



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/27/2026

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4774
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Memorandums of Understanding

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Sonoma County Continuum of Care's governing body known as the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition and the Department of Health Services, to act as Lead Agency for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care, for a term of three (3) years effective upon execution, with two (2) optional single year extensions.
- B) Authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Sonoma County Continuum of Care's governing body known as the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition and the Department of Health Services, designating DHS as the Collaborative Applicant for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care, for a term of three (3) years effective upon execution, with two (2) optional single year extensions.

Executive Summary:

Since January 2023, the Department of Health Services ("the Department" or "DHS") has served as the Lead Agency for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care's governing body, the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board. This transition occurred when staff supporting the Continuum of Care were moved from the Sonoma County Community Development Commission (CDC) to DHS, becoming part of the newly created Ending Homelessness section within the DHS Homelessness Division. Prior to this transfer, the CDC operated as the Lead Agency. For the past three years, the Homeless Coalition and the Department of Health Services have been working collaboratively on two Memorandums of Understanding between the two entities in order to establish and define clear roles and responsibilities in a cohesive, collaborative, and coordinated manner.

This item requests the Board approve and authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee, to execute two Memorandums of Understanding with the Homeless Coalition:

- 1. As **Lead Agency** for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care.
- 2. As **Collaborative Applicant** for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care.

Both MOUs are zero-dollar (\$0) agreements, and act only to establish and define clear roles and responsibilities in a cohesive, collaborative, and coordinated manner.

Discussion:

On April 20, 2021, the Board received a report Improving Integration and Outcomes to Benefit County Residents: Assessment of Housing and Homeless Services and Programs, prepared by KPMG, LLP, a contracted consultant. The report proposed recommendations to improve the overall operational efficiency, effectiveness, and delivery of housing and homeless services across the County. Included in the report was a recommendation related to the County's homelessness service's organizational structure, namely: to evaluate potential organizational models to facilitate best outcomes. Based on this report, and after staff conducted their due diligence and provided their recommendation to the Board, on May 24, 2022, the Board approved the staff recommendation to transfer the Sonoma County CDC Ending Homelessness team to the DHS within a newly created Homelessness Services Division. This action was grounded in the April KPMG report, which identified that consolidating most of the County's homelessness services programs within DHS would strengthen service alignment, improve cross-program coordination, and leverage specialized staff and systems under a unified strategic vision. As part of this transition, the role of Lead Agency for the Sonoma County Continuum of Care (CoC) was also moved to DHS, as the Lead Agency functions are performed by the Ending Homelessness team.

The Ending Homelessness team, as the Lead Agency for the CoC, carries out essential administrative and operational functions. These include organizing CoC Board and committee meetings; maintaining governance documents; supporting strategic planning and community engagement; coordinating the Point-in-Time Count and Housing Inventory Count; monitoring and reporting U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) System Performance Measures; and ensuring compliance with federal and state requirements. The team also plays a critical role in advancing the CoC's equity priorities, coordinating funding strategies, and supporting collaboration across providers. The May 24, 2022, Board action anticipated the development of a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize and clarify the Lead Agency functions.

In January 2023, the Ending Homelessness team and the Lead Agency role were fully transitioned from the CDC to DHS. This Board item brings forward two final Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to complete the transition: one covering the Lead Agency role and one covering the Collaborative Applicant role. Together, these MOUs clarify responsibilities of DHS and the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition, the governing body of the CoC. Both proposed MOUs are \$0 agreements, each with a three-year term effective upon execution, and include two optional single-year extensions.

Background on CoC Roles

The Sonoma County Continuum of Care, governed by the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition, coordinates a comprehensive, countywide response to homelessness. To meet federal and local requirements, the CoC must designate both a **Lead Agency** and a **Collaborative Applicant**. These roles are essential for securing and managing federal and state funding, coordinating services, and ensuring compliance with HUD regulations.

Under the MOUs, DHS is designated as:

Lead Agency - Responsible for providing staffing and administrative support, facilitating CoC Board and committee meetings, maintaining official records and governance documents, supporting strategic planning efforts, and coordinating community engagement and cross-system collaboration.

Collaborative Applicant - Responsible for managing the annual HUD CoC Program grant process, submitting the annual CoC Consolidated Application, applying for planning funds, conducting performance monitoring, and ensuring compliance with 24 CFR Part 578 and all HUD requirements.

These MOUs are aligned with the CoC Governance Charter, HUD regulations, and the County's commitment to

equity, inclusion, transparent system governance, and upstream investments to prevent and end homelessness. The County has historically used General Fund resources to support Lead Agency functions, including implementation of the five-year CoC Strategic Plan, alignment of local, state, and federal resources, and evaluation of system performance. After the first year of implementation, DHS will provide a financial overview to the Homeless Coalition Board to inform long-term funding strategies.

Effect of the MOUs

Upon execution of the two MOUs, DHS and the Sonoma County Homeless Coalition will operate under clearly defined and complementary responsibilities that strengthen systemwide coordination.

The Homeless Coalition, as the CoC governing body, will retain authority for establishing policies and procedures, setting performance targets, reviewing and approving funding applications, and conducting annual performance evaluations of the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant.

DHS will assume both the Lead Agency and Collaborative Applicant roles. DHS will oversee HUD funding processes, ensure regulatory compliance, manage performance monitoring, provide administrative support to the CoC, and coordinate strategic planning and community engagement activities.

Together, these agreements formalize a collaborative, transparent, and integrated framework for administering homelessness services in Sonoma County supporting the County's strategic goals to reduce homelessness, improve housing and health outcomes, and ensure effective use of public resources.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Healthy and Safe Communities

Goal: Goal 4: Reduce the County's overall homeless population by 10% each year by enhancing services through improved coordination and collaboration.

Objective: Objective 3: Increase investment in programs that treat underlying causes of homelessness, including substance abuse, mental illness, poverty, and lack of affordable housing.

Racial Equity:**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

Prior Board Actions:

January 31, 2023, the Board adopted a resolution supporting the Sonoma County Continuum of Care's regional strategic plan on homelessness for 2023-2027.

May 24, 2022, the Board received and approved staff recommendation to move the Community Development Commission's Ending Homelessness team to the Department of Health Services under a new Homelessness Services Division.

April 2021, the Board A) received KPMG's Housing and Homeless Services Assessment; and B) directed staff to return to the Board with additional analysis and recommendations for consideration.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There are no fiscal impacts resulting from the MOUs.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There are no staffing impacts as a result of this item.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Lead Agency MOU

Attachment 2 - Collaborative Applicant MOU

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

None