



## CCEH COVID-19 Response Newsletter

### Letter from CEO Richard Cho



Dear Friends,

We on the Coalition staff are thinking of all of you as many of you struggle with power outages and damage in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Isaias. Please let us know if and how your shelters, housing programs, and services have been affected.

Meanwhile, we are pleased the results of the 2020 Point-in-Time Count. This annual volunteer census is a massive effort by hundreds of volunteers across the state of Connecticut and provides us with an important and consistent one-night snapshot of homelessness in our state that allows for year-by-year and national comparisons.

These results show that homelessness decreased slightly from the previous year, meaning that we had held on to and slightly improved upon the 32% decrease in homelessness since 2007. Of course, these results reflect the state of homelessness in Connecticut before the COVID-19 public health emergency upended everything.

That said, I believe that the very statewide coordinated homeless response system that enabled us to achieve these steady declines in homelessness, and which enabled us to work quickly to protect people experiencing homelessness from COVID-19, will enable us to continue to drive down homelessness even further in the years to come. As I recently said in an interview with [Governing](#), "We've made housing first the DNA of our whole system," and not even a global pandemic can stop us from bringing an end to homelessness.

But the 2020 PIT Count results, and our more recent data, tell us that we still have more work to do. While January's results showed that our state achieved a slight decline in individual homelessness compared with last year, our current data shows that demand among individuals for shelter remains high even as shelters are taking in fewer new guests. Providers are connecting young adults to housing faster than ever, but youth continue to fall into homelessness. Rates of homelessness among families remained virtually unchanged in January and continue to remain unchanged now.

We, the Coalition staff, remain as committed as ever to making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring, even as we adapt to this new normal. We thank all of you for your incredible efforts and support and for joining us to continue the fight ahead.

Yours,

Richard Cho  
Chief Executive Officer

### 2020 Point-in-Time Report Available Now



We are pleased to share the results of the 2020 Point-in-Time Count. This year's PIT Count identified 2,904 people who were homeless on the night of the count. This included 1,947 individual adults and 305 family households including 560 children. This year's Count documented a decrease in homelessness across most populations. Please note that this year we will publish the results of the Youth Outreach and Count in a separate report. Of course, these results represent a snapshot of life before COVID, but are nonetheless important in offering a snapshot just before the current storm we are weathering.

We would like to thank our funders, the Connecticut Department of Housing, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the Melville Charitable Trust, and all of our dedicated regional coordinators who made this year's PIT possible, including Access Community Action Agency, BHcare, Capital Region Mental

Health Center, Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, Columbus House, The Connection, the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs, Emerge, Hartford Healthcare, Inspirica, Journey Home, Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project, Recovery Network of Programs, Salvation Army Waterbury, Supportive Housing Works, United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, and Windham No Freeze. A special thank above all to the more than 600 people who turned out to participate in the Count on one of the coldest days of the year. We are truly grateful!

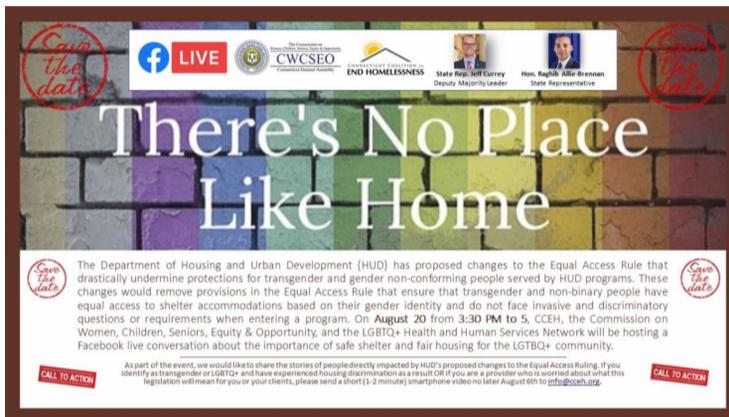
Click [here](#) to read the full report.

## Are You Experiencing Power Outage?

The State "Emergency Support Function" working group that deals with social services and facilities will reconvene this afternoon for an emergency session regarding impact of the tropical storm and power outages.

If your agency has experienced power outages or other impact from the storm, we invite you to forward your concerns briefly and quickly as you can to [info@cceh.org](mailto:info@cceh.org). Your responses will help us represent our coalition within that forum, in today's meeting or in a follow-up communication to the group's leadership.

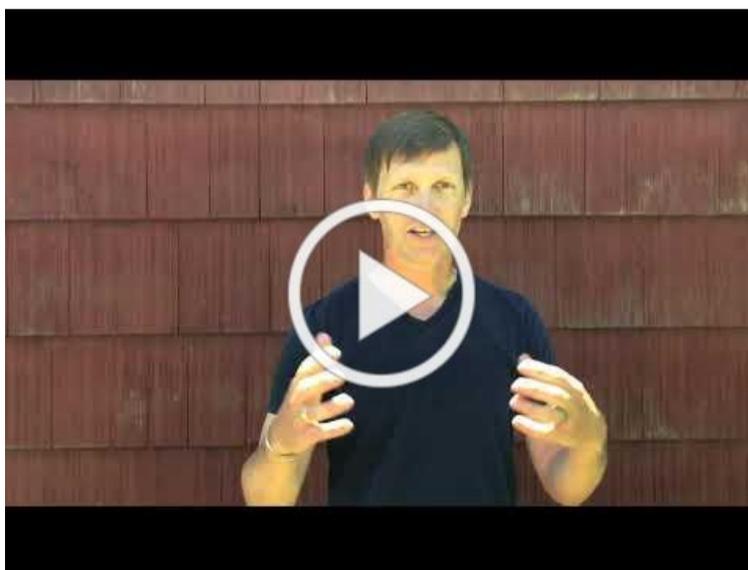
## Equal Access: Please Share Your Testimony



The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has proposed changes to the Equal Access Rule that drastically undermine protections for transgender and gender non-conforming people served by HUD programs. These changes would remove provisions to the Equal Access Rule that ensure that transgender and non-binary people have equal access to shelter accommodations based on their gender identity and do not face invasive and discriminatory questions or requirements when entering a program. On August 20 from 3:30 to 5 pm, CCEH, the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, and the LGBTQ+ Health and Human Services Network will be hosting a Facebook live conversation about the importance of safe shelter and fair housing for the LGBTQ+ community.

As part of the event, we would like to share the stories of people directly impacted by HUD's proposed changes to the Equal Access Ruling. If you identify as transgender or LGBTQ+ and have experienced housing discrimination as a result, or if you are a provider who is worried about what this legislation will mean for you or your clients, please send a short (1-2 minute) smartphone video no later than August 12 by noon to [info@cceh.org](mailto:info@cceh.org). Alternatively, if you would like to testify during the virtual hearing, you can also email [info@cceh.org](mailto:info@cceh.org).

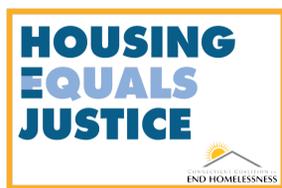
## Three Important Steps for Youth Experiencing Homelessness



Our very own Carl Asikainen put together this video to inform youth of three very important steps you must take if you are experiencing homelessness.

1. Call 2-1-1 and tell them your housing situation.
2. Find a trusted adult connected to the school system. This can be a teacher or counselor, and let them know you need housing assistance.
3. Contact the State's McKinney-Vento coordinator Louis Tallarita at [louis.tallarita@ct.gov](mailto:louis.tallarita@ct.gov)

## 2020 Annual Training Institute: Housing = Justice



Save the Date! CCEH's Annual Training Institute is just around the corner. Sponsored by Bank of America, this year's ATI will be a week-long virtual extravaganza with presenters focused on racial justice, criminal justice, and economic justice in the face of COVID.

This year, we seek to explore how we can all come together to build a homeless crisis response system that is just and compassionate while also making the best use of scarce financial resources in the face of a pandemic. We will focus in particular on topics that are on everybody's minds right now, including how towns and cities respond to rising homelessness in the face of the pandemic among singles, families, youth, and unsheltered populations in towns and cities across our state.

If you would like to nominate somebody you know to serve as a panelist during the ATI, please send your nominations to [info@cceh.org](mailto:info@cceh.org).

### Inputting COVID-19 Testing Data into HMIS

There is now a new [link](#) for inputting COVID-19 testing data. The link allows you to send data to a specific Nutmeg staff member who will upload your data into HMIS.

Please note as well that changes in HMIS due to the HUD 2020 Data Standards are coming in October. The updates include the Coordinated Entry Assessment and Event data elements, as well as changes to improve the Coordinated Entry intake form. More details to follow soon.

### Apply for COVID-19 Respond Funds Now

**CCEH is extending the deadline for applying for COVID-19 funds to August 21st at noon. Your agency can apply for a grant from the COVID-19 fund [here](#).**

As a thank you for your efforts to keep people safe during COVID-19, we are inviting all CCEH member agencies providing direct service to homeless populations to apply for a grant from CCEH's COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund. This funding is intended to reimburse regional providers for the purchase of supplies including PPE, food, toiletries, clothing, and coverage of gaps in staffing, as well as additional costs including flexible emergency assistance and unsheltered outreach expenses. We will be distributing a total of \$100K from the fund to CCEH member agencies who submit requests for eligible expenses [not reimbursed through other sources](#).

If your agency is not a current member, you can join [here](#) before submitting your application. Click [here](#) for a full list of current CCEH members.

Thank you again for your incredible work during the pandemic!

### How To Prioritize CARES ACT Funding

The national collaboration that produced the "[Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homelessness Response](#)" now offers this "At-a-Glance Matrix" to help communities decide how to prioritize CARES ACT funding streams effectively and efficiently. Please [click here](#) to view this matrix.

For further assistance an orientation by former USICH directors Barbara Poppe and Matt Doherty is available [here](#).

### Take Action: COVID-19 Relief Bill



The Senate passed the latest COVID-19 relief bill, but it fails to include an extension for the eviction moratoria or funding for homelessness and housing.

As final negotiations for this bill with the House begin, we need YOU to take action and help your vulnerable neighbors experiencing housing instability, as well as the local homeless service providers doing their best to respond to the effects of COVID19.

Contact your elected officials [here](#) and urge them to include funding for housing vouchers, rental assistance, and Emergency Solutions Grants!

### Get Out the Vote

Make sure you are register to vote! People experiencing homelessness should be aware of their right to vote. Courts have said that an individual is a resident of a town if they have some nexus to that particular town, and there is an intention to return to that town when absent from it. This could be some town that you have spent time in, slept in, and intend to go back to even if you are not presently there.

You can register to vote online [here](#).

### CCEH seeking be homeful ambassadors

If you know of any amazing kids who care deeply about ending homelessness, please encourage them to reach out and become *be homeful* ambassadors by filling out this [form](#).

Kids of all ages who want to help by making welcome home signs can send them to:

Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness  
c/o the be homeful project  
257 Lawrence Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

Please also share your signs via the [be homeful](#) Instagram page!



Artwork by: Caroline Baim



Artwork by: Patrick Baim



Artwork by: Andrew Baim

## 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](https://cceh.org/covid19).

### Spotlight Webinar

#### [Communities Using Data to Analyze Racial Disparities During the Pandemic](#)

CCEH has partnered with the CT Fair Housing Center, CT Legal Services, and CT Department of Housing to provide you with an "Update on the Status of Evictions in Connecticut During the COVID-19 Crisis."

### Upcoming Webinars

#### [Components of an Effective Outreach System](#)

Friday, August 14, 2020  
11:00 A.M. -12:00 P.M.

#### [How Vulnerable is the Homeless Population to COVID-19? Results from a National Study](#)

Tuesday, August 18, 2020  
12:00pm-1:00pm

#### [Reading Between the Data](#)

Thursday, September 3, 2020  
11:00am-12:00pm

### Previously Recorded Webinars

#### [Update on the Status of Evictions in CT During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

#### [Having a Harm Reduction Approach During a Pandemic \(Session 1\)](#)

#### [Having a Harm Reduction Approach During a Pandemic \(Session 2\)](#)

#### [Working with Landlords to Rapidly House Successfully: Recruiting, Engaging and Retaining](#)

#### [Addressing Racial Disparities in Homelessness During COVID-19](#)

#### [Responding to COVID-19: An Inside Look into Connecticut's Homeless Response](#)

#### [Shelter to Housing Crash Course: Rapidly Exiting to Permanent Housing](#)

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

## CCEH in the News

[Support for Housing the Homeless Continues as COVID Rages](#)  
Governing.com - August 2020



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

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