

FACT SHEET: Cape & Islands Regional Network on Homelessness

Barnstable County Department of Human Services

June 2017

MISSION

The Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness is a collaborative effort of state, county and local government, social service providers, housing agencies, faith-based organizations, the business community and individuals working together to prevent and end homelessness. Through its broad-based public-private partnership, the Regional Network identifies and implements creative solutions to preventing and ending homelessness on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket. Created in 2009 out of the former Leadership Council to End Homelessness, the Regional Network provides a forum for regional discussions and planning for better coordination of services aimed at reducing homelessness.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Regional Network is comprised of an Executive Committee, a Policy Board, several working groups, and a larger network of interested stakeholders. The Regional Network provides technical assistance and training on a variety of topics, convenes stakeholders to undertake specific initiatives, assists partner organizations with grant writing and leveraged resources, and is the liaison to the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing



and Homelessness. As the regional entity organized to carry out the responsibilities required by the HUD Continuum of Care McKinney-Vento (CoC) grant for homelessness services and programs, the Regional Network sets policy, implements the Coordinated Entry System (CES), and coordinates the annual Point in Time Count. Barnstable County Department of Human Services is the **convening agency** and the **collaborative applicant** for HUD's Continuum of Care grant and provides staff assistance to the Regional Network.

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PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Regional Network created the “Cape and Islands **Regional Plan** to Address Homelessness” which identifies the action areas of education, advocacy and facilitation to: increase access to safe, stable, accessible, and affordable housing; improve health and stability of target populations; and improve economic security. The vision of the Regional Network is that all individuals and families on Cape Cod and the Islands will have safe, affordable housing with supports needed to maintain that housing.

The results of the **2017 Annual Point In Time Count** conducted on January 24, 2017 indicate that the number of homeless families and individuals on the night of the count was 324, a decrease in 70 persons from the 2016 count and significantly lower than the counts since 2012. However, the 2017 count documented that the number of families in shelter (69) is at the high end of the five-year range (55 to 69). During this period the number of children in sheltered families has increased steadily from 77 in 2012 to 100 in 2017. Counts are conducted annually in every community, and are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Coordinated Entry System (CES) was implemented in 2016 to better identify and assist chronically homeless households. CES ensures that people experiencing a housing crisis are quickly identified, assessed and connected to housing and assistance based on their needs.

FUNDING

In FY 2016, approximately \$1.9 billion was awarded to new and renewal projects across the United States. The 16 CoC regions in Massachusetts were awarded a total of \$69,463,083. In March 2017, the Cape and Islands CoC, which is governed by the Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness Policy Board, received \$1,758,102 to support 13 projects providing permanent supportive housing to 146 individuals. This award includes five new permanent supportive housing beds on Martha’s Vineyard. The grant also supports CoC planning, CES expansion, and the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS). As the Regional Network’s convening entity and Cape and Islands CoC collaborative applicant, Barnstable County Department of Human Services provides monitoring, operational infrastructure, and administrative support.

CONTACT

For information about the Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness, contact Beth Albert, Director, Barnstable County Department of Human Services at balbert@barnstablecounty.org or 508-375-6626.