



## Interagency Commission on Homelessness

November 30, 2016

Dear County Executive Isiah Leggett:

On behalf of the Montgomery County Interagency Commission on Homelessness (ICH), I am pleased to submit the attached report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. The mission of the ICH is to promote a community-wide goal to end homelessness, develop and implement a strategic plan, educate the community about homelessness, and promote partnerships to improve the County's ability to prevent and reduce homelessness. As the Governing Board of the County's Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC), the ICH is also tasked with monitoring programs that are components of the CoC and make recommendations to the County Executive and County Council to improve the CoC—with the goal being to coordinate the implementation of an effective housing and service system within the Montgomery County CoC geographic area that meets the needs of homeless individuals and families.

In October 2014, the ICH approved a Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness after an extensive, community-wide planning process. The resulting plan is aligned with the Federal plan to end homelessness, "Opening Doors," which was developed by U.S Interagency Council to End Homelessness. To further the goals of the strategic plan, the ICH has developed a one-year action plan to guide its work, which is reviewed and updated annually. Priorities include conducting a comprehensive analysis of the homeless system, implementing a coordinated housing entry system for all populations, increasing the availability of low-income housing and rental subsidies, creating a Landlord Engagement and Incentive Fund to increase the number of landlords willing to accept previously homeless households, and implementing a medical respite program for homeless individuals recently discharged from the hospital with complex medical needs. The Interagency Commission on Homelessness engaged in a variety of activities in FY16 in support of the CoC strategic plan, including the following:

- Ending Veteran homelessness by achieving "functional zero" in December 2015.
- Implemented a Coordinated Entry process for the CoC providers serving single adults that ensures those individuals with the greatest needs are housed first.
- Instituted CoC-wide performance measures to evaluate the system on housing retention, length of time homeless, and many more.
- Provided clarification on the definition of "disability" and implemented uniform documentation standards.
- Received a limited local preference from the HOC for Veterans experiencing homelessness.
- Applied through the State of Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for a 1115 Medicaid Waiver that would make housing support services reimbursable through Medicaid for those individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and/or returning to homelessness after long-term institutionalization.

- Received a planning grant to develop a proposal to implement a supportive housing “Pay for Success” model by developing a permanent supportive housing program for justice-involved persons.

Having worked in this arena for 15+ years to provide legal services and technical assistance to communities across the country, I must say that I am quite impressed by the county staff and community partners working collaboratively to end homelessness in Montgomery County. I wish to recognize and give my personal thanks to all the Commissioners for their commitment and dedication in promoting a community-wide goal to end homelessness and to improve the County's ability to prevent and reduce homelessness. I would also like to recognize the following County staff for their tireless service and tremendous efforts to maximize resources and leverage strategic partnerships in support of the ICH and the CoC:

- Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director of Health and Human Service
- Amanda Harris, Chief of Special Needs Housing
- Nili Soni, Continuum of Care Coordinator
- Kim Ball, Homeless Service Administrator
- Sara Black, Housing Stabilization Administrator

Furthermore, as a county resident, I am extremely proud of my county for its thoughtful and strategic approach to caring for its most vulnerable citizens. I thank you for your leadership, and I stand ready to continue to support your efforts.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy E. Horton-Newell  
Chair

Interagency Commission on Homelessness

c: George L. Leventhal, HHS Committee Chair  
Uma S. Ahluwalia, Director of Health and Human Services