



INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

Housing for all = A Stronger Montgomery

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness | HousingForAll@montgomerycountymd.gov

December 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location

[Remote Teams/Zoom Meeting link \(update with actual link\)](#)

Attendance

Commissioners Present (remote)

- Jeff Goldman, Chair
- Ebony Grey, Co-Chair
- Christine Hong
- Karishma Sheth
- William Johnston for Dr. Kathryn Kelly
- Courtney Hall
- Dr. Gwendolyn Harter
- Margarita Bohorquez
- Stacey Gold
- Capt. Mike Brickles
- DaVida Rowley / for Chelsea Andrews
- Dr. Earl Stoddard
- Beth Shuman

Members Not Present

- Del. Vaughn Stewart
- Pelumi Olatinpo
- Scott Bruton

Proof of Quorum

Multiple members from various organizations were present, as confirmed in the detailed round of introductions led by Jeff Goldman and others at the start of the meeting.

Staff Present

- Diana Pina| Deputy Chief of SEPH

- Rozina Adhanom CoC Coordinator | ICH Staff
- Gloria Huggins | EAA for SEPH
- Vicky Suero | OSC for SEPH

Guests Speakers

- Hannah Roberts, Senior Program Manager, CSH
- Shatara Rolle, ICH People's Committee, Chair

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 PM.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Jeff Goldman welcomed all attendees, thanked them for their patience regarding the meeting's delayed start, and outlined the importance of the session. He invited each participant to introduce themselves in turn, resulting in a thorough round of introductions that confirmed the presence and engagement of representatives from numerous organizations and agencies central to the ICH mission.

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Ebony Grey led the review and approval of the minutes from the September 30, 2025, meeting. After confirming there were no questions or revisions, Dr. Gwendolyn Harter moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Karishma Sheth. The motion was carried out unanimously, with no objections, thereby approving the minutes of the previous meeting as written.

Meeting Minutes Agenda Items

- 1. Point-in-Time (PIT) Count Planning Update** - Rozina Adhanom CoC Coordinator | ICH Staff
 - a. The PIT Count will take place on January 28, starting at 8:30 pm with a light dinner for volunteers. Training begins that night, and deployment for the count starts around 10:30–10:45 pm. The count itself runs from 11:00 pm and concludes at 3:00 am on January 29.
 - b. Volunteer registration is open, but the turnout so far is low: only 29 have signed up, while the goal is between 130 and 160. Typically, 90–100 show up on the actual night.
 - c. Volunteer recruitment is a significant focus. The flyer will be sent to commissioners and public participants for broader distribution, and email outreach will continue until the count date.
 - d. For the first time, the up-county deployment site is at Boyer Park's activity center; the down-county site remains at the Silver Spring Civic Building.
 - e. The event follows previous years' schedules and models while waiting on updated HUD guidance for 2026. Preparations are based on the 2025 protocols.
 - f. The process includes two deployment and training sites and revised logistics to accommodate volunteers better.
 - g. There is ongoing weekly planning, and contributions from agencies and outreach teams were acknowledged.
- 2. CES Evaluation Recommendations **VOTE** - Hanna Roberts, CSH

- a. Hannah presented the CES evaluation results and detailed recommendations for system improvements.
- b. The recommendations cover improvements to access, assessment processes, matching/prioritization, staff training, and enhanced data practices.
- c. Committee members asked how the recommendations would be prioritized and implemented, and who would be responsible.
- d. It was clarified that the CES subcommittee will take the lead: they'll set priorities, create a step-by-step implementation/redesign plan, and return to ICH for approval.
- e. The improvement process is expected to unfold throughout 2026, depending on resources and planning.
- f. There was a strong emphasis on collaboration, continuous evaluation, and not trying to make all changes at once.
- g. The discussion highlighted the desire for a person-centered, streamlined, and accessible coordinated entry system, with support for staff and clients.
- h. Members expressed appreciation for the thorough evaluation process and the inclusion of broad, frank feedback in developing the recommendations.
- i. After discussion, ICH voted unanimously to advance these recommendations to the CES subcommittee.
 1. **Motion to adopt changes:** Stacey Gold
 2. **Seconded by:** Courtney Hall
 3. **Outcome:** Unanimously approved.

3. ICH People's Committee Recommendation Addendum to CoC Written Standards VOTE –**
Shatara Roller | Chair

- a. Shatara presented the rationale for revising the **Grievance Procedure (Page 37 of current standards)**. She emphasized the need for clarity, multiple communication methods (including anonymous and verbal submissions), staff support for grievance preparation, defined response timelines, robust documentation, and a clear multi-level escalation structure.
- b. The current grievance process, adopted in **August 2024**, lacked clarity, consistency, and accessibility.
- c. The review was triggered by public comment at the **January 14 meeting**, which highlighted significant concerns.
- d. Issues identified:
 1. Limited submission methods (email only).
 2. No clear timelines for acknowledgment or resolution.
 3. Lack of documentation requirements.
 4. No structured escalation process.
 5. Limited participant awareness of grievance rights.
- e. Shatara outlined the key changes recommended:
 1. Rename to **Program Participant Grievance Procedure** (person-centered language).
 2. Allow multiple submission formats: oral, written, anonymous, and digital.
 3. Advocate rights: Explicitly inform participants and allow an advocate at all stages.
 4. Staff support: Require assistance in grievance preparation.
 5. Timelines: Acknowledgment within 3 days; clear response deadlines.

6. Documentation: At each stage, including resolution confirmation.
 7. Escalation: Formal multi-level structure.
 8. Ongoing communication: Posters, meetings, and case manager reminders.
 9. Tracking: Continuous quality improvement through grievance data monitoring.
 - f. The committee's process included meetings with providers, surveys, shelter listening sessions, and collaborative workshops to gather feedback from both participants and providers, ensuring buy-in and effectiveness.
 - g. Discussion noted that family shelters were not included in this round; the People's Committee acknowledged the current focus on adult shelters but committed to future engagement with family shelters.
 - h. Multiple members, including **Christine Hong** and **Courtney Hall**, expressed appreciation for the People's Committee's thorough work and stressed the importance of a safe, accessible, and continuously improving grievance process.
 - i. The committee emphasized that these changes aim to restore trust, promote continuous quality improvement, and support both clients and providers.
 - j. The tone of the discussion was positive, collaborative, and forward-looking, with a shared commitment to adopting more inclusive, robust, and actionable grievance standards.
 1. **Motion to adopt changes:** Earl Stoddard
 2. **Seconded by:** Stacey Gold
 3. **Outcome:** Unanimously approved.
4. **HUD NOFO FY25 CoC Competition Update Gap funding Plans/Advocacy** - Diana Pina, Deputy Chief of SEPH | Christine Hong, Chief of SEPH
- a. **Diana provided an update on the NOFO FY25 CoC Competition:**
 1. HUD's FY25 NOFO proposed reducing renewals for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) from the usual ~90% to only 30%, signaling a potential 70% cut to PSH funding nationwide.
 2. After lawsuits and national pushbacks, HUD withdrew the NOFO on December 8. No timeline or details for a revised NOFO have been provided yet; the local application process is paused until further guidance is available.
 3. Two lawsuits are pending that challenge the compressed timeline and the drastic policy changes in the NOFO. The upcoming hearing may indicate the next steps.
 4. Both the state and national experts expect HUD will continue shifting policy away from "housing first" toward "treatment first" and transitional housing models.
 - b. **Christine provided an update on the Gap Funding Plans:**
 1. For FY26, Montgomery County identified \$250,000 needed to bridge expiring HUD-funded programs. The county will use its local Housing Initiative Fund to cover this gap via local contracts, pending Council approval in January.
 2. For FY27 (starting July 1, 2026), six programs face a projected \$10 million funding gap. The County's budget process will prepare for possible scenarios to cover some/all costs if HUD funding is not restored.
 3. The county's strategy is to avoid lapse in PSH by reallocating local resources, with an understanding that the costs of increased homelessness would ultimately impact the county more.
 - c. **Advocacy & Impact Discussion:**

1. Dr. Stoddard emphasized that if PSH is cut, the costs and challenges merely shift elsewhere (e.g., sheltering or hoteling individuals), which is less effective and more expensive. He argued this should be a key advocacy message to persuade the public and elected officials, noting that “the cost of not doing this is likely greater than the cost of actually addressing it.”
2. Dr. Stoddard also highlighted the strategic importance of involving the business community, since visible homelessness often prompts concern among business owners, which in turn influences elected officials’ priorities.
3. Dr. Harter offered to provide data on the impact of funding changes (such as the number of people who would be homeless in specific neighborhoods), supporting collective advocacy efforts.
4. Courtney added that emphasizing visible homelessness across various parts of the county—not just in downtown Silver Spring—can make advocacy more persuasive, as it demonstrates to officials that the issue is widespread and urgent.
5. There’s a consensus on the need for robust, data-driven advocacy illustrating the real-world impact of funding cuts and the broad consequences for the county and its most vulnerable residents.

5. Public Comments – Public

a. **Speaker:** Lisa Lowe

b. **Request:**

1. Asked that ratification of the revised grievance process be **tabled until after public comment and review by advocates.**

c. **Concerns Raised:**

1. Volunteers drafting policy without enforcement provisions is problematic.
2. Current revisions lack enforcement and measurement procedures, making them **non-compliant with HUD Title 24 Part 578.**
3. Risk of lawsuits under the **Maryland Consumer Protection Act**, which could jeopardize HUD funding.
4. Previous protests and a lawsuit by a public commenter indicate the seriousness of the issue.
5. Suggested that **SAS (county staff)**, not volunteers, should draft enforceable policy.
6. Shared that she wrote a **white paper** titled “*Montgomery County Homeless Services, CoC Grievance Process and Other Violations*” and emailed it to leadership, but received no response.
7. Requested that her concerns be logged in the minutes and reviewed before implementation.

d. **Discussion Following Public Comment**

1. **Jeff** acknowledged Lisa’s concerns and the seriousness of potential consequences.
2. Proposed not rescinding the vote immediately but reviewing Lisa’s white paper and revisiting if necessary. He also suggested including Lisa in future discussions.
3. **Ebony** supported Jeff’s approach; she emphasized doing this correctly and respecting the process.
4. **Rozina** clarified that the People’s Committee was authorized to revise the CoC written standards.

5. She explained the committee followed proper steps: surveys, listening sessions, and provider engagement.
 6. Noted that enforcement of contracts falls under county authority, not the committee.
 7. **Courtney** highlighted that People’s Committee members are official ICH committee members, not “just volunteers.”
 8. Suggested that Lisa’s concerns be formally shared with the committee for consideration. He mentioned potential amendments to family shelters.
- e. **The Tone of Discussion:**
1. Collaborative and respectful.
 2. Consensus to **keep the vote as is for now**, review Lisa’s document, and revisit if needed.
 3. Comments from People’s Committee members in chat indicated disagreement with Lisa’s perspective and support for the adopted revisions.

6. Announcements - All

a. **Courtney Hall’s Departure**

1. Courtney announced he will be leaving **Interfaith Works** and, therefore, the ICH as a commissioner.

b. **Acknowledgments:**

1. Jeff and Ebony praised Courtney’s steady leadership, commitment to people-first solutions, and active engagement in ICH initiatives.
2. Courtney expressed gratitude and confirmed he will attend the **February meeting** before his departure.

c. **Next Meeting**

1. Scheduled for **February 24, 2026**.
2. Rozina noted that the 2026 meeting calendar will be finalized and sent out soon, with **six meetings planned for the year** (approximately every nine weeks).

d. **Closing Remarks**

1. Jeff thanked commissioners for a productive year, highlighting progress on key issues despite challenges.
2. Ebony extended holiday greetings and encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on 02/24/2026 from 4–6 pm, virtual.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m.