



## CCEH COVID-19 Response Newsletter

Welcome to the CCEH COVID-19 Response Newsletter.

For additional resources relating to the COVID-19 response, visit [cceh.org/covid19](https://cceh.org/covid19).

You can also donate to CCEH's COVID-19 Emergency Fund at [cceh.org/about/donate-now/covid19](https://cceh.org/about/donate-now/covid19).

### A Message from Our CEO

Dear Friends,

Several weeks into the arrival of the pandemic in Connecticut, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we have accomplished together in such a short period of time. If you have been following national news, you may have read about COVID-19 outbreaks and a rising number of COVID-related fatalities in homeless shelters across the country. So far, it appears that the steps we have taken in Connecticut have prevented this tragedy, and we remain hopeful that our coalition's hard work has enabled us to prevent outbreaks among our homeless population and in turn, our state's population as a whole.

And while I, for one, am resting somewhat easier now that shelter residents have a safe place to socially distance, we still have challenges ahead. While the number of known COVID-19 cases among our homeless population remain small, we must ensure that we can provide access to care for these individuals. In addition, while COVID-19 testing still remains limited, we still do not know how many asymptomatic cases are present and so we must continue to implement our social distancing measures.

Meanwhile, the Governor's order (and FEMA approval) that enables homeless shelter residents to remain in hotels is currently authorized through June 1st. We hope that that the timeline of the hoteling will match the overall Stay Safe, Stay Home orders for the general public, but we also know that the shelter decompression in hotels was never intended to last forever.

We know that while shelters save lives and meet basic needs, shelters have never been the solution to homelessness. The solution has always been permanent housing. Likewise, hotels are helping protect people from COVID-19 spread, but this pandemic only made more clear that the safest place for anyone is a stable home. Now more than ever, we as a coalition need to double-down on our efforts to house as many people as possible so that we can return as few people as possible back to congregate shelters.

At CCEH, we continue to make available the funds that we administer from the state, the federal government, and non-government sources like *be homeful* to divert and rapidly exit people from shelters. This includes some additional funds that we have received from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Bank of America, Lincoln Financial Foundation, and others to support our state's COVID-19 efforts. We continue to speak with our partners including the Department of Housing, the Partnership for Strong Communities, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, HUD, CONN-NAHRO and others about ways that we can increase available housing for people experiencing homelessness.

We are still looking to hear about additional vacancies in the rental market, including private and subsidized apartments. If you know of any housing vacancies or want to help clients in your area locate housing, please visit our [emergency housing](#) form. We are actively seeking units for our clients and are grateful to the many realtors and property owners who have reached out to help. Faith communities interested in helping may also use the form to share their interest in helping. We can use all the help we can get!

As all this is happening, we are also focused on keeping clients and staff remaining in shelters safe. I encourage you to check our [resource guide](#) on a regular basis for updates on resources, protocols, and guides that may be helpful to you.

Wishing you safety and thank you for your service.

Yours,

Richard Cho

### Register Now: Webinar Series on the Monitor, Care, and Isolation of Persons With COVID-19 in Shelters and Hotels

Although Connecticut may have prevented outbreaks of COVID-19 among our sheltered homeless population, it is inevitable that some people experiencing homelessness in shelters and hotels will be found to have COVID-19. We have heard many questions about the appropriate ways to monitor, care for, and safely isolate people with COVID-19 who are currently in shelter and hotel settings. To help answer these questions, CCEH is holding a two-part webinar series on this topic.

Part 1 of this webinar series will take place on Monday, May 4 and will feature a presentation by and Q&A with officials from the Connecticut Department of Public Health. The presentation will cover the latest DPH COVID-19 guidance for shelter providers on how to monitor, isolate, access testing, and care for COVID positive individuals in shelters and hotels.

Part 2 of the webinar series will take place the following week (exact date and time TBD) and will feature speakers from the New London Homeless Hospitality Center and Community Health Center, Inc. talking about how they have developed and are following recommended COVID-19 protocols within the shelter and hotel sites where they are serving individuals.

[Register Now](#)

## Tracking COVID-19 Data in HMIS

Visit the link below to find out about changes underway in HMIS in response to the COVID-19 crisis. This document includes:

- information on release of information;
- background on the proposed process for obtaining COVID data from hospitals and testing sites via DPH and the local health districts; and
- additional fields to be added to HMIS to capture COVID data.

[Read more here.](#)

## Volunteer Recruitment

The Connecticut COVID-19 emergency management team (including the Office of the Governor, state agencies, and nonprofit partners) has launched a coordinated volunteer recruitment and placement effort. Governor Lamont has asked Connecticut residents who are not immune-compromised/living with other underlying health conditions, under the age of 60, and not currently ill with COVID-19 or otherwise to consider volunteering to help meet the pressing needs of other Connecticut residents.

Connecticut residents interested in volunteering can register online through DART. The DART system matches volunteers with organizations in need, and makes the connection via the point of contact that you list in the [online form](#).

If you would like to participate in this effort, please fill out the brief [Agency Registration](#) request form to start the process. After you register, you will be able to add the specific volunteer needs of your agency to the database.

If you have already registered, but have additional needs, please update your organization's information in the database to include those new volunteer needs.

## How You Can Help

Our providers need your help! This [site](#) includes ways you can volunteer, purchase meals for shelter guests, find a job in a shelter, and help clients become housed. See below to learn how you can contribute to the COVID homeless response.

**Donate today:** Please consider donating emergency funds to move families and individuals into apartments right away. Click [here](#) to make your donation.

**Food:** Please take a moment to donate a hot meal (or two, or three) to a person experiencing homelessness during this crisis. Click [here](#) to purchase a meal or start a "meal-raiser."

**Donate supplies:** CCEH has compiled wishlists of items that our local partners need to keep their staff and clients safe during this crisis. Items in high demand include PPE, toilet paper, and paper towels. Click [here](#) to find your region's wishlist.

**Apartment Vacancies:** We are looking for assistance identifying any vacant units right away. Click [here](#) to share vacancies with our provider network.

**Employment:** You can be part of the COVID homeless response! CCEH is currently accepting applications for essential shelter staff for shelters in Danbury, Greater New Haven, New Britain, and Willimantic/Mansfield Center/Storrs. CCEH will forward applicants to regional Coordinated Access Networks for consideration. Click [here](#) for more information and how to apply.

**Volunteer:** Frontline nonprofits – particularly food banks/pantries, meal delivery services, and homeless shelters – are seeing a marked increase in demand for their services. The state is currently looking for volunteers to support the effort. Click [here](#) to register as a volunteer.

## Webinars & Additional Guidance

With information about COVID rapidly evolving, keeping up-to-date is more important than ever. Stay up-to-date by visiting CCEH's COVID Guidance Page, located at [cceh.org/covid19](https://cceh.org/covid19).

### Upcoming Webinars:

Registration is open for the upcoming webinar:

- [DPH Guidance for Shelter Providers During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [Shelter Diversion During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

### Previously Recorded Webinars:

- [Responding to Violence in the Home During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [Addressing Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [Tips for Case Managers Navigating the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [Preparing Homeless Services and Shelters for Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [Addressing Eviction and Discrimination Concerns During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

## News Digest

[COVID-19 Hospitalizations Sees Largest One-Day Drop Since State Began Tracking](#)

CT Mirror | April 2020



Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness | 257 Lawrence Street, Hartford, CT 06106

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