

**CLALLAM COUNTY  
HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE  
AND  
HOUSING PLAN  
2020 – 2024**

## Introduction

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Clallam County Washington is the most northwestern county in the continental United States. It is a rural county with total a population of 74,570 ("U.S. Census by County", 2017). The majority of the county's population (43,485) resides in unincorporated areas, but more than a quarter of the population (26.25%) resides in Port Angeles (Clallam County Community Health Status Assessment, 2017). Clallam County's population is aging. As of 2015, the median age in the county was 51.

The majority of Clallam County's population (83.20%) is white (non-Hispanic). The largest populations among communities of color are Hispanic (6.1%) and American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) (5.60%). In 2017, the median household income of Clallam County residents was \$48,002 (<https://www.washington-demographics.com/clallam-county-demographics>) which is significantly lower than the state average of \$70,714. The poverty rate is 15.3% with more than a third (35%) of county residents living below 200% of the poverty level (Clallam County Community Health Status Assessment, 2017).

Clallam County's 2018 vacancy rate for rental units is reported to be 3.2% (WA Department of Commerce 2018 Year to Year Comparison). The percent of Clallam County population living in homelessness is 0.38%.

The major causal factors for homelessness in Clallam County are: lower than average salaries and elevated unemployment rates of 7% (<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/WACLALOURN>) that contribute to the county's high poverty rate of 15% (Clallam County Community Health Status Assessment, 2017), and the low vacancy rate, high rental rates, and available affordable housing stock. In addition, although there is currently a large gap in funding for providers to adequately address the homelessness and housing needs, this plan will assume that there will be no additional funding for plan implementation.

## Executive Summary

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The challenge for this 2020-2024 Clallam County Homelessness Plan update is to both provide immediate shelter to those facing a night on the street, and at the same time to provide long-term help for people to get back on the street and become economically independent for all of Clallam County's homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. This challenge is significantly increased as the plan assumes that there will be no increase in the amount of funding available to accomplish these tasks. In light of these circumstances, for example, no increase in staff capacity for services, no additional shelter or housing capacity etc., then the plan's main focus is to look for areas to increase efficiency, coordination between providers, and identification of gaps and needs in service.

## History

Historically there had been no statewide, integrated approach to homelessness in Washington. House Bill 2163, passed in 2005, attempted to remedy this situation by requiring each county to develop a homeless housing plan, providing a funding source through document recording fees to directly address the goals identified in these plans, and outlining reporting requirements. As a result of the new funding stream the Clallam County Board of Commissioners establish the Homelessness Task Force (HTF) in 2005. The HTF functions to prepare plans that address homelessness issues and provide recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on funding programs that address issues identified in the homelessness plans.

The current positions for the HTF are:

**Governments:**

Representative from Clallam County Health and Human Services – Andy Brastad

Representative from City governments of Port Angeles - Mike French

Representative from Tribal governments – Currently Vacant

**Providers:**

Representative of healthcare providers – Mary Hogan

Representative from Peninsula Housing Authority –Debbi Tesch

Representative from mental health/substance use providers – Jaymie Doane

Representative from domestic violence/sexual assault providers – Rebecca Korby

Representative from service providers on the West End – Ann Simpson

Representative from Serenity House of Clallam County – Doc Robinson

Representative from Olympic Community Action Programs – Kathy Morgan

Representative from United Way of Clallam County – Christy Smith

Representative from WorkSource – currently vacant

**Community Representatives:**

Representative from the law and justice system – Jason Viada

Representative from the Faith Community – Tom Steffen

Representatives that are homeless or formerly homeless residing in Clallam County – John DeBoer

Representative who is an advocate for youth issues – Susan Hilgren

Representative who is an advocate for veteran’s issues – Cheri Tinker

Representative from the Department of Social and Health Services – Juli Murrain

Representative serving in an at-large capacity –Joseph Cress

Representative serving in an at-large capacity –Corrie Matlock Hightower

The HTF has developed several documents to address homelessness in Clallam County:

Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Clallam County (2005)

2010 Update to the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Clallam County (2010)

2014 Update to the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Clallam County (2013)

**Administration of the Homelessness Programs**

As stated in RCW 43.185C 080 “While a local government has the authority to subcontract with other entities, the local government continues to maintain the ultimate responsibility for the homeless housing program within its borders”. In the past Clallam County has not taken lead status for homelessness programs nor accepted the Department of Commerce Consolidated Homelessness Grant (CHG), instead supporting Serenity House of Clallam County in receiving the grant funds and responsibility for meeting the grant’s requirements. County leadership does realize that the County is ultimately responsible for implementation and tracking of the plans action items. Realizing this, the Clallam County Board of Commissioners are rethinking how the Coordinated Housing grant is administered. They will be exploring the possibility of assuming lead status and applying for the Consolidated Homelessness Grant in the 2021 funding cycle.

## Development of this Plan

The Clallam County Homelessness Task Force Plan Update Committee, a subcommittee of the Clallam County Homelessness Task Force, developed draft plans and received input from the entire HTF prior to working with the Clallam County Board of Commissioners on an approval process.

A Plan Update Committee was organized from the membership of the Clallam County Homelessness Task Force (HTF). The Planning committee was responsible for developing drafts of the updated plan to bring to the full Homelessness Task Force membership for review and comments. The Plan Updated Committee was comprised of the following HTF members:

Mary Hogan – Olympia Peninsula Community Clinic

Susan Hillgren – The Answer for Youth

Ann Simpson – Forks Abuse Program

Kathy Morgan – Olympic Community Action Programs

Cheri Tinker - North Olympic Regional Veteran's Housing Network (NORVHN)

Andy Brastad – Clallam County Health and Human Services

Although though there was not a person who experience homelessness on the planning subcommittee, there is a person who experienced homelessness on the HTF and did provide input into the planning effort.

The Plan Update was provided for review and approval at the November 2019 HTF monthly meeting. The Plan was presented to the Clallam Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on November 18, 2019 and approved by the BOCC on November 26, 2019.

## Scope of the Plan

The plan contemplates that no new resources (or funding) will be available for implementation and only existing resources are available. That requires that focus areas of the plan will be making the Clallam County Homelessness - Continuum of Care system more efficient and effective. Actions that create better coordination between the various entities involved in providing shelter, housing, and aid will be a major part of this focus area. This would entail improvements in the coordinated entry system, open communication among providers regarding available services, and rapid interaction with the homeless to provide shelter and housing services as available.

### **This plan addresses issues of homelessness throughout Clallam County, including:**

- Procedures for coordinating the release of patients from hospital, behavioral health providers, and incarceration with the coordinated entry system.
- Assessing the current Continuum of Care system, identifying needs and gaps in the current services.
- Identifying additional sources of funding to address additional shelters to serve both east and western Clallam County create additional affordable housing and transitional housing.
- Address connectivity to needed services for veterans, homeless youth, and the American Indian and Alaska Native homeless population.

## Plan Goals

The overall goal of the Plan is to ***work together as a community to make homelessness a rare, brief, and one time occurrence in Clallam County through an efficient and effective homeless response system.***

The Action Plan is comprised of five objectives, each with supporting Core Strategies and New Action Steps, which will be used over the next five years to address homelessness. Each Goal also includes Performance Indicators of Success.

1. **Quickly identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness**
2. **Prioritize housing for people with the greatest needs**
3. **Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable permanent housing**
4. **Project the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies**
5. **Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness**

### **HUD's Definition of Chronically Homeless:**

Chronically homeless means: (1) A "homeless individual with a disability," as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(9)), who: (i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and (ii) Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility; (2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility

### **Goal 1: Quickly identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness**

One of the most cost-effective ways to decrease homelessness is to prevent the endless flow of individuals and families who become homeless from entering the system. The steps needed to accomplish this include a fluid coordination of non-profits providing navigators and peer counselors who meet those experiencing homelessness where they congregate. Olympic Peninsula Community Clinic (OPCC) have partnered with the Port Angeles Police Department (PAPD) to go out in the field looking for community members who are in need of services and don't know how to access them.

These contacts have resulted in meaningful linkage to mental health, substance abuse, medical services, housing and shelter, food bank, crisis services, transportation and other necessities. The goal of this program (Rediscovery) is to help people before their circumstances lead to an arrest or hospitalization. The Port Angeles Fire Dept. also has a "Community Paramedic" program which works in partnership with the Rediscovery Program team. Filling the gaps through collaboration the teams have developed productive and effective professional relationships with community partners that assist our community members to engage in the appropriate service at the appropriate time with the least amount of resistance.

There are other agencies in the county such as Peninsula Behavioral Health who use peer counselors for their outreach programs. Together, our community is working together to shorten the time our community members are living on the street.

### **Current Needs and Gaps**

The number of homeless individuals and households, and requests for homeless services has grown over the past decade. As long as the myriad underlying social causes of housing crisis exist, households will continue to become homeless. National research indicates that many households who report needing assistance to prevent homelessness may actually be resilient enough to resolve the issue independently, whereas those who are most vulnerable should be prioritized for assistance.

**People Re-entering the Community from Systems of Care:** People are frequently discharged from other systems of care, such as jails, hospitals, behavioral health programs, substance disorder treatment and foster care, into homelessness due to the lack of housing options. In addition, Clallam County currently has very few emergency housing beds for people who have high behavioral health needs, significant medical needs or criminal histories.

Clallam County has been working together to put together a First Responders Group made up of Serenity House (Shelter), North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN), Olympic Medical Center (Hospital), Peninsula Behavioral Health (PBH), Port Angeles Fire Dept. Paramedics and PAPD) to coordinate with the different entities who are being discharged from the Hospital and have no place to go. If no available bed can be found, the patient will stay in the hospital until a suitable bed is available.

For those leaving incarceration, it will take a coordinated effort between the jail's discharge and the shelters within Clallam County. We are able to provide shelter for clients exiting incarceration and transportation to get to the shelters. This reduces the number of formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the street without support.

**Affordable Housing Shortage:** Clallam County, like many other cities and counties, is in the midst of a shortage of affordable housing – both subsidized and market-rate. The 2019 Washington State Affordable Housing Needs Assessment states that 51% of renters statewide (54.6% in Clallam County) have become “cost-burdened,” spending more than 30% of household income on housing. Currently, there are 234,000 households considered “severely cost-burdened” in Washington State. Severely cost-burdened households pay more than half their monthly income on rent. Prospective homeowners are also impacted by the lack of affordable housing. The statewide median sales price for a home is \$337,000, 6.6% higher than 2016 and is the highest median home price ever recorded in Washington.

**Additional Missing Systems:** Clallam County, along with other cities and counties in Washington State have limited funds when it comes to helping those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. When we identify and engage with a homeless person we have to consider cultural issues and, are they also a veteran, a senior citizen, youth, LGBTQ, or fleeing domestic violence. Their needs are all different but the basic needs are the same; food, housing, a job. The way we engage has to meet the needs of these different cultures of people if we are going to be successful in keeping them off the streets.

Other missing programs are those for seniors that include housing and extended care, veterans housing, safe and stable housing and mental health services for youth of color, LGBTQ.

### **Core Strategies**

**Preventing homelessness** through targeted prevention can avert eviction or foreclosure for those most likely to become homeless. **Diversion programs** make smaller investments for non-housing items that prevent housing instability or homelessness. Prevention programs have improved efficacy if connections to existing supports (such as job training and placement, basic life skills, financial literacy and education) are included so that households can address the underlying reason for their housing crisis.

**Pro-actively planning for housing and services for individuals re-entering the community** from jails, correctional facilities, foster care, hospitals, mental health programs, substance use disorder treatment, and homeless shelters, transitional housing, and other housing programs will prevent homelessness among people in these situations. In addition, **respite beds** are needed for people with complex medical and/or behavioral health needs who do not have stable housing and are in need of related supportive services either temporarily or long-term.

**Additional units of affordable housing** for households at very low and low income levels are required to prevent the large number of rent-burdened households being forced into homelessness. *This plan does not attempt to specifically identify actions to increase the number of affordable housing units.* Instead, it proposes an Affordable Housing Inventory and Needs Assessment report to provide leadership and data to develop a separate plan to address this critical need. In addition, this Plan’s scope only includes action steps that can be accomplished by local governments and agencies, Clallam Counties’ homelessness service providers and members and other organizations that are part of the Clallam County Homeless Crisis Response System. A more extensive group of stakeholders will need to be involved in the development of an affordable housing plan. Alternative housing models may also provide some solutions – in other counties Single Room Occupancy units, boarding houses, shared housing and tiny houses have proved to be a viable way for more low-income households to remain intact.

**Connection to services** is the first step to getting people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless in stable housing or staying in their homes. Household, single, unaccompanied youth need to be connected with appropriate existing supports and benefits to avoid homelessness. Solidify and streamline collaborative inter-agency effort by continually sharing current information on resources, increase outreach and providers' capacity to end crisis and decrease duplication of services and misinformation to clients.

This will be accomplished with the aid of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to help decrease duplication of services, especially when it comes to housing. The City of Sequim is using their Health and Human Services grant funds to put together a collaboration of non-profit service providers who will work together to build a resource center that will house those providing services for those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. This three year grant will gather information and provide services using navigators to determine who are homeless and what services are needed to bring down the number of people living on the streets. So far there are nine providers with more providers expected to join next year. The resource center will be located next to the Sequim Food Bank where many people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, congregate.

**Outreach:** There are several non-profit agencies that provide outreach programs in addition to homelessness services:

- Serenity House has their “Beat the Streets” program where they send navigators to engage with those who are homeless to get them into services.
- Peninsula Behavior Health has the “Path” program where peer counselors are out on the streets engaging the homeless to get into services.
- Olympic Peninsula Community Clinic has their “Rediscovery” program. They have hired a MSW who partners with the Port Angeles Police Department to ride along with officers to link people to services. OPCC is planning on expanding their program to have a navigator in Sequim and eventually, in Forks.

All three of these programs are successful in getting those living on the streets into services. It is a long process as some of those living on the street are distrustful of everyone because of bad experiences they have had in the past. The navigators stay with each client to make sure they make appointments and help in breaking down barriers that would prevent those living on the streets from getting care.

**Emergency Services:** Several organizations offer emergency services. Forks Abuse and Healthy Families have a crisis hot line for domestic violence or sexual abuse. Peninsula Behavioral Health has a crisis hot line for behavioral health issues.

Serenity House provides emergency shelter in their night-by-night shelter and short term transitional housing for 6 months or less, youth drop-in every day from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Serenity House provides food and clothing, and aid in preventing homelessness.

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| <b>GOAL 1</b>                                           | Quickly identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness.                                             |
| <b>Performance Indicators of Success</b>                | <b>Core Strategies</b>                                                                                        |
| Fewer people experience homelessness for the first time | <b>Prevention and diversion:</b> People are prevented from losing their homes through targeted prevention and |

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | diversion programs that keep people out of shelter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Fewer people discharged from institutions to homelessness                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Prevent discharges to homelessness:</b> People are not discharged into homelessness from other systems of care.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| More unaccompanied youth have (to include runaway youth and homeless youth) safe shelter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Affordable Housing:</b> Increasing the availability and accessibility of housing that is affordable to people with low incomes is promoted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| All people experiencing homelessness under the state definition, all unaccompanied youth under any federal definition, through outreach and coordination between every system that encounters people experiencing homelessness.                                                                                                                         | <b>Alternative housing options:</b> Non-traditional housing options are available and affordable for people at risk of homelessness including homeless youth.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Connection with services:</b> Households are connected with appropriate existing supports and benefits to avoid homelessness. Solidify and streamline collaborative inter-agency effort by continually sharing current information on resources, increase outreach and providers' capacity to end crisis and decrease duplication of services and misinformation to clients. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>*New Action Steps</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Implementation Timeline</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Responsible Parties</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Create a plan for medical discharge coordination:</b> Establish procedures for coordination between the coordinated entry system and local hospital to improve housing placements at discharge. Increase percentage of exits to positive outcome destinations to the level of the top performing 20% of homeless crisis response systems nationwide. | <b>Beginning 2020<br/>And will be an ongoing program.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Peninsula Behavioral Health<br>West End Outreach Services<br>Serenity House<br>Healthy Families<br>Mariposa House - Forks<br>NORVHN (North Olympic Regional Veteran's Housing Network)<br>OPCC (Olympic Peninsula Community Clinic)<br>Olympic Medical Center<br>County Jail<br>NOHN (North Olympic Health Network)<br>Jamestown Health Center<br>TAFY (The Answer for Youth)<br>Forks Community Hospital<br>Forks Jail |
| <b>Create a plan for behavioral health discharge coordination:</b> Establish procedures for coordination between the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Beginning 2020<br/>And will be an ongoing program.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Serenity House<br>Peninsula Behavioral Health<br>West End Outreach Services<br>OPCC<br>OMP (Olympic Medical                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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| <p>coordinated entry system and behavioral health providers to improve housing placements at discharge. Increase percentage of exits to positive outcome destinations to the level of the top performing 20% of homeless crisis response systems nationwide.</p>                                                                                                                 |                                                                             | <p>Physicians)<br/>Clallam County Jail<br/>NOHN<br/>Jamestown Health Center<br/>TAFY</p>                                  |
| <p><b>Create a plan for those exiting incarceration coordination:</b><br/>Establish procedures for coordination between the coordinated entry system and those exiting incarceration to improve the rate of recidivism. Increase percentage of exits to positive outcome destinations to the level of the top performing 20% of homeless crisis response systems nationwide.</p> | <p><b>Beginning 2020<br/>And will be an ongoing program.</b></p>            | <p>Clallam County Jail<br/>Forks Jail<br/>OPCC – Rediscovery<br/>PBH (Peninsula Behavioral Health)<br/>Serenity House</p> |
| <p><b>Affordable Housing Inventory and Needs Report:</b> Produce an affordable housing inventory and transportation analysis report to determine Clallam County’s current housing landscape and inventory to determine what types of housing are needed currently and in the future and how housing distribution aligns with the transportation network.</p>                     | <p><b>Beginning 2021<br/>End 2021</b></p>                                   | <p>Clallam County Commissioners<br/>Planning Commission<br/>CED<br/>Clallam Transit</p>                                   |
| <p><b>Resource Guides:</b> Develop and distribute resource brochures about housing and homeless services for specific populations such as youth, seniors, veterans, jail inmates, and AI/AN.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p><b>Beginning 2020<br/>And will be ongoing due to yearly updates.</b></p> | <p>Homeless Task Force Outreach Committee<br/>City of Sequim</p>                                                          |

## **Goal 2: Prioritize housing for people with the greatest needs**

For all households who experience homelessness, being identified, connected with resources, and getting into emergency housing as quickly as possible is the goal. After they are stabilized, transitioning to permanent housing as quickly as possible ends their homelessness.

In order to determine the approximate needs for our community members, we use a Coordinated Entry System (CES). The CES provides the quickest access to the most appropriate housing to every household experiencing or at-risk of homelessness through a standardized assessment and referral process.

Our lead agency for the county's CES program is Serenity House. The CES policies and procedures ensure all households in different populations have fair and equal access to CES, including people experiencing chronic homelessness, veterans, households with children, youth, survivors of domestic violence, and those least likely to access homeless assistance. Serenity House has three offices for CES, Port Angeles, Sequim and Forks. Every Tuesday Serenity House holds a meeting with other agencies offering housing. At this meeting, the number of available housing solutions are discussed and filled by those listed in the CES. This is an ongoing process every Tuesday.

Those who are provided housing will learn about housing stability through education and employment, connectivity with social security and disability benefits (if qualified) and any other programs that will help them stay in housing.

### **Current Needs and Gaps**

**Accessibility:** While the coordinated entry system is successfully doing intake, assessments, and referrals, the accessibility of these beds remains a challenge for some households. Households who are particularly vulnerable and/or unable to advocate for themselves are often not accessing services. Not only are the vast majority of shelter beds located in Port Angeles, there is a huge shortage of available beds, making it difficult for households from anywhere in the county to access.

**Housing and Resources for Chronically Unsheltered Individuals:** Currently individuals with the most severe, persistent, or complex barriers to housing stability are the most under-served. Because they are often not seeking housing, it is difficult to estimate how many are living in places not meant for human habitation, such as camping illegally, living in cars, or in abandoned houses or buildings. They tend to be difficult to place in existing permanent supportive housing programs. A growing body of research supports a Housing First housing model for these individuals to become stably re-housed, prioritizing keeping them in housing and then making supportive services available but not mandatory.

**Coordinated Entry/Prioritization Policy:** According to the Department of Commerce, the governing body is responsible for establishing and implementing a system-wide prioritization policy. In Clallam County that is Serenity House. Their prioritization policy includes the required minimum requirements such as chronic illness as defined by HUD, length of time homeless, unsheltered homelessness, vulnerability to illness to death and vulnerability to victimization, including physical assault, trafficking or sex work. All this information is gathered during coordinated entry and put in the HMIS system to generate a By Name List. The problem with this system is, it tends to be biased. When you only have 5 or 6 beds available, a lot of minorities fall further down the list. Serenity House has made changes to make several By Name lists to include veterans, racial/ethnic groups, American Indian/Alaska Natives, LGBTQ, and Domestic Violence. Now that all the groups will get their

most vulnerable to the top of the list, how do you choose what group goes first. Serenity House is working with Dept. of Commerce to come up with a formula that makes this system fair to all involved.

The volume of people requiring coordinated entry is increasing significantly. This increase has been going on for some time and seems to be accelerating. This will add FTE's to an already strained budget. Further, as pressure on scarce housing grows, a full time landlord liaison will also be needed. In total, a minimum 3.5 FTE increase will be needed due to system changes and increased rates of homelessness and increased pressure on scarce housing.

Our measures of success will be: compliance with state and federal coordinated entry requirements for all projects receiving federal, state and local homelessness funds, implementation of the Coordinated Entry Core Element recommendations and the Office of Homeless Youth's Five Recommendations for Making Coordinated Entry Work for Youth and Young Adults and successful implementation of prioritization policies for all projects receiving federal, state and local homeless funds, resulting in prioritized people consistently housed in a timely manner.

**Immediate Shelter:** Clallam County has one night by night adult shelter that is open year around. Their maximum capacity is 70 and they average 40 to 70 a night depending on the weather. The shelter belongs to Serenity House who also allows some tent camping on their property. The shelter is located in Port Angeles. Clallam County desperately needs additional year around low-barrier night by night and 24 hour shelter beds in Forks and Sequim, with 24 hour shelter beds also needed in Port Angeles – accepting people's pets, possessions, and partners. These centers would serve as temporary respites for those households that require a longer stay because they are more difficult to place and it keeps them from returning to unstable living conditions or situations unsuitable for human habitation.

### Core Strategies

Vulnerable and chronically homeless households should be **identified as quickly as possible and prioritized** for shelter and services. **Easy access and appropriate connections to crisis response housing through the coordinated entry program** makes unsheltered homelessness brief. **Providing immediate shelter** beds for all who want it and having low-barrier shelter beds in more geographic locations means that more households will not be forced to survive outside. **Alternative models of emergency housing** such as tiny houses, safe parks, and legal encampments can expand options available for people moving out of homelessness – they should not be considered permanent housing, but an interim step to build relationships with providers and improve connections with supportive services.

The goal is to **place all households into permanent housing as quickly as possible**. To achieve this, appropriate and affordable housing must be available. For households with low barriers to self-sufficiency, **rapid rehousing** with short graduated subsidies and short term support services is appropriate. Households with more complex behavioral and health barriers are not able to afford or successfully maintain mainstream housing and need **permanent supportive housing**. **Housing First** is a model of permanent supportive housing that provides housing with low barriers or requirements, and is paired with tenancy supports and offers of supportive services, with the goal of keeping people with significant behavioral health, chronic substance abuse disorders, and/or physical health issues permanently housed for as long as possible.

New state legislation prohibits landlords from discriminating on the basis of income source, such as rental assistance or housing voucher. It also provides a mitigation fund for landlords who have damage to their units.

**Education for landlords** about these new laws will help expand landlord partnerships.

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| <b>GOAL 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    | Prioritize housing for people with the greatest needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                            |
| <b>Performance Indicators of Success</b>                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Core Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                            |
| People experience fewer days of homeless before being sheltered                                                                                                                                  | <b>Identification &amp; Engagement:</b> Quickly identify & engage homeless individuals                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                            |
| People experience fewer days in shelters                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Coordinated Entry:</b> Three coordinated entry sites located in Sequim, Port Angeles and Forks that are manned daily by staff will ensure easy access and appropriate connections to crisis response housing and services (at least 20 hours a week at all three locations. Consistency in Forks) |                                                                                                            |
| Fewer people are experiencing homelessness                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Prioritize Based on Need:</b> Acuity scale to determine that the most vulnerable, unsheltered and chronically homeless are served first                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                            |
| Increase percentage of exits to permanent housing to the level of the top performing 20% of homeless crisis response systems nationwide.                                                         | <b>Immediate Shelter:</b> Immediate shelter is available for all who want it, including a low barrier option.                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                            |
| Reduce returns to homeless after exit to permanent housing in less than 10%.                                                                                                                     | <b>Connection with Resources:</b> Households in shelter and in the shelter system are connected with other community resources and benefits as quickly as possible.                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                            |
| Successful implementation of prioritization policies for all projects receiving federal, state and local homeless funds, resulting in prioritized people consistently housed in a timely manner. | <b>Partner with Landlords:</b> Existing housing units are used whenever possible through partnerships with for profit and non-profit landlords                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                            |
| <b>*New Action Steps</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Implementation Timeline</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Responsible Parties</b>                                                                                 |
| <b>Identify &amp; Engagement:</b><br>Navigators riding along with PD to link people to services. Peer counselors out in the field linking people to services.                                    | <b>Already started, will be ongoing.</b><br><br><b>Initiate Conversation 2020</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | PBH<br>OPCC<br>City of Sequim<br>Serenity House<br>Port Angeles Fire Department<br>Forks Police Department |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                       |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <p><b>Coordinated Entry/Prioritize Based on Need:</b> Working on a more equitable way to prioritize in compliance with state and federal Coordinated Entry Data Collection requirements in order to build and maintain active lists of people experiencing homelessness and to track the homelessness status, engagements and housing placements for each household. Serenity House to have coordinated entry staff in Forks and Sequim on a consistent basis.</p>                                                                            | <p><b>Beginning 2020 and ongoing.</b></p>                             | <p>NORVHN<br/>Serenity House</p> |
| <p><b>Upcoming Changes to Coordinated Entry:</b> In the coming year the coordinated entry will be undergoing changes. The first changes come after a recent statewide study demonstrated that the states standard housing assessment tool produces results that cannot predict race, it is therefore not neutral – racist. Some questions are racist in the results they produce. So being assessed as needing housing is lower for people of color. We are developing interim solutions here in Clallam and as part of a statewide team.</p> | <p><b>Beginning 2020 and ongoing until corrected.</b></p>             | <p>Serenity House</p>            |
| <p><b>Updating Coordinate Entry System to properly house AI/AN And Mixed Race clients:</b> Serenity House has already started working and training toward interim alternative assessment tools. Eventually the state will weigh in and the developing interim will itself be replaced with the permanent system, more training for all staff. In the near future full time tribal coordinated entry expert will be on staff to help with the</p>                                                                                              | <p><b>Beginning 2020 and ongoing until updates are completed.</b></p> | <p>Serenity House</p>            |



### **Goal 3: Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable permanent housing**

To ensure long-term housing stability, households must be quickly connected with resources to help them address and overcome barriers to housing stability.

Although leadership for homeless issues is strong within the homeless response system, it would be strengthened to incorporate a broader representation from other sectors and systems of care that interact with the issues of affordable housing and homelessness and to widen its scope beyond tents and tiny homes to the many other homelessness issues facing Clallam County.

One of the most frequent themes at the Homeless Task Force Advisory Board (HTF) meetings for this plan was the need for having coordinated and consistent communication about the issues of homelessness with the broader community so that compassion for those experiencing homelessness can be increased, leading to greater community support and involvement.

Housing stability is increasingly being identified as an important component of the success of other sectors, such as health care and behavioral health. Coordinating and integrating strategies is now being recognized as essential to success for clients in all these systems of care. The timing of this plan is intended to allow for increased coordination between planning efforts.

While Clallam County has funding sources targeted to reducing homelessness, the demand for services and housing continue to grow. Federal funding sources that support permanent subsidized and permanent supportive housing have been reduced or stagnated over the past four to six years. More expensive operation costs mean that funding does not stretch as far as it once did. Because of this limited funding, existing funding must be invested as effectively as possible and advocacy at the state and federal level is essential.

The HTF outreach committee is working on implementing a specific communication plan and providing data about homelessness to the community to raise awareness. Paired with specific volunteer opportunities, more community members will be able to engage in solutions.

Advocacy at the local, state and federal level increases the likelihood of the needed funding streams to implement this plan and make significant investments into affordable housing. By focusing on these core efforts we can bring down the number of those experiencing homelessness in Clallam County.

#### **Current Needs and Gaps**

**Supportive Services:** Expanding connections with supportive services is needed, including consistently incorporating these resources into housing stability plans. In addition, an increased focus on personal safety net and skill-building is needed to help households retain housing stability.

**Employment and Education:** Employment is frequently reported as a challenge for people experiencing homelessness – both the ability to get and maintain employment while living homeless, and to find employment that generates sufficient income to move back into housing when large deposits are often required.

**Performance Measurement:** Although many individual organizations are using performance indicators, including outputs and outcomes, currently there is no widespread use of performance measures at the countywide and agency level to help identify whether collective progress is being made to accomplish community impact. In addition, organizations could benefit from training on how to use performance measures and targets to improve their performance.

**Limited Capacity:** Capacity issues exist on two levels in our community. First, the existing emergency, supportive and permanent affordable housing available is not adequate to meet the demand. Homeless

services, such as emergency shelters, are being strained and usually run at capacity. Since there are not sufficient homeless housing units or beds available to meet the demand, homeless individuals and families are forced to find shelter in temporary or unsuitable conditions. Waiting lists for permanent subsidized housing, such as public housing, are often years long.

Second, some agencies’ abilities to manage the expansion of an existing program or develop a new program are limited. This may be due to a need for more specific expertise and experience within agencies. Agencies can also be reluctant to expand or create new programs without assurance that they have funding for the ongoing operation and maintenance of these programs. Agencies may also need assistance developing their agency capacity through training on capacity-building and emerging evidence-based practices.

**Core Strategies**

Once households are stabilized in appropriate permanent housing, they can address the issues or barriers to self-sufficiency that caused the housing crisis. Rapid **connection with individually tailored services and resources**, including employment supports and education are essential. In addition, **developing resiliency** through personal skill-building provides long-term benefits, including prevention of further episodes of homelessness.

In addition, **criminalization of homelessness** should be prevented – a growing trend throughout the country, despite evidence that it is expensive and ineffective.

At a time when demand is increasing and resources are decreasing, doing more with less is imperative. Increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the homeless housing system through maximizing system coordination, provider capacity, and overall system capacity is critical.

**Using performance measures and data to drive decision-making and improving coordination among different systems of care and among service providers**, will provide efficiency.

In addition, ensuring that **planning for homelessness and affordable housing are integrated** with other planning effort and the evolution of other services delivery will provide a more cohesive and comprehensive response.

We must **ensure the strategic investment of public funds** through incorporating evidence-based practices in new and existing programs to shift the response system. In particular, **incorporating trauma-informed care and person-centered care** principles throughout the homeless crisis response system will provide a more compassionate and effective response.

**Provider capacity and outcomes can be improved** through providing training on evidence-base practices, performance measurement, and implementing shelter care standards.

|                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                            |
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| GOAL 3                                                                                                                                       | Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable permanent housing.                                |
| <b>Performance Indicators of Success</b>                                                                                                     | <b>Core Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                     |
| Increase percentage of exits to permanent housing to the level of top the top performing 20% of homeless crisis response systems nationwide. | <b>Provide Supportive Services:</b> Supportive services and tenancy supports are provided for people moving out of homelessness to remain in their housing |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                  |
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| More people exit homelessness with increased income and/or benefits                                                                                                                                          | <b>Employment and Education Connections:</b> Sturdy connections to employment and education are provided for people moving out of homelessness to increase their incomes.              |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Reduce returns to homelessness after exit to permanent housing to less than 10%.                                                                                                                             | <b>Connectivity to Social Security Disability Benefits &amp; Department of Veterans Affairs Service Connected Disability:</b> Aiding the disabled homeless to increase their income    |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Create more permanent supportive housing/housing first program to reduce the average length of stay in temporary housing projects to less than 90 days.                                                      | <b>Tailored Services:</b> Connections to appropriate tailored services and benefits are provided                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Create additional affordable housing and transitional housing                                                                                                                                                | <b>Cultivate Resilience &amp; Compassion:</b> Resilience strategies for individuals and communities are supported and expanded through education and connectivity within the community |                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>*New Action Steps</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Implementation Timeline</b>                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Responsible Parties</b>                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Employment &amp; Education Planning:</b> Incorporate employment and education goals into housing stability plans                                                                                          | <b>Ongoing and improving</b>                                                                                                                                                           | WorkSource<br>Peninsula College<br>Healthy Families<br>Serenity House<br>NORVHN<br>Forks Abuse Program<br>High Schools<br>HTF Outreach Committee |
| <b>Social Security Disability Benefits &amp; VA Benefits:</b><br>Connectivity when applicable                                                                                                                | <b>Ongoing</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | NORVHN<br>Healthy Families<br>Forks Abuse Program<br>Serenity House<br>Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)                           |
| <b>Youth Peer Network:</b> Develop a youth peer network/program to provide support and mentoring for youth experiencing instability and homelessness                                                         | <b>Ongoing and 2020</b>                                                                                                                                                                | TAFY<br>Serenity House<br>School Systems<br>PBH<br>Homeless Task Force (HTF)<br>Outreach Committee                                               |
| <b>Ensure Access to Appropriate Services and Remove Barriers (Homeless Youth):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Employ-ability skills</li> <li>• Wrap-around Employment Support</li> </ul> | <b>Present and Continuing</b>                                                                                                                                                          | TAFY<br>Serenity House<br>Peninsula Housing Authority<br>Healthy Families<br>First Step Family Support Services<br>Housing Resource Center       |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                        |                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate and deliver services to children/youth</li> <li>• Dropout prevention</li> <li>• Employment Skills – vocational training, social enterprises, job opportunities, business partnerships, part time work, self-esteem, vocational assessment</li> </ul> <p><b>Direct Service Provider Network:</b><br/>Identify line staff from key housing/support service providers to meet, at a minimum, every other month to update and identify current available services and gaps in services.</p> |                                        | WorkSource                                                                                                                         |
| <p><b>Unpaid Work in the Community:</b><br/>ABAWDS (Able bodied adults without dependents) can meet their work requirement by completing volunteer hours at a non-profit or public agency.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Beginning 2020</b>                  | TAFY<br>Peninsula College<br>DSHS                                                                                                  |
| <p><b>Create Additional Affordable Housing:</b> Actively pursuing development of Eklund Heights property-37 units of market rate, affordable housing. Exploring a RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration) conversation which would preserve 170 units of senior/disabled units; 48 units at Lee; allow us to redevelop 67 units of public housing, build 41 new tax credits units and exploring our options to build 33 new senior units through HUD’s Section 202 program.</p>                                                               | <b>Present and continuing</b>          | Peninsula Housing Authority                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>Permanent Supportive Housing/Housing First:</b><br/>Rehabilitate, preserve and/or create 25 units of permanent supportive housing to serve those with severe, long term behavioral and/or physical health issues. Supportive housing would</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Present and Beginning June 2020</b> | NORVHN<br>Serenity House<br>County Commissioners (Homeless Task Force to write policy to prioritize New Construction for funding). |

|                                                                                                        |                           |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------|
| include Case Management and 1 permanent housing unit.                                                  |                           |      |
| <b>Transitional Housing:</b><br>One transitional housing unit for clean and sober males. (2-4) people. | <b>Beginning<br/>2020</b> | TAFY |

**Goal 4: Project the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <p>GOAL 4</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Project the impact of the fully implemented local plans on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies.</p> |
| <p>Clallam County, 2019:<br/>         1,113 households housed<br/>         79 unsheltered households at a point in time</p> <p>Clallam County, 2024:</p> <p>After meeting state performance improvement standards; adding 25 units of permanent supportive housing; (41 units + 37 units of affordable housing) x 9% = 7 households that “but for” the new affordable housing would have been homeless; and one new transitional housing unit:</p> <p>1,158 households housed<br/>         74 unsheltered households at a point in time (-6%, fewer households vs. 2019)</p> <p>If the new units opened today and performance met the state benchmarks today, the 2020 count of unsheltered households is forecasted to be (-22%, 19 fewer households vs. 2019), but population growth and inflation takes its toll.</p> <p>The actual world is vastly more complicated than this or any model can replicate, but this should provide a ballpark view of expected impacts assuming no major changes in Clallam’s local economy and other systems.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

**Goal 5: Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness**

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| GOAL 5 | Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | <b>Narrative</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | <p>Addressing Racial Disparities - Among American Indian/Alaska Native homeless in Clallam County</p> <p>American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes have inhabited the area now called Clallam County for time immemorial. These tribes are Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Elwha Klallam Tribe, Makah Tribe, and Quileute Tribe. Residents of those tribes and members of other American Indian Tribes that now reside in Clallam County make up approximately 5 % of the county’s population. However, the American Indian/Alaska Native homeless population is the second highest population experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (16%). Although 16% of the total number of people experiencing homelessness is a small number (16 individuals), it is still important to consider racial disparities among AI/AN people an issue to address. Also, there may be limitations of data due to small population size and geographical dispersion. It has been reported that in rural areas, the geography of small spread-out populations makes data collection more difficult (Expert Panel on Homelessness among American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, <a href="https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Expert_Panel_on_Homelessness_among_American_Indians%2C_Alaska_Natives%2C_and_Native_Hawaiians.pdf">https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Expert_Panel_on_Homelessness_among_American_Indians%2C_Alaska_Natives%2C_and_Native_Hawaiians.pdf</a>).</p> <p>American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) are subject to many of the same conditions that lead to homelessness including poverty, domestic violence, behavioral health, and addiction. However, historic trauma such as being displace from historic tribal lands, oppression of culture and language may be other contributing factors. Better understanding of AI/NA culture and traditions is needed to fully understand racial disparities in this population and how to address them.</p> |

| Numbers and Percentages-Clallam County |                |               |                                 |                                       |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Race                                   | All            | In Poverty    | Experiencing Homeless           | Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness |
| All People                             | 73,439<br>100% | 12,599<br>17% | 216 .29%<br>Of total population | 101 .14%<br>Of total population       |
| White                                  | 64,665<br>88%  | 9,914<br>79%  | 171 79%                         | 79 78%                                |
| Black                                  | 847<br>1%      | 588<br>5%     | 4 2%                            | 0 0%                                  |
| American                               | 3,376          | 972           | 29 13%                          | 16 16%                                |

|                              |               |               |         |        |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------|--------|
| Indian/Alaska Native         | 5%            | 8%            |         |        |
| Asian/Pacific Islander       | 1,148<br>2%   | 382<br>3%     | 2 1%    | 1 1%   |
| Other Multi-Racial           | 3,403<br>5%   | 743<br>6%     | 10 5%   | 5 5%   |
| <b>Ethnicity</b><br>Hispanic | 4,419<br>6%   | 1,221<br>10%  | 9 4%    | 6 6%   |
| Non-Hispanic                 | 69,020<br>94% | 11,378<br>90% | 189 88% | 82 81% |

**Numbers & Percentages –Small Rural Counties in WA.**

| <b>Race</b>                   | <b>All</b>       | <b>In Poverty</b> | <b>Experiencing Homelessness</b> | <b>Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| All People                    | 2,197,623        | 329,786           | 5,243                            | 1,680                                        |
| White                         | 1,840,399<br>84% | 249,209<br>76%    | 4,078<br>78%                     | 1,374<br>82%                                 |
| Black                         | 32,417<br>1%     | 7,189<br>2%       | 292<br>6%                        | 46<br>3%                                     |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 41,376<br>2%     | 11,437<br>3%      | 412<br>8%                        | 138<br>8%                                    |
| Asian/Pacific Islander        | 71,388<br>3%     | 10,501<br>3%      | 100<br>2%                        | 35<br>2%                                     |
| Other Multi-Racial            | 212,043<br>10%   | 51,450<br>16%     | 361<br>7%                        | 87<br>5%                                     |
| <b>Ethnicity</b><br>Hispanic  | 314,018<br>14%   | 81,286<br>25%     | 847<br>16%                       | 173<br>10%                                   |
| Non-Hispanic                  | 1,000,605<br>86% | 248,500<br>75%    | 4,396<br>84%                     | 1,507<br>90%                                 |

**Emerging Strategies for Addressing Racial Inequities**

- Use demographic data from the most recent census to map the ethnic and racial diversity of the community and compare it to HMIS data to understand who experiencing homelessness at disproportionate rates in our community.
- Report on staff and board diversity compared to population experiencing homelessness and develop diversification goals.
- Develop data-driven goals for including people of color with lived experience of homelessness into planning efforts.

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyze data to determine if equitable permanent housing outcomes are being achieved and identify if there are ethnic or racial groups who are less likely to be exiting to permanent housing.</li><li>• Map the points of entry and precipitating causes of homelessness and assess whether there are significant differences among people of color.</li><li>• Regularly review data, assess impact, and refine and strengthen strategies and activities. Collaborate with local ethnic/racial leaders to enhance and identify needs,</li></ul> |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Sources:**

WA Department of Commerce Racial Equity Analysis Tool for Clallam County

Emerging Strategies for Addressing Racial Inequities in Our Efforts to End Homelessness/United States

Interagency Council on Homelessness

### **Defining Success**

For many years success in homeless programs was defined by how many people received services. Over time, the idea of what constitutes success has shifted to focus on outcomes for the individuals served. It is not enough to say that services were received, but instead we must determine the efficacy of those services in reducing homelessness. This can be a difficult process, since long term follow –up of people who received housing or services is difficult and impractical.

### **Challenges**

In addition, determining success in the realm of reducing overall homelessness is an elusive proposition.

Several factors contribute to the challenge:

- **Dynamic Population:** The homeless population is not static: there is a constant influx of people who are becoming homeless at any given time, while at the same time previously homeless people are being housed. While hundreds of homeless people may have been housed over a period of time, more have become homeless over the same period. Therefore, the overall number of homeless may have stayed the same or increased.
- **Prevention Efforts:** Many of our efforts are geared at preventing homelessness and evaluating the long-term effectiveness of these programs is difficult to measure.
- **Inaccurate Data & Counts:** There are numerous homeless people who either do not consider themselves to be homeless because they are “staying with friends” or “living in their car” or who do not want to be counted due to a variety of personal issues. Our community experiences these people and their homelessness, but they are not included in our voluntary homeless counts.

Challenges notwithstanding, it is crucial that we develop ways to assess whether the time, effort, and financial commitments to the issues of homelessness are effective.

### **Tools**

In addition to data from community partners, two primary tools will be used to assist with evaluating success.

#### **Annual Point in Time Count**

Every January Serenity House is mandated to carry out a countywide count of homeless people, both sheltered (currently receiving subsidized emergency or transitional housing) and unsheltered (living on the streets, in cars, with friends, or identified as incarcerated transients). Participation by people experiencing homelessness is voluntary. Data collected from this effort provides the state with basic statistics about Clallam County’s progress in reducing homelessness, and provides the County and the community with information about the housing and services gaps.

#### **Homeless Management Information System**

This state and federally mandated database project collects detailed data about users of homeless housing and services. The collected data is used by the state to analyze the resources necessary to move individuals from homelessness to self-sufficiency. On a local level, it facilitates coordination among agencies and delivery of services to homeless individuals. It also allows excellent quality demographic and programmatic information to be collected about homeless households who are receiving services.

## Non-Profits (who responded to request for information) Providing Services to Those Experiencing Homelessness and Those at Risk of Becoming Homeless

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### **Serenity House of Clallam County (SHCC) (Port Angeles, Sequim)**

Serenity House of Clallam County is an independent non-profit organization and the lead housing agency for very low-income clients in Clallam County. SHCC is the official designated Clallam Continuum of Care Provider and Consolidate Homeless Grand Lead (WA. Commerce). These titles come with regulatory requirements such as the Point in Time Count, the Housing Inventory Count, HUD grant review, Coordinated Entry and CHG grant monitoring.

Serenity house strives to prevent homelessness throughout Clallam County by offering programs that target the root causes of homelessness. These programs include best-practice housing first methodology, homelessness prevention, and provision of low-income and permanent supportive housing, transitional housing and immediate emergency shelter. Our focus is on creating permanent solutions that cultivate a culture of self-reliance among those we serve, empowering them to find housing, employment, make everyday choices, and approach any other crisis that may arise from a place of safety.

### **Healthy Families of Clallam County (HFCC) (Port Angeles, Sequim)**

Healthy Families of Clallam County (HFCC) has been serving victims of domestic and sexual violence since 1971. Services include but are not limited to: emergency and bridge housing (over 11,400 bed-nights provided in FY2019); legal/medical/system advocacy; court and hospital accompaniment; support services; support services; Masters level 1:1 therapy; flexible funding assistance for client-identified needs; a Housing First philosophy. HFCC added a Children's Advocacy Center to (CAC) its' list of programs in 2012. The CAC was nationally accredited in 2015.

### **Forks Abuse Program (Forks)**

Mariposa House was established in 1979 to support people experiencing domestic violence. Soon after we began to serve people who had experienced sexual assault. Six years ago we rounded out our services to include victims of all major crimes.

Mariposa House offers emergency shelter to people fleeing intimate partner domestic violence and supportive housing to survivors.

Our advocates provide support and advocacy across all life domains. Advocacy for legal cases, medical care, housing, education, financial and social are all available. Our agency is committed to improving social conditions that impact people who have experienced violence. We are excited about our partnerships working on these issues: The West End Housing Network, The North West Coast Tribal Partnership and the developing Prevention Coalition.

We believe all people can live their best lives when they experience healthy relationships within a caring community.

Gaps in Services in the West End (Joyce, Beaver, Forks, Clallam Bay)

- Coordinated Entry Office is 62+ miles from downtown Forks
- Transportation to that office by bus is limited and does not coordinate with available child care
- CE office in Forks is open 1 half day per week due to staff turnover and prioritization is often closed
- No overnight shelter
- No low barrier shelter

- No permanent supportive housing
- No coordination with mental health services for high needs homeless
- No job training service
- No street outreach
- No government city or county engagement in homeless housing issues
- No housing stock for subsidized income people or working poor
- Insufficient public housing resources

### **Olympic Peninsula Community Clinic (OPCC) (Port Angeles)**

OPCC is a free and charitable clinic located in Port Angeles serving those who are the underserved in our community. OPCC provides medical, dental, and behavioral health services. Our Programs:

- Chronic and acute medical care
- Wound care
- Adult vaccine program
- Hepatitis C screening and treatment
- Hypertension Clinic
- Diabetes Education
- Dental: prevention, restoration, and extractions
- Counseling services
- Rediscovery Program – linking people to services
- Breast, Cervical, Colon Health Program

We do not turn anyone away because of the ability to pay.

### **Peninsula Housing Authority**

The Peninsula Housing Authority has been established since 1941 and provides affordable housing in Clallam and Jefferson counties. Currently, Peninsula Housing Authority owns and operates the Section B Housing Choice Voucher Program, Public Housing, Low Income Housing Tax Credit Partnership Properties, HUD Section 811, USDA Rural Development Properties, and Mutual Self Help Homeownership, Tenant Based Rental Assistance, Home Projects and HUD Multi-Family Housing. Our mission is to serve our community's housing needs using all resources available.

Progress made since the last 10 year plan:

- Eklund Heights – 13 units of affordable housing.
- Sea Ridge – demolished 33 units of public housing, replaced with 33 new units of public housing and 30 units of affordable housing.

Current capacity of beds/housing/shelter – 514 units available with an 18-48 month waiting list, depending on property.

### **North Olympic Regional Veteran's Housing Network (NORVHN)**

NORVHN is a non-profit whose mission is to serve the homeless Veterans of Clallam and Jefferson Counties in Washington State since 2011. NORVHN operates "Sarge's Place", an interim shelter located in Forks, Washington where we have a contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs for 12 beds to serve those who have served honorably in the military, are homeless and poor. NORVHN owns a permanent supportive housing project across the street from the shelter called "Camp Sol Duc" which contains two apartments for

low income formerly homeless Veterans as well as a family 4-plex apartment building in Port Angeles called “The Outpost” which is permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless Veterans and their families. This project comes with a VA Social Worker attached to the families. NORVHN is currently developing a 7 bedroom house called “Hobucket House” in Forks where Veterans with chronic mental health and medical conditions can reside permanently.

Current Capacity: Sarge’s Place Interim shelter had a VA contract for up to 12 Veteran beds. We typically run about 9-10 Veterans on any given night. About once a week we turn away folks who are either not Veterans, do not meet our qualifications or have special needs which we cannot accommodate. We are seeing an increase in the number of Veterans with dementia (aging Vietnam Veteran population); wheelchair and scooter users (we only have one bay which can accommodate that need and it’s currently full); as well as we currently have two Veterans who are going through cancer treatment (one has stage 4 cancer and he will not survive it); and the biggest barrier is addiction. We have 5 people approach our program last week who were all actively chronically drinking.

Progress from last 10 year Plan:

- Sarge’s Place – 12 shelter beds for singles & families
- Camp Sol Duc – 2 permanent supportive apartments in Forks
- The Outpost – 4 permanent supportive apartments in Port Angeles
- Hobucket House – (being created now) 7 bedroom house for homeless Veterans – permanent housing in Forks

## **OlyCap**

Mission: OlyCap partners to lead and engage the community to promote self-reliance on behalf of those we serve while embracing innovation and collaboration with the determination and commitment to build a healthier community.

Vision: We help children and families by creating a seamless culture of commitment, strengthening and expanding community connections, and linking families to necessary service and support.

Values: OlyCap as an organization is committed to:

- Creating a culture of excellence in providing comprehensive and high-quality services.
- Focusing on a shared set of guiding principles that dictate our behavior and actions to include:
  - Honesty and Integrity
  - Trust and Respect
  - Teamwork and Collaboration
  - Accountability and Results
- Good stewardship of public and private funds.

## **Peninsula Behavioral Health (PBH)**

PBH is a fully licensed Community Mental Health and Outpatient Chemical Dependency Treatment Center that has been serving the residents of east Clallam County since 1971. We provide services in various outpatient locations, as well as the Clallam County Respite Center, home-based and other community settings. PBH operates offices in Port Angeles and Sequim.

From childhood trauma to schizophrenia to acute crises to episodic depression, Peninsula Behavioral Health has the expertise and resources to treat residents who need care. Our clinical team includes mental health and

substance use disorder experts, MDs, nurse practitioners (ARNPs), social workers, counselors, case managers and peer mentors.

### **The Answer for Youth (TAFY)**

TAFY is a drop in center for homeless and at risk youth, young adults, and families up to age 35. At no cost to clients, TAFY meets the most basic survival needs of those who live on the streets. Four hours a day, four days a week, clients are well fed, cared about, listened to, and valued. Below is a list many of the resources TAFY assists clients with:

- Food
- Clothing
- Showers
- Sleeping Bag
- Tent
- Hygiene
- Glasses
- Prescriptions
- Food Card
- Formula/Diapers
- Propane
- Household Items
- Recovery Information
- Cat/dog Food
- Suicide Prevention Information
- Laundry
- Birth Certificate, Id/license

## Discussion

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The homelessness Continuum of Care system continues to be stretched beyond capacity. Major identified issues contributing to this situation are the continuing influx of homeless people into the continuum of care system, lack of available shelter facilities, the lack of available affordable housing, and number of living wage jobs in the area. For example, anecdotally, a family of four (two children) with an income of \$50,000 cannot afford to pay mortgage or rent an adequate home and still pay for all the other necessities (utilities, food, etc.). Signs of this condition are being noticed at Serenity House as they are starting to see “the working poor” who cannot afford to live in proper housing due to rent and housing price increases. Other signs of current trends described by Clallam County HTF committee members when they met on November 5, 2019 are:

- A domestic violence/sexual assault provider stated that she sees 22 people or more every night at her facility. These numbers are higher than previously seen.
- A youth shelter provider stated that she is seeing 10 to 15 more youth per night using the shelter than she did last year.
- A HTF member who is affiliated with the Port Angeles Senior Center stated that more and more seniors are calling the center asking for help because they are being priced out of their homes.
- A member of the faith community said that a church is feeding 90 – 100 people each night more than they ever have.
- An Olympic Medical Center employee reported that OMC’s extended care beds have 10% – 20 % occupation rates by people who are homeless and not able to care for themselves.

## Conclusion

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There is no firm evidence that the homelessness issue is declining in Clallam County. The trend is quite the opposite. There is not enough shelter capacity in the eastern or western parts of the County to provide emergency shelter. For those who need to obtain permanent housing, there are already waiting lists for housing facilities not yet built. Without a large infusion of funds to help build housing facilities for the homelessness the continuum of care programs will continue to struggle. Using the Department of Commerce model to project the impact of the fully implemented homelessness plan on the number of households housed and number of households left unsheltered; the 2024 Point in Time count (PIT) would only show a reduction of 7 less homeless households as compared to the 2019 PIT. According to the Department of Commerce model an increase in annual spending necessary to keep pace with need and cost inflation is estimated to be \$380,071.

Measureable outcomes have been established and need to be tracked and reported on a regular basis to funders and the Board of County Commissioners. Considering the lack of increased funding and capacity, we must continue to be open to innovative practices to end homelessness, if they can demonstrate success. The most important focus will be to continue to work towards all people have shelter when needed, that homelessness is rare, brief, and a one-time experience.