

CONTINUUM OF CARE MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 14, 2026 9:00am

By Paiton Beckner

Our mission: Teaming up to make homelessness rare, non-recurring, and short-lived.

Roll Call – **Please sign in the chat for attendance.**

Motion to approve – John Quirk; PJ Brooks

Old Business

- 990 Total **Households**; 2,533 **Individuals** (Literally Homeless, At Risk, DV, Vet)
- 297 **Households** Literally Homeless; 595 **Individuals**
- 8 **Households** Fleeing Domestic Violence; 19 **Individuals**
- **688 Households** At Risk; 2,032 **Individuals**
- Veterans: **4**
- Referrals sent to providers in March: **99** (including Housing referrals, ELC, Griffin Lofts and Jersey Commons)
- **148** Total CE Assessments taken last month. (March)
- **49** Total CE Assessments taken to date so far for this month (April)

New Business

- **Volunteer Celebration Luncheon**
 - Event held successfully; positive feedback from attendees.
 - Awards presented (e.g., Survey Sniper, Step Up, Above & Beyond, Team Lead).
 - Participation Persuader Award: St. Vincent de Paul (most volunteers; ~20+).
 - Traveling trophy introduced for future annual recognition.
 - Appreciation extended to Tri-County Services for hosting.
- **HUD Funding**
 - No confirmed updates on upcoming HUD NOFO; awaiting guidance.
 - June 1 NOFO release (uncertain).
 - Anticipated changes may include:
 - Reduced Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) allocation (~30%)
 - Increased focus on outreach, transitional housing, encampments
 - Emphasis on substance abuse services (with regulatory challenges in Florida)
 - Ongoing concerns about alignment between federal requirements and Florida regulations.
- **State Budget**
 - Potential decrease in state budget (pending updates expected around April)

23).

- Agencies should be at **≥75% expenditure** before contract end (June).
- Unspent funds may negatively impact county; agencies encouraged to coordinate if unable to utilize funds.

- **Grant & Contract Updates**

- Some agencies are experiencing delays in receiving new funding contracts (e.g., PSH grants starting April 1).
- Closeout documents completed, but new agreements are pending.
- Bridget to follow up with state contact (Tanya Madison) on behalf of agencies.

- **Elizabeth Smith Property Management – Jersey Commons & Carteret (setting your client for success) Key Insight:** Clients engaged in **case management are significantly more successful** in maintaining housing.

- Emphasized that many evictions and lease terminations **may have been preventable** with stronger engagement in on-site services.
- **Encouraged agencies to:**
 - Actively connect clients to **on-site services** (CASL, Tri-County, property staff).
 - Promote early engagement (clubhouse visits, introductions to staff).
 - Respond quickly when property management raises concerns.
- **Highlighted challenges:**
 - Increase in **recent evictions and non-renewals**, resulting in returns to homelessness.
 - Communication gaps between agencies and property management.

- **Discussion & Recommendations**

- **Bridget Engleman suggested:**
 - Utilizing **monthly case conferencing sessions** for real-time problem-solving.
 - Exploring **cross-agency collaboration** to support overloaded case managers.
- **P.J. Brooks noted:**
 - Availability of **on-site case management and clinical services** (including mental health and substance abuse support).
 - **Jersey Commons CASL Case Manager on site contact: Addy Hernandez** addy.hernandez@caslinc.org
 - pj.brooks@caslinc.org
- Encouraged “warm handoffs” to connect clients directly with services.
- **General agreement on:**
 - Importance of **early intervention and teamwork** across agencies.
- **Additional Ideas**
 - Development of **tenant education resources/classes** (e.g., “how to be a good tenant”).
 - Potential creation of a **standardized training video** for clients prior to move-in.

- **Feedback**
 - Multiple members expressed appreciation for Elizabeth Smith's responsiveness and partnership.
 - Elizabeth offered support for **tenant education initiatives**.
- **Katrina (Cara AI) Understanding Your Work & the Weight of It**
 - Introduction of **CARA AI**, an AI tool integrated into ClientTrack.
 - **Purpose:** Streamline case management and reporting tasks.
 - **Key Features (Phase 1)**
 - Natural language chat interface
 - Automatic **case summaries and client face sheets**
 - Report assistance and troubleshooting
 - Task prioritization support
 - **Capabilities**
 - Pulls data from:
 - ClientTrack database
 - CaseWorthy knowledge base
 - Designed to align with **HUD data standards**
 - **Ethical Design**
 - Built with focus on:
 - Privacy & security
 - Transparency
 - Human oversight
 - User control (optional use via toggle)
 - **Timeline**
 - Initial rollout expected **starting May (no confirmed date)**
 - Additional features to follow in later phases through 2026
 - **Discussion**
 - Emphasis on need for **accurate and complete data entry** to maximize AI effectiveness.
 - Questions raised about future **system integrations** (not yet confirmed).
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSeH6Pf_tcA&t=3s
 - <https://caseworthy.com/platform/artificial-intelligence-for-human-services/>
- **Upcoming Events**
 - **April 15** – Homeless Poverty Conference 5pm-9pm (Florida Southern) - Entry to the conference requires you to bring a jar of peanut butter or jelly
 - **April 21** - 2nd Annual Fair Housing Outreach 8:30-1:00(WH 210 Cypress Garden Blvd)
 - **April 23** – State of the County 9am-11:30pm (1251 Jim Keene Blvd)
 - **May 15** - Gospel Inc. Ribbon Cutting
 - **August 24-26** - FHC Affordable Housing (Rosen Centre Hotel)
 - **Sept 1st-3rd** – FCEH (Hilton Lake Buena Vista)
 - CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS IS CLOSING SOON!!! **4/30/26**
- **Open Floor - Next meeting: JUNE, 2026 (Zoom)**

General Announcements

- Agencies encouraged to:
 - Support one another's events and initiatives
 - Share updates and opportunities
- No additional agency announcements raised.

ATTENDANCE: Bridget Engleman, HCPC; Nessie Braun, HCPC, Cathy Golden, HCPC; Lucas Simmons, HCPC; Paiton Beckner, HCPC; Brittany Preo, HCPC; Bren Sanders, HCPC; Katrina Panzica, HCPC; Deborah Cozzetti Talbot House; Nicole Redmond, Lake Wales Care Center; Melissa Irving, Peace River Center; Chris Dyer, Heartland for Children; Jes Shapiro from Peace River Center - Victim Services; Michelle Czelusniak - The Wilson House; Jason Saffels, CFBHN; Dr. Glynnnes Smith, Community Access Support Services Inc (Dba CASS Cares); Rebecca Green, The Salvation Army; Mark Luba TriCounty PATH; John Quirk, SVDP; Derek Howell, SVDP; Lana Nolan - Catholic Charities; Giffe Gill, ACTS; Kera Beard Volunteers of America of Florida; Tomi Steinruck, SVDP CARES; Jennifer MCSC; Corina Hathaway, ACTS; P.J. Brooks, CASL; Elizabeth Smith. Carteret Mgmt; Mike Smith, City of Lakeland; Nancy Hurley; Stephen Powers, TCHS; Annie Gibson, HCPC Board; MaryBeth Moore; Terri Cram, ACTS; Bobby R from MCSC; Lesly Yanez MCSC; Maureen McIntire BayCare, Winter Haven Hospital, Center for Behavioral Health; Kelly Carter BoCC; Kacey Wood, George Harris Youth Shelter;