



CCEH COVID-19 Response Newsletter

A Letter From CCEH CEO Richard Cho



Dear Friends,

In our work to end homelessness, rarely a day goes by where we are not confronted with new and challenging questions. These days, the questions that come up for us have a lot to do with COVID-19: What is the safest way to meet the increased demand for shelter in cold weather? Should the frequency of COVID-19 testing increase when COVID-19 transmission rates go up? How do we house our clients faster when landlords seem to be more risk averse than ever? The answers are not always clear or

straightforward, and often the best we can do is to try what feels right and make adjustments as we need.

But even as we grapple with questions that we don't always have answer to, it's also important to remember and center ourselves on the things we do know for sure about ending homelessness. And those things are as follows:

1. We know for certain that homelessness is not a result of personal failure. Homelessness isn't caused by people's mental illnesses or addiction. People are not homeless because they are lazy or don't work hard enough. Many people are homeless who do not have any mental illnesses or addiction issues and many people who are homeless are actually working. Likewise, there are many people who have mental illnesses and addiction issues who never experience homelessness, just as there are people who are un- or under-employed who never become homeless. Viewing homelessness as a personal failure leads us down the wrong path of focusing on "fixing" people and not on the true cause of homelessness.
2. We know for certain that what causes homelessness is the growing inaccessibility of housing. And why is housing becoming less and less accessible? First, because [rental housing costs are rising above what wages can afford](#). The laws of supply and demand dictate that the price of any good is a function of what customers are willing to pay and what suppliers are willing to produce. But in recent years, [rental housing has become a good that is traded as a speculative investment, as a commodity on financial markets, and even as an item sold on Airbnb](#). Meanwhile, the supply of housing is limited in Connecticut by local zoning policies and practices that seek to keep density low. It's no wonder that the cost of rental housing has gone way above what working families can afford. Second, housing is inaccessible because of laws that fail to adequately protect vulnerable people from housing exclusion. People with criminal records, poor credit history, eviction histories, and who have disabilities are routinely rejected from rental housing even if they are working, striving to rebuild their lives, and already protected under the law.
3. We know for certain that what solves homelessness—both at the individual household level and at the systems level—is rapid and direct connection to stable housing. We've seen through [research](#) and direct experience how even the people with the most significant personal challenges can radically rebuild their lives once they obtain a home and use that home as a foundation for achieving their personal goals. (On the other hand, achieving those personal goals—whether to increase incomes or achieve recovery—are next to impossible when one does not have a stable home.) And we've seen how applying that approach leads to success at a community and a state level. Connecticut's experience—in which [homelessness has been reduced by 35% since 2007](#) even as housing costs have increased in our state—is proof that the [Housing First](#) approach works. And our reductions in homelessness would be even steeper if we could address the rising cost of housing. We also know that the greatest reductions in homelessness occurred after Connecticut fully adopted the Housing First approach statewide through the creation of a Coordinated Access Network system in 2014.

Sadly, we seem to be living in an age when invalidated and unsubstantiated ideas are given equal footing alongside approaches that have been tested and proven through science and evidence, whether on climate change, vaccines, COVID-19, and now, homelessness. In each of these cases, the goal of those who promote these unsubstantiated ideas is not actually to suggest viable alternative solutions. It's simply to create doubt and misdirection so as to undermine further investment in proven solutions. By saying climate change is not real or not caused by human activity, deniers seek to reduce political support for reducing fossil fuel consumption and investing in non-carbon emitting technologies. Likewise, by saying homelessness results of personal failure, Housing First deniers seek to shift the focus away from government responsibility on investing in housing assistance and on protecting renters.

My message to you is simple: **Don't get distracted. Stay focused.** We know what works. Let's keep applying and scaling what works and keep proving to the country and the world that homelessness can be ended, and Connecticut knows how to do it.

Yours truly,

Richard Cho
CEO

Get Out the Vote!

Election day (November 3rd) is right around the corner. YOU can make a difference! Elections are won by a handful of votes, and all citizens deserve to have their vote and voice counted.

Please click [here](#) to get detailed information on the laws for getting your clients registered to vote. If you have any questions please contact us at info@cceh.org.



Click on the image to download the flyer.



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A Very Concerning Government Response to Homelessness

This week the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released their strategic plan called [Expanding the Toolbox](#). We at CCEH are deeply troubled by the direction USICH has taken in recent months. Please read the whole statement to learn about this concerning development at the federal level.

Our friends at the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) share our concerns and have released a statement in response to USICH strategic vision. Please take some time to read their response by clicking [here](#).

2020 Annual Training Institute: Presentation Slides

We have created a page with the presentation slides from the ATI. This will allow you to extract information from some of the webinars. Please visit the page by click [here](#).

We hope you are enjoying the many workshop videos. You can now view all keynotes, workshops, and tours on-demand [here](#). Please share your favorite sessions with anybody you think would be interested. We are delighted that those who missed the conference will still be able to benefit from the information shared by our fabulous presenters.



We Are Hiring! Join Our Team

CCEH is hiring! Please spread the word about the following openings:

Senior Data Analyst

The Senior Data Analyst is member of the CCEH data team, responsible for a wide variety of tasks related to data collection and analysis, including through CT-HMIS, relating to programs that serve people experiencing homelessness in Connecticut. Learn more [here](#).

Capacity Building & Equity Coordinator/Program Manager

The Capacity Building & Equity Program Manager, in partnership with CCEH staff, manages and implements the agency's training and technical assistance program as well as CCEH's strategies to end racial inequity in the homeless service system. Learn more [here](#).

Director of Finance and Administration

CCEH is seeking an energetic, mission-driven, strategic, and problem-solving Director of Finance and Administration to oversee all financial and administrative functions, including office and building operations and human resources functions. Learn more [here](#).

Mattresses Available for Clients Moving into Apartments

We still have mattresses available for your clients! CT REALTORS Foundation has generously donated 100 twin mattresses for clients moving out of the shelter system into permanent housing. Please click [here](#) to submit your requests. Mattresses will be available on a first come, first served basis. Mattresses can be shipped directly to your client's new home.

[PLACE YOUR ORDER](#)

Get Your Housing Equals Justice Merch!

Yes the ATI is over but our work continues. You can still be a part of our movement by visiting the [online store](#)! All proceeds will go towards making homelessness, rare, brief, and non-recurring in Connecticut. Place your order right away!



Wear it proud! Available in many styles including t-shirts, hoodies, and baseball tees.



Warm up your body and soul! Start each day right drinking from a mug that says it all.



What better way to send a message than wearing a Housing Equals Justice mask!

Resources for Providers

[Remote Supervision Tips for Homeless System Providers \(HUD\)](#)

[Rapid Rehousing Ramp up \(HUD\)](#)

[Guide to Using the IRS Non-Filers Tool to Get an Economic Impact Payment \(IRS\)](#)

[Governor Lamont Extends Eviction Moratorium To End of 2020](#)

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

[Motivational Interviewing Workshop](#)

Thursday, October 29th & Friday, October 30th, 2020
9 A.M. - 12 P.M.

[Housing Inventory Count \(HIC\) Training](#)

Wednesday, November 4th, 2020
1 P.M. - 2 P.M.

[Rights of and Resources for the Most Vulnerable Populations](#)

Tuesday, November 17th, 2020
12 P.M. - 1 P.M.

Previously Recorded Webinars

- [Housing Stability for People and their Pets](#)
- [APR Bootcamp](#)
- [Components of an Effective Outreach System](#)
- [How Vulnerable is the Homeless Population to COVID-19? Results from a National Study](#)
- [Addressing Racialized Trauma and Actively Engaging in Anti-Racism](#)
- [Having a Harm Reduction Approach During a Pandemic \(Session 2\)](#)
- [Having a Harm Reduction Approach During a Pandemic \(Session 1\)](#)
- [Update on the Status of Evictions in CT During the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

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

CCEH in the News

[Connecticut's housing crisis requires more than an emergency response](#)

CT Mirror | October 2020

[COVID presents fresh challenges for prisoners re-entering society, but also new opportunities](#)

CT Mirror | October 2020

[Advocates, State Find Housing for 1,099 People](#)

NBC Connecticut | October 2020

[Connecticut's Hidden Homeless: Motel-dwellers aren't considered 'homeless enough' to warrant state help](#)

CT Mirror | October 2020

[New Haven takes on youth homelessness amid pandemic](#)

Yale Daily News | October 2020



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

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