



Public Health & Social Services

**Lewis County
Five-Year
Housing and Homeless
Strategic Plan**

December 2019 to December 2024

November 8, 2019

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Approved by LCPHSS Advisory Board November 8, 2019.

Background

Lewis County

Established in 1845 by the Oregon Territory Provisional Legislature, Lewis County was named for Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The county is 2,408 square miles in size and has an estimated population of over 78,000. The county seat is located in Chehalis, the county's second-largest city. The county is made up of two larger "twin" cities, Centralia and Chehalis, and several smaller cities and towns. Forty percent of the population live in incorporated towns and cities, while sixty percent live in unincorporated areas. With a population density of 32.5 people per square mile, Lewis County is variously described as rural or micropolitan.

The Washington State Office of Financial Management estimates the 2018 county population at 78,380 and projects that the population of Lewis County will be over 89,000 by 2040. The population of Lewis County is predominantly White with people of color and Hispanics of any race making up smaller percentages than Washington State as a whole.

Historically the economy of Lewis County was based on resource extraction and agriculture. With the decline of the logging industry and the closing of a large coal mine, unemployment and poverty rates have increased. According to the American Community Survey's 5-year estimates for 2013-2017, 16.0% of Lewis County residents were living in poverty. This contrasts with 12.2% for Washington State as a whole. There are racial and ethnic disparities in these rates with American Indians/Alaska Natives having a rate (36.2%) that is more than twice that of Whites (15.1%), and Hispanics having a rate of 28.2%.

Over the past 10 years, the median household income for Lewis County has averaged 70% of the statewide median. Per Office of Financial Management's estimate, the median household income in 2018 was \$54,096. The housing affordability gap as defined by the difference between the median house selling price and three times the median household income has been increasing steadily over the past several years and is approaching the peak seen in 2007.

Plan to End Homelessness

Washington State law requires that each county develop and recommend to its local government legislative authority a five-year homeless housing plan that is consistent with the local plan guidelines issued by the Department of Commerce. This Strategic Plan was developed and submitted to the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners in accordance with Washington law. The intent of this plan is to reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Lewis County.

The Washington State Legislature passed the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (Chapter 43.185C RCW) in 2005. This Act, along with other legislation, allows the collection of surcharges on documents recorded for the sale and/or transfer of real property to fund homeless programs. The document recording surcharge funds ("surcharge funds") are used by the state and local government agencies to reduce homelessness.

The Consolidated Homeless Grant Program (CHG) is awarded to Counties through a bi-annual process. Each county sub-grants these funds to support a variety of activities that target households with an area median income of less than 30%. These funds are governed by the contract between the Department of Commerce and the county, as well as the manual "Guidelines for the Consolidated Homeless Grant". These funds support administration, operations, and

facilities support for such programming as emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, diversion, coordinated entry, and data collection and reporting.

2163 Funds (RCW 36.22) Homeless Housing and Assistance: The Homeless Housing Grant Program was created in Washington State by Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (ESSHB) 2163 on August 1, 2005. The law directed that document recording fees on certain documents to be utilized by local jurisdictions to reduce homelessness. Funds are obtained through an imposed surcharge on document recording fees of real property, dedicating funding to low-income and very-low income individuals.

RCW 36.22 has been amended several times by the Legislature, most recently in 2019 as follows:

House Bill 1980
Federal Tax Lien Documents – Recording Surcharge Exemption
Passed by 2019 Legislature
House vote 98 – 0, Senate vote 46-0
Effective date July 28, 2019

Synopsis of legislative amendments to RCW 36.22.178, 36.22.179, and 36.22.1791

RCW	Surcharge	Distribution of Fees Collected
36.22.178	\$ 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% to county Auditor to collect/administer/distribute • 40% of balance to WA State Treasurer to distribute to Dept. of Commerce for affordable housing programs under RCW 43.185C.190 • Balance retained by the county for eligible housing programs.
36.22.179	\$ 62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2% to county Auditor to collect • 60% of balance to county for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6% admin expenses ○ remainder to eligible housing programs • Balance to WA State Treasurer with restrictions on how to spend
36.22.1791	\$ 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% to county to fund eligible programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less 6% for Auditor admin fees • Balance to WA State Treasurer with restrictions on how to spend
	Total: \$ 83	
For complete text of this 2019 legislative action, go to: https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1696&Year=2019		

Administration of the grant funds are shared between local governments and the state. Eligible uses of the funds are to provide housing and shelter for homeless people including, but not limited to:

- grants to operate, repair, and staff shelters
- grants to operate transitional housing
- partial payments for rental assistance
- consolidated emergency assistance
- overnight youth shelters

- grants and vouchers designated for victims of human trafficking and their families;
- emergency shelter assistance
- funding the homeless housing grant program

These funds are used in Lewis County to fund projects that serve residents who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Through a competitive RFP process these projects are selected each year by an ad hoc committee made of members from the LCPHSS advisory board, as well as other engaged community members who either have lived experience with homelessness or have expresses interest in addressing homelessness issues.

Lewis County Public Health & Social Services (LCPHSS) is committed to supporting agencies that have a primary objective of ending homelessness in Lewis County. It also supports the State vision of, *No person left living outside.*

Plan Development

LCPHSS uses a population-based model for providing public health services in Lewis County. Available resources are predominantly focused where they can do the most good for the most people. Our housing programs are a good example of this service model. Our priority for the foreseeable future is to contract with qualified sub-grantees. Under a population-based model, we will be able to maximize impacts of available homeless and affordable housing funding.

Because LCPHSS retains ultimate responsibility for homeless housing programs in Lewis County, these contractors' processes and deliverables are carefully monitored by LCPHSS contract coordinators. This way, we can ensure the most good can be done for the most people by organizations best qualified to do the work.

To gain the most benefit matching funding to programs, LCPHSS believes it necessary to develop a new local plan following Department of Commerce (DOC) guidelines. Plan development is guided by the Lewis County Public Health Advisory Board, a volunteer group representing a broad spectrum of community partners that advises LCPHSS through monthly meetings and ad hoc committee work. Advisory Board members include representation from:

- business
- civic organizations
- community at-large
- community networks
- criminal justice
- persons with developmental disabilities or developmental disabilities service providers
- education
- emergency healthcare
- faith-based organizations
- personas who have experienced homelessness x 2
- human services providers
- law enforcement
- local government
- mental health treatment providers
- Realtors®
- substance abuse treatment providers

This plan was drafted by LCPHSS staff, submitted to the LCPHSS Advisory Board for review and comment, approved by the Advisory Board on November 7, 2019, and approved by the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners on November 25, 2019.

This plan covers the five-year period of December 2019 to December 2024. LCPHSS will comply with all DOC reporting requirements. In addition, the LCPHSS Advisory Board, Lewis County Manager, Lewis County Board of County Commissioners, and the Lewis County Board of Health will receive regular updates.

Plan Implementation and Review

The 2019-2024 Policy Plan for Housing and Homeless Funding Expenditures has been created to guide the implementation and review of this Five-Year Housing and Homeless Strategic Plan. It creates an open and transparent process that LCPHSS housing staff and management will follow to ensure equitable treatment of all sub-grantees and the most effective use of funding entrusted to LCPHSS.

The plan will be continuously reviewed and updated as conditions change due to:

- program outcomes
- DOC feedback
- provider suggestions and feedback
- direction from the LCPHSS Advisory Board
- direction from Lewis County Manager and governing bodies
- increases or decreases in available funding
- new programs that become available
- expansion or contraction in available program providers

Five-Year Strategic Action Plan

Vision:

Every person in Lewis County has access to safe, affordable housing.

Goal:

Maintain an emergency shelter and housing support system that effectively identifies and responds to persons at risk of, or experiencing homelessness.

Objective One:

Quickly identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness under the state definition in Lewis County, and all unaccompanied youth under any federal definition, through outreach and coordination between every system that encounters people experiencing homelessness.

Current Condition

LCPHSS uses funding from a number of local, state, and federal sources to contract with local organizations that comprise the homeless outreach system in Lewis County. Currently contracted organizations and the services they provide include:

<p>Housing Resource Center</p>	<p>Serves as the coordinated entry lead agency for Lewis County homeless services. Provides housing consultation to persons who are literally homeless or at imminent risk. Conducts countywide street outreach to persons experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Provides homeless housing services for homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency shelter • finding housing • utility assistance • rental assistance • fees associated with obtaining housing • ongoing consultation to reduce barriers <p>Provides homeless housing services for families with children including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding housing • rental assistance • ongoing consultation to reduce barriers
<p>Human Response Network</p>	<p>Provides domestic violence-specific homeless housing services for homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency shelter • finding housing • utility assistance • rental assistance • transportation assistance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • counseling services • fees associated with obtaining housing • ongoing consultation to reduce barriers
Reliable Enterprises	<p>Provides ongoing consultation with persons who exited homelessness into housing so they may maintain housing.</p> <p>Provides targeted counseling services for individuals with high barriers in order to maintain housing.</p> <p>Provides training to program participants on how to create, implement and maintain a budget.</p> <p>Provides training to program participants on communicating with landlords, municipalities and other professional service providers.</p>
The Salvation Army	<p>Provides homeless housing services for homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emergency shelter • finding housing • utility assistance • rental assistance • fees associated with obtaining housing • ongoing consultation to reduce barriers <p>Maintains a low-barrier emergency shelter.</p>
Bethel Church	Provides emergency nighttime shelter to homeless persons when weather is below 38 degrees
Centralia School District	Provides assistance to families or individual students in the CSD who are or at risk of being homeless, including connection of service to area providers
Community Action Council	Provides homeless housing services for homeless or a imminent risk of homelessness including: utility assistance, rental assistance, fees associated with obtaining housing and provide ongoing consultation to reduce barriers. Maintain a low barrier emergency shelter.
Housing Opportunities of Southwest Washington	Provides rental assistance vouchers for persons who are homeless for up to 2 years
Lewis County Gospel Mission	Provides hygienic services to homeless persons.
Twin City Transit	Provides transportation vouchers for persons who are homeless or imminent risk of being homeless.

LCPHSS also manages the Lewis County Veterans’ Relief Fund which uses locally generated dollars to assist military veterans with utilities, rent, and housing needs.

In 2015 the Housing Resource Center implemented the Coordinated Entry Process (CEP) in response to a request from LCPHSS to facilitate a streamlined process to ensure connection of available services to those persons experiencing homelessness and create a system change. CEP serves all of Lewis County through an access point in Centralia. In addition to the access point in Centralia, CEP includes street outreach countywide.

LCPHSS has identified missing community partners in healthcare, behavioral health, and other social service providers. In order to engage these partners LCPHSS will conduct outreach to individual provider groups on the value of the Coordinated Entry program and how to access CE on behalf of those they serve.

Our Plan to Achieve

The first step toward achieving Objective One is gathering qualitative data in four primary areas:

- Identify to the greatest extent possible all persons experiencing homelessness;
- Identify factors contributing to homelessness;
- Identify barriers to achieving positive outcomes for persons experiencing homelessness; and
- Create a comprehensive list of all community partners with actual or potential means to have positive direct or indirect impacts on persons experiencing homelessness.

LCPHSS has outlined three strategies that will provide guidance and benchmarks for achieving Objective One.

Objective One, Strategy One takes the first step noted above by incorporating data collection into contractor selection. In addition, an ongoing communications process will keep data up-to-date and shared with all community partners.

Objective One, Strategy Two will create and maintain a comprehensive and routinely updated inventory of all housing in Lewis County by HUD definition and capacity.

Objective One, Strategy Three formally recognizes the critical function of the Coordinated Entry Process by requiring its use by all community partners without exception, and providing ongoing education to community partners to ensure they stay up-to-date CEP.

Measures of Success

- a) Increase percentage of exits to positive outcome destinations to the level of the top performing 20 percent of homeless crisis response systems nationwide or 76% of those exiting projects whichever is higher.
- b) 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.
- c) Compliance with HMIS data entry accuracy, completeness, and timeliness standards for all clients in the system.

Strategy One:

Award funding to agencies that perform/provide:

- Services that locate every homeless person living in Lewis County
- Targeted outreach efforts that engage underserved populations
- Regular housing updates and information to all community social service and healthcare providers.

Action Items:

- A. Include provision of these services in Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposals (RFP) sent to area agencies.
- B. Include provision of each service identified in Strategy One in contract Scope of Work language.

- C. Include regular updates on service delivery and efficacy in contract reporting requirements.
- D. Include HMIS data entry compliance in contract reporting requirements.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	April 2020	Distribution to potential providers	Receive multiple, qualified responses
B	LCPHSS Selected sub-grantees	June 2020	Draft contracts to qualified providers	Signed contracts from qualified sub-grantees
C	LCPHSS Contracted sub-grantees	August 2020	Receive mandated reports from all contracted providers	Reports are timely, complete, and accurate.
D	LCPHSS	June 2020	Draft contract language contains HMIS requirement	Signed contracts with HMIS language from sub-grantees

Strategy Two:

Create inventory list of housing destinations that meet HUD definitions for temporary, institutional, or permanent housing.

Action Items:

- A. Develop a catalog of all Lewis County facilities and project types that meet one of the HUD definitions, to include location, contact information, entry requirements, capacities, and vacancies.
- B. Distribute catalog to all providers working in the homeless crisis response system.
- C. Contact all listed facilities quarterly to maintain an up-to-date inventory of capacity countywide.
- D. Facilitate quarterly meetings for all providers working in the homeless crisis response system to identify gaps in service and ensure coordinated approach.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS Selected sub-grantee	June 2020	Receive input from all housing – providers	Receive input from 100% of providers
B	Selected sub-grantee	September 2020	Catalog created	Catalog distributed electronically
C	Selected sub-grantee	Quarterly starting in December 2020	Obtain current information from all providers in December, March, June, September	Distribute updated catalog in January, April, July, October

D	LCPHSS Selected sub-grantee	Quarterly to coincide with update cycles	At least 75% attendance by identified providers	Increased awareness among providers of each other’s programs, strengths, needs.
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Strategy Three

Ensure CEP is easily accessible and used countywide.

Action Items:

- A. Draft RFQ, RFP and contract language that requires projects use CEP.
- B. Provide ongoing education to housing providers about CEP, what it is, how it works, and the critical importance of the process being followed every time by every provider, for every client.
- C. Include demonstrated use of the designated CEP and provider in contract reporting requirements.
- D. Facilitate quarterly meetings for all providers working in the homeless crisis system to identify gaps in service and ensure coordinated approach.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	April 2020	Distribution to potential providers	Receive multiple, qualified responses
B	LCPHSS	Include as standing agenda item in meetings identified in Strategy One, Action Item D above.	Providers understand how CEP works and the importance of universal use.	CEP used in at least 90 percent of new client intake.
C	LCPHSS Contracted sub-grantees	August 2020	Receive mandated reports from all contracted providers	Reports are timely, complete, and accurate.
D	LCPHSS	Include as standing agenda item in meetings identified in Strategy One, Action Item D above.	At least 75% attendance by identified providers	Increased awareness among providers of each other’s programs, strengths, needs.

Objective Two:

Prioritize housing for people with the greatest need.

Current Condition

All households that contact Coordinated Entry and are literally homeless are assessed by the lead CE agency using the VI-SPDAT, which is the vulnerability index – service prioritization decision assistance tool. The vulnerability assessment identifies their barriers to housing. The VI-SPDAT scores are used to create a list which prioritizes those with the greatest need (high vulnerability). LCPHSS and the lead CE agency meet weekly to discuss the status and next steps for households on this list. Persons are referred to programs they may be eligible for that have open capacity. While the goal is to serve and house the most vulnerable, who is served can be driven by the programs that are available in the community and, in the case of finding market-rate housing, by whom the landlord selects. Opportunities exist to partner with our local housing authority and revamp the vulnerability index. In 2018, Lewis County's unsheltered entries were 70.6% while the state average was 54%. Lewis County meets the compliance level of the Consolidated Homeless Grant.

Our Plan to Achieve

Prioritizing housing in Objective Two can be defined in two ways. First, provision of housing must be prioritized so that persons who are assessed to be in the greatest needed are the first to have access to available, acceptable housing. Secondly, development and acquisition of additional housing resources needs to be prioritized based on documented community needs.

LCPHSS has outlined three strategies that will provide guidance and benchmarks for achieving Objective Two.

Objective Two, Strategy One seeks to expand the availability of and access to low-barrier housing by using proven models and prioritizing funding to its best effect. Persons at the greatest risk of homelessness are often in that situation due to multiple mitigating factors. These persons will be prioritized at or near the top of the list for housing services. Concurrently, they may only be eligible for a low-barrier program.

Objective Two, Strategy Two is devoted entirely to serving at risk youth and young adults. DOC OHY programs will be evaluated to determine which one(s) of the six would most closely meet youth and young adult needs identified in Objective One. Contracts would connect these needs to qualified providers qualified to implement the selected DOC OHY program(s).

Objective Two, Strategy Three is meant to keep all efforts by all community partners focused on serving the highest priority persons with the most effective program and housing options, while maintaining enhanced situational awareness among all providers of remaining unmet needs.

Measures of Success

- a) Compliance with state and federal Coordinated Entry requirements for all projects receiving federal, state and local homeless funds.
- b) Consider implementation of the Coordinated Entry Core Element recommendations and the Office of Homeless Youth's (OHY) [Five Recommendations for Making Coordinated Entry Work for Youth and Young Adults](#)
- c) Successful implementation of prioritization policies for all projects receiving federal, state and local homeless funds, resulting in people with the greatest need consistently housed in a timely manner.

Strategy One

Promote low-barrier housing programs.

Action Items:

- A. Include utilization of housing-first models in RFQs and RFPs sent to area agencies.
- B. Prioritize funding for programs that utilize housing-first models.
- C. Include provision of housing-first models as appropriate in contract Scope of Work language.
- D. Include status of how housing-first models are being used in contract reporting requirements.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	April 2020	Distribution to potential providers	Receive multiple, qualified responses
B	LCPHSS	June 2020	RFQ responses show an understanding of housing-first models.	Multiple RFQ responders qualify to submit RFP applications.
C	LCPHSS	June 2020	Contracts signed with multiple, qualified sub-grantees	Multiple low-barrier programs serve all age groups.
D	LCPHSS	August 2020	Report template created for sub-grantees	Direct correlation demonstrated between low-barrier program use and housing the homeless.

Strategy Two

Seek service providers that can implement coordinated entry for youth and young adults in Lewis County.

Action Items:

- A. Evaluate the six programs described by DOC OHY to determine which program(s) would be best suited to Lewis County’s environment.
- B. Use DOC guidance documents to create RFQ and RFP for youth and young adult services.
- C. Prioritize available funding to program(s) determined to have the greatest opportunity for success in the Lewis County environment.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	February 2021	Select one or more programs to test	A program or programs can be identified which

				have potential to be useful in Lewis County.
B	LCPHSS	March 2021	Distribute RFQ in March, distribute RFP to qualified responders in April 2021.	One or more sub-grantees selected for contracting.
C	LCPHSS Selected sub-grantee(s)	June 2021	Work with sub-grantee(s) to match program processes and goals to sub-grantee's capabilities and capacity.	Coordinated entry process results in reduction in homeless youth and young adults.

Strategy Three

Promote service models that prioritize high-risk populations.

Action Items:

- A. Educate contractors and other community partners on the fiscal and practical efficiency of prioritizing high-risk populations in their service models.
- B. Include high-risk population models in RFQs and RFPs sent to area agencies.
- C. Include high-risk population service models as appropriate in contract Scope of Work language.
- D. Include provision of services to high-risk populations in contract reporting requirements.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	February 2020	Contractors and community partners educated	Contractors and community partners understand the need to prioritize high-risk populations
B	LCPHSS	March 2020	Distribute RFQ in March, distribute RFP to qualified responders in April 2021.	One or more sub-grantees selected for contracting.
C	LCPHSS	June 2020	Contracts signed with multiple, qualified sub-grantees	Service models implemented to serve high-risk populations.
D	LCPHSS	August 2020	Report template created for sub-grantees	Successes and challenges of service model

				implementation documented.
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Objective Three:

Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that swiftly moves people into stable, permanent housing.

Current Condition

Lewis County has three year-round shelters: Domestic violence specific, family, and single adults. In addition to the three year-round shelters, we have a cold-weather shelter that operates approximately six months of the year when the temperature is below 38 degrees. The four shelter options receive funding through local document and recording fees and the consolidated homeless grant. The capacity of the year-round shelters is insufficient to meet current need, and priority has been given to increase the number of available beds. There are currently no formal transitional housing services within Lewis County. An opportunity exists within Lewis County to operationalize services so homeless persons are quickly moved into stable housing.

Our Plan to Achieve

LCPHSS wants to expand its outreach efforts to effect a greater level of communication and cooperation with non-traditional partners. Historically, housing efforts have focused primarily on persons experiencing homelessness, community partners that help find housing for these persons, and community partners that provide housing units. With Objective Three, LCPHSS intends to create new pathways for developers to create housing, while using proven models to connect persons in need with housing options that meet their needs.

Objective Three, Strategy One makes LCPHSS a partner in the development, governance, and educational processes that lead to creating additional shelter capacity while also creating a better pathway to building new, sustainable, and permanent housing options.

Objective Three, Strategy Two will evaluate outcome-based housing models to determine the best fit to meet needs in Lewis County. Guidance provided by the selected model(s) will help inform LCPHSS input working with non-traditional partners identified in Strategy One. It will also be used to identify qualified housing services contractors and incentivize these contractors to perform to established benchmarks.

Measures of Success

System-wide performance:

- a) Increase percentage of exits to permanent housing to the level of the top performing 20 percent of homeless crisis response systems nationwide.
- b) Reduce returns to homelessness after exit to permanent housing to less than 10 percent.
- c) Reduce average length of stay in temporary housing projects to less than 90 days.

Strategy One

Increase development of all types of housing.

Action Items:

- A. Promote sustainable countywide policies that encourage housing development.

- B. Partner with businesses and homeless advocacy agencies to provide data supporting the need to develop more housing.
- C. Partner with Lewis County Community Development and Board of County Commissioners to facilitate increased housing development.
- D. Partner with business and homeless advocacy agencies to create additional housing units.
- E. Partner with area schools and Centralia College to increase the future workforce knowledgeable in single- and multi-family residential development.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	2023	Develop policy proposals to share with housing development community	Adoption of policies generated or championed by LCPHSS
B	LCPHSS	2019	Invitation to participate and share data	Data generated and shared by all participants
C	LCPHSS	2019	1406 Resolution passed by Lewis County BOCC	1406 legislation passed by BOCC
D	LCPHSS	2019	Support Reliable Enterprises' new multi-family housing project	Reliable's project is built and available for residency.
E	LCPHSS	2022	Analyze curricula for suitability in the Lewis County building environment	Curriculum changes adopted to make course content reflect Lewis County processes.

Strategy Two

Use an outcome-based model that incentivizes specific, targeted outcome measures.

Action Items:

- A. Review various outcome-based models to select one or more that most closely matches Lewis County challenges.
- B. Include model(s) along with percentage of exits, returns to homelessness, and 90-day benchmarks in RFQs and RFPs sent to area agencies.
- C. Evaluate and prioritize responses that appear to most closely follow selected outcome-based model(s).
- D. Include these benchmarks in contract Scope of Work language.
- E. Include performance toward these benchmarks in contract reporting requirements.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	2021	Models reviewed	Most appropriate model(s) selected

B	LCPHSS	2021	Models included in distributed RFQs and RFPs	One or more sub-grantees selected for contracting.
C	LCPHSS	2021	Applicants selected	Applicants proposed outcome-based models
D	LCPHSS	2021	Contracts signed with multiple, qualified sub-grantees	Outcome-based models implemented
E	LCPHSS	2021	Report template created for sub-grantees	Performance toward benchmarks consistently reported by contractors

Objective Four:

Project the impact of the fully implemented local plan on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered, assuming existing resources and state policies.

Current Condition

A modeling tool developed by DOC was utilized to project the impact of the fully-implemented plan. The model projects a 15% reduction in the number of unsheltered households. This reduction is based on numerous assumptions, including a steady rate of 2.0% annual inflation, a 3.0% annual rate of inflation for rents, a 1.3% annual population growth rate, and an annual increase of 0.69% in the rate of homelessness. The model also reflects an additional 17 households receiving emergency shelter services at a point in time, an additional 13 households receiving rapid rehousing services at a point in time, and an additional 9 households receiving permanent supportive housing services at a point in time. The resulting forecast for a point in time count of unsheltered households is 64, which is a reduction of 11 households.

The model utilized is intended to be robust but not precise, so the absolute reduction in the number of households left unsheltered should be viewed as a general estimate.

Our Plan to Achieve

The DOC model used to meet Objective Four projects an end-point, but also offers a starting point to begin proving or disproving the model over time. A desired outcome would be a greater-than-predicted reduction in the number of unsheltered households. So, how do we get there?

Objective Four, Strategy One is designed to first more clearly and accurately identify the present state of homelessness and available resources at a single point in time. Future projections using the DOC model would always be made from a data set that is as accurate as possible. On an annual basis, the data set will be updated and the DOC modeling tool used to re-calculate the anticipated end-point.

Objective Four, Strategy Two will address any negative variances identified by the data set or modeling tool by developing new methods and processes to reach the benchmarks identified in Action Items A through F.

Measures of Success

- a) An estimate of people experiencing homelessness who will be housed during 2024 after successful implementation of the local plan using existing resources, and the count of households left unsheltered at a point in time in 2024, based on credible data and research; including the data, assumptions, calculations, and related citations necessary for outside parties to review and reproduce the estimate.

Strategy One

Determine baseline benchmarks, then update and review progress on an ongoing basis.

Action Items:

- A. Within the first six months, create database that establishes beginning number of known homeless, total number of housing units, available number of housing units, and demand for housing units.
- B. Annually thereafter, update all data points. Report on changes and analyze causes.
- C. Work with providers and community partners to adjust programs as needed to improve key-element performance.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS Sub-grantee	December 2020	Database created	Database in use
B	Sub-grantee	Annually in December	Database updated annually	Database information is current
C	LCPHSS	Annually in the spring when RFQs and RFPs are distributed	Information from database informs project improvement	Projects more effectively address current situation

Strategy Two

Use outcome-based model(s) that incentivizes specific, targeted outcome measures.

Action Items:

- A. Increase percentage of exits to permanent housing to the level of the top-performing 20 percent of the homeless crisis response systems nationwide.
- B. Reduce returns to homelessness after exit to permanent housing to less than 10 percent.
- C. Reduce average length of time homeless of those service to less than 90 days.
- D. Include these benchmarks in RFQs and RFPs sent to area agencies.
- E. Include these benchmarks in contract Scope of Work language.
- F. Include performance toward these benchmarks in contract reporting requirements.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
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A	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2024	Percentage of exits to permanent housing meets threshold	More people exit to permanent housing
B	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2024	Exits to homelessness reduced to less than 10%	Fewer people exit to homelessness
C	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2024	Average length of time spent homeless is reduced to less than 90 days	More people get into housing more quickly
D	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2020	Benchmarks included in distributed RFQs and RFPs	Benchmarks understood by sub-contractors
E	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2020	Contracts signed with multiple, qualified sub-grantees	Benchmarks acknowledged by sub-contractors
F	LCPHSS Sub-grantees	2020	Report template created for sub-grantees	Subcontractors regularly report on progress toward and barriers to benchmarks

Objective Five:

Address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness.

Current Condition

Data from the Department of Commerce’s Racial Equity Analysis Tool indicates that a total of 116 persons were experiencing homelessness in Lewis County on the date that the point-in-time (PIT) count was conducted in 2018. The race and ethnicity breakdowns provided in the tool suggest that there may be racial and ethnic disparities in the rates of homelessness for some populations, but small numbers make these rates volatile and not necessarily reliable. Whites made up 91.3% of the total county population, accounted for 85.9% of people living in poverty and made up 88.8% of the individuals counted as homeless. The only other racial group with more than five people represented in the PIT count is Native Americans/Alaska Natives. This group made up 0.6% of the total county population and accounted for 1.4% of people living in poverty but made up 6.0% of the individuals counted as homeless. This gives the group a rate of homelessness (1,483.1 per 100,000) that is ten times that of Whites (148.4 per 100,000), but the rate is based on a total of seven people in the PIT count and may not be truly representative.

When the PIT count numbers are examined through the lens of ethnicity, Non-Hispanics made up 90.2% of the total county population and accounted for 82.7% of people living in poverty, but they made up 94.0% of all people counted as homeless. Hispanics, while making up 9.8% of the

county population and 17.3% of people living in poverty, made up only 6.0% of all people counted as homeless. The rate for homelessness among Hispanics is 93.8 per 100,000 while that for Non-Hispanics is 159.0 per 100,000. Again, this rate should be taken in context, as it is based on a total count of seven Hispanic people experiencing homelessness.

Meaningful disparities between the rates of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness are not discernable in the data provided by DOC due to the low numbers of clients counted. Likewise, differences in rates of homelessness for families are not evident, with all families counted categorized as White. Finally, of the 8 youth under 25 listed, 7 are White and all 8 are Non-Hispanic, so differences in rates of homelessness among youth of different racial and ethnic groups are not discernable.

Comparing these numbers to those for Washington as a whole reinforces the impression that rates calculated for Lewis County are challenged by the low numbers used in those calculations. Statewide, Whites make up a disproportionately small percentage of people living in poverty and an even smaller percentage of the people counted as homeless in the PIT count. With the exception of Asian/Pacific Islanders, all of the other racial groups have a higher rate of homelessness than Whites, and Hispanics have a higher rate than Non-Hispanics.

While the unexpected rates generated from the PIT count numbers may solely be a reflection of the unstable rates due to smaller population size in Lewis County, they may also indicate that the methodology utilized for the PIT count results in an undercount of people of color (with the possible exception of Native Americans/Alaska Natives) and Hispanics..

Our Plan to Achieve

LCPHSS has begun the process identified in Objective Five, Strategy One to identify racial disparities. Data has been generated using the Department of Commerce’s Racial Equity Analysis Tool. However, as noted in the Current Conditions section above, it is not entirely clear whether the data generated by this initial assessment is thorough or completely reliable. Meeting Objective Five will also include additional attempts to acquire localized data on racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness via other means. Once sufficient, actionable data has been acquired, Objective Five, Strategy One Action Items A through C can be completed. Action Item D will ensure efforts to address racial disparities will remain ongoing.

Measures of Success

Completion of an initial analysis using a racial equity tool and data provided by Commerce.

The goal of this analysis is to examine disparities in the homeless system and then identify where the system may be perpetuating inequity. The questions below are a start toward that examination and counties are encouraged to go beyond simply answering them with the data and tool and include information on where inequity exists and solutions to address the disparities.

In terms of race and ethnicity:

1. How does your county compare to other like size counties in the state? Are any groups over or underrepresented in the homeless population?
2. What does the family data look like compared to all households?
3. In PIT counts, are there significant differences between sheltered and unsheltered counts?
4. Are there specific local or state conditions that might lead to these differences?

Strategy One

Identify racial disparities that exist in the Lewis County homeless and affordable housing programs.

Action Items:

- A. Complete initial analysis using the DOC racial equity tool and provided data.
- B. Analyze results according to the four questions above and other criteria.
- C. Create an improvement Action Plan to address identified needs.
- D. Review progress annually.

Action Item	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Milestone	Measures of Success
A	LCPHSS	2019	Analysis complete	Completed Racial Equity Tool
B	LCPHSS	2019	Analysis complete	A better understanding is developed of the racial disparities that exist
C	LCPHSS Sub-grantee	2020	Plan completed	Plan implemented
D	LCPHSS	Annually beginning in 2020	Annual review conducted	Information from annual review utilized to reduce disparities