



CCEH COVID-19 Response Newsletter

A Message from Our CEO

Dear Friends,

Recent events have made me think a lot about leadership. What does leadership mean? And what does it mean to be a good leader? And while I have by no means figured out the answers to these questions, I thought I'd share with you some of my thoughts just as I am eager to hear from you about yours.

On the one hand, the need for one kind of leadership has never been clearer as the world is gripped by a once-in-a-century global health emergency and a virus that eludes easy understanding. We've found ourselves wanting (and sometimes failing to get) strong and decisive leadership. Leadership that speaks with clarity, but with calm. Leadership that speaks the truth, even when those truths are difficult. Leadership that is authoritative, and downright stringent. I've heard people who typically shun and mistrust formal authority say how they wish there was stronger leadership from our elected leaders, and welcome the federal or state government asserting greater authority or enforces guidelines and rules. As we at CCEH worked quickly to protect the individuals and families who experience homelessness in our state, I even heard directly from many of you, our members, praising us for asserting that type of strong (and some might say) bullish leadership during this time.

On the other hand, as our nation mourned the brutal killing of George Floyd—alongside so many other victims of racism and police-involved violence against black Americans—and took to the streets in protest, we found ourselves needing (and again, failing to see) a different type of leadership. A leadership that listens. An empathetic leadership that understands the language of the unheard. A leadership that admits when policies and institutions have failed and takes responsibility. A leadership that unites, rather than divides. In other words, a leadership that knows when to stop talking (or tweeting), to listen, and to let others lead.

I know that for people in positions of influence and authority both types of leadership are needed. The hard part is knowing what type of leader to be when. As an advocate and organizational leader, my first instinct is typically to speak up, to step in, and to act when people are in need, harmed, or when injustice is done. But I have also learned that there are times when leadership demands that I do not act or speak, but instead restrain myself and listen.

So while I am far from having answers and have many shortcomings in my own leadership, I will say this to my fellow executives and leaders in non-profits and in government: we must strive to provide the kind of leadership that different situations demand. There are times, such as in the midst of a viral pandemic, to take quick and decisive action based on the best available science. But there are also times, when it is important to not jump straight to action, but to listen and to let others lead. And in doing so, we open the door to a third type of leadership. A leadership not conferred by title or position, but by necessity. Family members of victims of police brutality who choke down tears to share their stories of pain and grief. High school students that organize a peaceful demonstration. Private citizens from all walks of life voicing their support. Our own colleagues and staff members who lead us through uncomfortable, but important conversations.

In my view, reversing centuries of racial injustice and police brutality demands the type of leadership that does not rush into action or seek quick solutions, but that takes the time to listen and allow the people who've been most affected to guide us and lead us. I believe that doing so will not only make solutions stronger, but it will also allow for needed healing and for learning to take place.

We can and we must honor the George Floyd's life by seizing this moment and advancing the kind of true and lasting change that has been needed for far too long. But we would not honor his life fully if we provide the wrong kind of leadership. Justice for George Floyd and for generations of black, indigenous, and Americans of color will not be done only by the quick passing of a bill, the launching of a program, or budgetary changes, but also by giving the space and the time for people to speak and for leaders to listen.

May we all provide the kind of leadership that this moment and time demands.

Yours,

Yours,

Richard Cho

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Homeless Services

The attached [slide deck](#) presents available data to indicate how the COVID-19 pandemic appears to have impacted homeless populations and homeless services. Data include trends in 211 call volume and the number of people accessing homeless shelter.

Juneteenth Call to Action

We invite you to join CCEH on June 19th as we observe Juneteenth, or Freedom Day, through engaging in at least one act of protest. CCEH calls on our members and supporters to join us in making Juneteenth a day of protest. Acts of protest include, but are not limited to, reading educational materials on racism in America and black liberation; donating to anti-racist organizations that uplift communities of color; attending a racial justice protest; and doing self-reflection on your role in creating anti-racist communities. Join us in being a stronger coalition, fighting for racial justice as we work to end homelessness.

Race Equity During COVID

Racial Disparities in COVID



In Connecticut, Black/African-Americans account for over 30% of people experiencing homelessness, but only represent about 10% of CT's general population.



Black/African-Americans account for around 20% of CT COVID-positive cases and around 15% of COVID-related deaths
ctdata.org/covid19



Initial data indicates that people of color make up a disproportionate percentage of the homeless population. CCEH seeks to support our coalition in ensuring that skin color is not a barrier to attaining housing resources. As current events have highlighted, words are not enough to make this happen, which is why we are focused on six strategies we view as essential to transforming our system:

1. Recognizing racial disparities exist
2. Analyzing data for racial disparities
3. Develop a Race Equity Framework for our coalition
4. Formally empower people of color from partner agencies to lead
5. Provide trainings targeted to address specific race equity issues
6. Develop strategies for making board and staff fully representative

To learn more about how CCEH is addressing racial disparities during COVID-19 visit our new [Race and Equity during COVID](#) webpage.

HMIS Update

HMIS has recently improved search results for duplicate clients. This will allow people entering new clients to search for duplicate client records.

In addition, improvements have been made to the Document Check feature in the system. This will provide a clearer summary screen for easier assessment of existing documents.

For more detailed information please [click here](#).

IKEA Coming Your Way!



Thank you once again to IKEA for the generous donation of eleven tons of furniture to distribute to clients moving out of the shelter system into new apartments during COVID. We are pleased to share that Two Men and a Truck has generously volunteered to help us move the merchandise to locations accessible to each CAN starting this Monday.

We are in touch with CAN leads to coordinate logistics on the delivery. Stay tuned!

Face Mask Distribution



Thank you again to United Healthcare for the donation of 4000 masks, which CSH and CCEH have jointly distributed to nearly 40 providers around Connecticut. We know that they will be put to good use and welcome additional donations of reusable face masks.

Economic Impact Payments for Americans Experiencing Homelessness



The IRS has reached out to us to share this important information that directly benefits people experiencing homelessness. Even if you do not have an address you are still eligible to receive \$1,200 in economic relief due to COVID-19.

For additional information please [click here](#).

COVID-19 Planning & Response for Homeless Assistance Providers

HUD's Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) invites homeless assistance providers and their partners to participate in weekly Office Hours to discuss COVID-19 planning and response on **Fridays from 2:30 - 4:00 PM**

EDT. Presenters from the following federal agencies and their partners will be available for a live question and answer session.

To register please [click here](#).

Charity Workout Competition



We are excited to announce that City Climb Gym will be hosting a fundraising yoga event this Sunday June 14th at 10 A.M. via Zoom.

Please [click here](#) for additional information, and thank you for supporting our efforts to end homelessness.

How You Can Help

Our providers need your help! This [site](#) includes ways you can join Connecticut's homeless response.

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.

Upcoming Webinars:

- [Testing for COVID-19 in Homeless Shelters & Encampments: Discussing CDC's New Health Department Guidance & NHCHC's Newest Issue Brief](#)

Previously Recorded Webinars:

- [Using the Emergency Solutions Grant Program for COVID-19 Housing Response](#)
- [Communities Using Data to Analyze Racial Disparities During the Pandemic](#)
- [Hotels to Homes: Rapidly Housing from Hotels During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Housing and Justice: Avoiding Homelessness after Incarceration](#)
- [Communities Using Data to Analyze Racial Disparities During the Pandemic – Here's Where You Can Start](#)
- [Addressing Racial Disparities in Homelessness During COVID-19](#)
- [Verbal De-Escalation and Crisis Prevention During COVID-19](#)
- [Responding to COVID-19: An Inside Look into Connecticut's Homeless Response](#)
- [Caring for and Reducing the Transmission of COVID-19 in Shelters and Hotels: A View from the Field](#)
- [Shelter to Housing Crash Course: Rapidly Exiting to Permanent Housing](#)
- [DPH Webinar: COVID-19 Monitoring, Care, and Transmission Reduction Among People Experiencing Homelessness in Shelters and Hotels](#)
- [Responding to Violence in the Home During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)
- [Addressing Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

Additional Resources:

- [NAEH COVID-19 Online Learning Resources](#)

Please [click here](#) to access our entire webinar catalog.



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