not in the custody of their parent or guardian. Um, and we also collect data on, um, any children and youth who are experiencing homelessness. Um, unfortunately our definitions don't align with HUD, so we use McKinney-Vento, the federal definition for education. Um, so there's, um, probably a much higher level conversation about, um, data, um, just because we're talking about apples and oranges a little bit. Um, but even opportunities, I know we worked with a lot of Cal ICH staff around, um, connecting our county offices of education and COCs. Um, we do a lot of community-based organization, um, partnerships, so maybe looking at data across community-based organizations as well, um, but open to having conversations.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:43:28

Thank you for that. Undersecretary Buchanan.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:43:38

Uh, I just wanted to give a quick, um, thumbs up in appreciation for aligning the goals. It was so great to see the goal, the alignment between the goals that you've come up with for, um, the HELP Act and what we're trying to do more globally. So it's cool to see. And, um, really excited 'cause I think, um, folks are tracking that we've been working really closely with, um, the Cal ICH team on a data integration with Cal HHS data, and so that'll be especially interesting to explore whether we, we might be able to, um, also, uh, collapse data you may have around, um, survivor of domestic violence as well. That's something to explore, so thank you.

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:43:53

Um, just one other thought about sort of overlapping populations. I'd be curious about how this intersects with young people and youth homelessness as well, because certainly, there are young people who would be within this category, but I don't know how we are tracking that data set against this one, so just, uh, curious about that.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:44:02

Thank you for that. Any final comments, council members? Secretary Moss.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:44:23

Yeah. So there's a filter for age, um, and that, that is, that is the point in time that we're at right now for the information that we can, uh, we can glean from what is available. But again, as we expand, uh, systems that we're connecting with, we can, we can certainly, um, specifically for students, start to dig into- to that area. Dr. Bushell.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:44:58

Considering the, um, outcomes for unaccompanied women are so much worse than families, and we actually know a lot of those unaccompanied women are only unaccompanied because of their homelessness. They... Kids have either been taken from them because of their homelessness or their kids are stashed with a family member, and then they don't get reintegrated. I'm wondering if there's any way through data sharing or anything you could identify who is sort of unaccompanied, but parenting a minor, um, and look at that as an outcome, because certainly reintegrating, um, children with their parent is one of the most important thing we can do for a child's outcome.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:45:27

Thank you for that, Dr. Bushell. We are working... You know, we have an established data sharing agreement with our colleagues at Health and Human Services and are working at- at, uh, data mashing with DHCS and CDSS specifically. CDSS would be, uh, sort of a dataset that we could answer that question, um, and as I- I think this council understands, it's incredibly, um, delicate process to match particularly, uh, child welfare service data with- with, um, self-reported data that we have in HDIS, but it has been top of mind for, um, Cal ICH, for HHS, uh, as well as our partners at CDSS.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:46:11

Sorry. Um, I just wanna, um, piggyback off of some of what we're sharing and what's happened in the meeting throughout the day. I know Member Lewis was talking about, um, things that work and moving forward with that. Um, I did notice in the data there was a big portion of children or families with children that have had success, um, and I just wanna toot the horns of maybe some of the audience, um, for homeless education liaisons that are only federally funded, um, to... that support. Um, our homeless education liaisons, both at the county and district levels, um, ensure that students are enrolled and have everything that they need to start school on the first day, whether that means a uniform, a backpack, um, transportation in whatever form helps

the family, um, that I- I'm thinking, you know, and there's no real way to identify this for sure, but the success that is shared, um, in the data regarding families, um, you know, uh, parents with children and their success and how that's tied into the current roles that educators, um, have, um, with the work that, that's done, um, at th- with the homeless liaisons.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:46:28

Any final thoughts, council? Yes, yes.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:47:46

Yeah, thank you for that. I will also say, um, you know, we have the- the points in time, uh, beginning with 2020 up to 2024. We know that the investments that our colleagues at, at Social Services in particular have made into serving, um, families experiencing homelessness have been transformative for this population. So agree that, uh, we, we, we as a council, um, can certainly do better at id- identifying populations that are experiencing success and uplifting the programs that are, are supporting that success, so thank you for that. Council Member Lewis?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:48:13

Yeah, some of the quotes that were shared, we kind of moved past them, but they were very striking. Um, and I was not unfor- unfortunately, I was not really surprised by anything I saw. They were striking, and I'm going to try to say this as delicately as possible. Um, many of the temporary housing-focused, um, victim service providers have very high thresholds of entry for safety reasons. Um, and so that means that we have a lot of people, um, that are at various points of their cycle or journey, um, that are ending up in fr- I'm going to use the term general shelters for lack of a better term. And I think that there's an opportunity for the departments that fund the CoCs to fund providers to really take a look at, um, in particular with unaccompanied women, um, again, as Dr. Christel said, many of whom are unaccompanied for a variety of reasons that are consequences, um, collateral consequences of, um-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:49:20

... experiencing violence. But there is a lot of work that needs to be done in our general shelter system, um, and certainly, you know, not all of them can do every- for everybody, but we just have, um... It's clear and it comes up regularly, right, about some of the challenges in these settings and obviously, how much providers are being paid and economies of scale. Like, there's lots of considerations, but we continue to hear over and over again in different ways in this, in these meetings about the need to really figure out how to make these places, um, places that are affirming and welcoming and that people feel safe in. And the departments that are sitting here that, that give money to jurisdictions and/or community service providers directly, I think have a role to play in that. And so I think, I don't want to skip over the quotes, you all put them there for a reason, and skip o- skip over the reality that only a fraction of these folks actually end up in s- uh, targeted victim service housing situations. Most of them end up either back on the street, as you saw somebody said, we have to make a choice, um, or they end up in spaces that are not necessarily equipped to meet their needs. And so just, you know, want to lay th- put that out there that as we talk about regular technical assistance and capacity building

and accountability for the money that you all are giving to the different parts of the state and data, like I, I want you all to really think about in terms of the HELP Act, th- w- how, um, do the policies and the practices and the protocols of these housing, um, programs that you're funding, how that can play a role in meeting some of these goals for the HELP Act 'cause it absolutely can.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:51:11

Thank you for that Council Member Lewis. I will say without, um, without criticizing our, our victim service providers... No, no, no. Um, the comment that I wanted to offer is that we, we're aware that there are certain victim service providers, um, particularly in smaller, um, um, communities that simply do not have capacity to serve, um, persons who were homeless during their experience of violence or do not have an immediate housing placement after a very short stay. So, what that translates into, I experienced violence, um, uh, during my, my time in homelessness. If I don't have a housing placement lined up within the next seven to 14 days, some victim service providers cannot serve me because they do not have access into those, those rehousing services, so... Which is why I sort of started my comments with, this is probably the most damaging effect of the silos that have been created that we're, we're working to, to address through the HELP Act, so appreciate that.

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:52:23

Thank you again to Sydney and team, uh, fantastic work. Very much appreciate. What we, what we didn't acknowledge at the, the, the start of this presentation was that this work was intended to be completed by a contractor, and due to unforeseen circumstances, Cal ICH had to bring this work in-house. Um, and so those hundreds of pages of, of interviews, um, the, the transcriptions that Sydney, uh, described, those were done by, by another entity and then had to be deciphered, um, by, by the team so just wanna again highlight the fantastic work that, that Sydney and team have, um, have put into this, so. Um, all right, so moving from data, uh, I would like to provide council members with information on other areas of standing business. Um, as a reminder, uh, we have our three-year action plan and so, uh, which will term in 2027, so our goal is to come back to you, council, first to our advisory committee in November with a draft of what our annual progress report will look like, uh, and then to the council in December for a final adoption and in the March meeting. And so just as a reminder, we adopted this action plan in January of 2025. It's meant to be a three-year action plan, uh, and so this will be a point-in-time capture at our, sort of our midpoint of, of progress. I just want to acknowledge that we will reserve, uh, some space in that annual progress report, uh, to identify any potential impacts that federal policy decisions have on the investments that we've identified in our action plan. But we're excited to bring that back to you in December.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:52:50

Any final comments, Council Members? All right-

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:54:07

Um, on the note of, of federal changes, uh, we are, Cal ICH is, uh, closely monitoring any

impacts of the executive order that Undersecretary Buchanan, um, so eloquently, uh, uh, described at the... in, in her opening remarks, and are working closely with each of, of your departments and your department staff to ensure that we're identifying not just the numbers and not just the, the, the, the quantitative, uh, losses or potential losses, but also what those human losses look like. Uh, so rounding out our standing business, I want to thank council members who participated in our Housing First survey that I mentioned. Um, and act... so, you know, back to the, the EO, which was essentially an attack on Housing First, just to reiterate, there are no changes to, uh, California's requirement for our investments in housing and homelessness to abide by Housing First law, so we will, in California, continue as we, we have for these many years. Um, and so this is the time of year when we connect with you all to say how is Housing First working in all of your, your investments to address housing and homelessness. Again, thank you for your responses. You'll all receive an email with sort of the, the cumulative, um, the cumulative summary of our progress in Housing First, and then for those departments who need perhaps a little bit more technical assistance that our team can offer, we'll be reaching out with, with, um, a few recommendations. It's gotta be here first. It's the... we're gonna finish probably about an hour early, which I don't think anybody would complain about, but just want to acknowledge all of the time that you all take to be here with us. But, um, before I pass it to Giselle to facilitate public comment and, and wrap up this meeting, are there any questions or comments from council members on our action plan progress, Housing First, or policy implementation at Cal ICH?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:56:06

Secretary Moss, you have 55 minutes. (laughs)

[B] Sep 03, 2025 14:56:13

(laughs) You know I love a short meeting. Um, I was just curious, you know, I had, you know, I think the action plan is such an accomplishment for the council and for California to have, you know, metrics and things that we're working toward using our data, and I feel like folks don't know enough about it. I feel like we need to really think about an outreach strategy, a calm strategy, and I just wanted to raise that for the council 'cause it could be very helpful for us to engage your comms teams and really think about what about the action plan can we get out to folks and letting people know that we want to align with their local efforts, we want to use our state and local resources together to help us reach these collective goals! So, I just... So, it, it came out in January. Uh, I remem- I was in a meeting recently with a legislator and I was like, "The action plan." She was like, "What? What's that?"

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:57:32

And I was like, "Wait, what?"

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:58:31

... which is how I knew Director Demores had a hearing, because we're watching those agendas to see, is there an opportunity for us to sneak in and just add a few, a few things around our action plan and, and the collective work of the council? So, appreciate that. Any final thoughts,

council members?

[E] Sep 03, 2025 14:58:49

... pass it to Jazel Sanchez to open up for public comment. I see several hands raised already, so perhaps, perhaps we will be here till four, folks.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 14:59:06

... now accept general public comments. Thank you all for your patience, and we appreciate the council members for listening to public comments as well. Uh, we welcome all comments and feedback. I would like to remind everyone that we are unable to discuss items that are not on the agenda for today's meeting. Additionally, due to the structure of this meeting, we may not be able to respond to any questions. If you have any questions for Cal ICH or the council, we ask that you please email us at calich@bcsh.cai.gov. Everyone will get two minutes for their comment, and Cal ICH staff member will soon share their screen with a two-minute countdown timer and we will warn you when your time has expired. If you're connected through Zoom, select the raised hand icon on the meeting window on your computer, um, and we'll allow you to unmute. For those joining us by phone, you may press star nine to indicate you'd like to comment. And if you're joining us in person, please raise your hand if you have a comment. All right, I'm gonna start you guys to line up in, um, along the row tables. Can we get the timer on the screen please?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:00:29

Perfect. Please state your name for the record, and then you may begin your comment.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:00:37

Thank you. My name is Ken Houston, son of Oakland. Um, um, 231 days in, uh, Council Member of Oakland, California, and I'm counting down. Right? So I came out here 'cause this is so important to me. Um, in Alameda County, we have a unique situation. We have what, I heard it when I was online driving down there, we have \$1.4 billion to address this ca- address this issue. 1.4 billion. Oakland, the population in Oakland and Alameda County is 29%. 58% of the homeless lives in, in, in, in Oakland from, in that count, in our, in our city of Oakland. I have a bunch of questions. I wanted to find out, um, Oakland has a different element of certain homeless encampments and in my district is, uh, many of the encampments are crime-ridden. They are. Um, and I wanted to find out with Grants Pass, if, uh, we don't provide housing, how will that affect our HHAP-6? How would that affect that, um, because it said, Grants Pass said we don't have to, um-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:01:40

... give housing, right? But we will, we will. We want to be able to give housing. And let me give you a little bit of experience on me, uh, myself. Um, I actually was homeless for about 24 months. Um, my brother, um, my personal experience, my brother was homeless for 39 years. When I was a kid, I saw my mother cry every day until my brother, um, got housing, right? And I actually worked, um, with the Clean California Maintenance agreement with Gavin Newsom's

office, and I hired the justice impacted on house, and brought many individuals out of that, that, that, that condition. So, I have many questions about the, um, how does Grant Pass affect, um, individuals recommendations on how we do housing? Say for instance, a homeless encampment that's just, just ridden, crime ridden, and we offer housing or we just say, "Hey, this is some housing that's available." And they turn it down, and we close down the encampment. Are we able to get those fundings? I, um, uh, like I said, I'm new to this, and I came out here, drove out here 'cause I wanted to find out and have some questions. So, you said send an email?

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:03:18

All right. Please state your name and then you may voice your comment.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:03:25

Good afternoon. Kim Lewis representing the California Coalition for Youth and a member of your Youth and Young Adult Working Group and appreciate the opportunity to provide some comments. I was really excited to see the work that's been done on the HELP Act and really moving that forward, and I appreciate Secretary Moss's question around our young adults who are experiencing homelessness and being able to pay attention to their needs. And I would just call to your attention that SB 918 was passed in 2018 and became law in 2019, and I really haven't seen measurable goals that I would like to see as one of the co-sponsors of that proposal around: How do we address and end homelessness for our young people? When I look at your action plan and goals, you're lumping them in with the entire population. I really do think that they are unique and distinct population, has very different developmental needs, and they really need to be called out differently. That's why we passed SB 918 back then. So I really hope and I would challenge the Council to really take a look at that and really implement that bill since it was passed three years before this HELP Act. Um, not to slam the work that's going on in the HELP Act, I think that's really awesome and wonderful. And then just respect to the Youth Empowerment Commission, we're also one of the co-sponsors of that bill, and that was really designed to really support our young people being more engaged in the policy-making process and to be able to work with the legislature and the administration and to raise up, um, policies and legislation and things that are needed for our young people across the state with a focus on disadvantaged youths, so not just for our young people experiencing homelessness but all youth broadly. So just wanted to call that to your attention and would love to, um, have some more time, and I hope that the Youth and Young Adult Working Group can get back started to the work that we were doing. I think we've made some measurable progress and would love to be able to share that with the Council soon.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:03:33

All right.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:03:34

Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:03:34

Okay. So, you guys will get a whole bunch of emails from me about questions that I have, and I appreciate the time. I drove down here 'cause this is very, very important to me 'cause I want to be able to... We got that one time for that one point, what, \$1.4 billion to address this, and I think we can, we can do it, um, um, the right way, but we only have one chance, so thank you for your help. Thank you for your time.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:05:05

Hi. My name is Ariane Dall'Orta. I'm sure you've seen me (laughs) before. Uh, I'm representing Lived Experience Advisors, uh, in San Diego. Uh, we just had a conversation with the, uh, supervisor, board of supervisors there and this is regarding the, um, creating a fund to, uh, offset the federal restrictions that are coming along for Medicaid and, uh, SNAP assistance. So, um, many p- people need that, uh, for survival and, uh, you know, people who are, um, just short from becoming homeless or are homeless are dependent on these services. And what San Diego is doing to create a fund for that, uh, purpose, is very in- interesting. I thought it was like, "Oh, that's great." And then I hear here-

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:05:12

Thank you for your comment. speaker (muffled) Thank you. All right. Please state your name and you may voice your comment.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:06:09

That there is this, uh, absurd funding for incarceration and which is three times what is for homelessness. Um, just asking you guys- (laughs) ... uh, what can you do to shift some of that funding to homelessness? You know, um, just consider that. Um, just advocating for kind of a remove, reducing the funding for incarceration and increasing and (laughs) shifting it to, uh, homeless, um, support assistance advocacy. And I really love that, uh, focusing on unaccompanied women. I was such a person and, um, I was lucky enough to have my retirement fund to get out my... of the homelessness, but a lot of them can't. So, yes, I'm advocating for them. Thank you so much for your service. Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:07:17

Thank you for your comment. All right. We have two hands raised for those joining online. Um, first we have Gregory Pierson.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:07:25

Gregory, if you're able to speak, you may voice your comment.

[A] Sep 03, 2025 15:07:28

Thank you very much. My name is Gregory Farren, no S. Um, as a, uh, 50-year career person starting in domestic violence, moving into homelessness, I totally understand and appreciate your emphasis on homeless programs and homeless individuals. But I want to point to Secretary Moss's comment about Prop 1 because as we all, um, matured in the homeless

service field, we realized, uh, real easily that m- mental health and s- substance use was so much a part of our clients' lives that we needed to start moving into behavioral health planning and behavioral health services. I'm now on the Behavioral Health Board in Sonoma County and the Measure O board that provides, you know, \$30 million a year in local tax money and it may be the only money left if this federal disaster takes place and it's important that our integrated plan mandated by Prop 1, uh, which includes having someone on our... people on our board who are young and who are from schools, it seems like a perfect opportunity if you can stretch a little f- bit farther with your focus to include Prop 1's mandate, uh, to be able to integrate, break silos, have a way in which the b- local behavioral health boards and the COC boards work together to be able to solve the problems collectively. We're probably gonna end up that if, if, you know, AHAP and COC money goes away, our homeless coalition's gonna end up in our behavioral health board, uh, purview simply because it'll be the last funding source standing. Uh, you should beginning... You should begin to think about trying to figure out a way of extrem- extending your brilliance, which you've been doing lately and I, I love your dashboards and stuff, to help the behavioral health, uh, board administer, um, mental health and substance use, um, funding to the same clients you're serving. Thank you.

[D] Sep 03, 2025 15:10:55

Thank you, Gregory. Uh, and apologies if I mispronounce the next speaker as well. Uh, Eve Flinston Barthot, you should be able to speak.