

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
CHARLESTON
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 4-07

By the Governor

WHEREAS, homelessness threatens the dignity of affected persons by denying them the basic human need for adequate shelter; and

WHEREAS, despite a general perception that homelessness exists predominantly in urban areas, the most recent national study, performed by the Urban Institute, found that approximately nine percent of all homeless persons in the United States reside in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that over one thousand five hundred people experienced homelessness in West Virginia in 2005; and

WHEREAS, many West Virginia families live in a precarious state of “near-homelessness” where one serious financial setback may force them out of their homes; and

WHEREAS, several State agencies and service providers offer programs and services for persons experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness; and

WHEREAS, by working together, these agencies and providers can more effectively address the problem of homelessness through coordinated program development and delivery of essential services; and

WHEREAS, the enhanced integration of “preventative management” for the near-homeless can end homelessness before it begins; and

WHEREAS, collaboration between various federal, State, and local departments and agencies is critical to achieve a complete delivery of services, particularly in rural areas where resources are less abundant and separated by greater distances than in urban areas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 11311, *et seq.*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness was established to develop and implement a national strategy to end homelessness through interagency, intergovernmental and intercommunity collaborations; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 11320, “[e]ach state is encouraged to establish a State interagency council on the homeless or designate a lead agency for the State for the purpose of assuming the primary responsibility for coordinating and interacting with the [United States Interagency Council on Homelessness] and State and local agencies as necessary”; and

WHEREAS, on May 3, 2004, Executive Order No. 9–04 was issued, ordering the creation of the West Virginia Interagency Council for the Homeless; and

WHEREAS, the needs of the homeless in West Virginia and the programs, services and strategies intended to assist that community have evolved since the issuance of Executive Order No. 9-04 and, therefore, a proactive State council specifically designed to address those changes is required.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOE MANCHIN III, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of West Virginia, do hereby **ORDER** that:

1. Executive Order No. 9-04 is hereby rescinded.
2. A state interagency council on homelessness, to be known as the West Virginia Interagency Council on Homelessness (hereinafter “the Council”), is hereby created.
3. The Council shall coordinate the development, delivery, and oversight of programs and services assisting persons experiencing homelessness and near-homelessness in West Virginia.
4. The objective of the Council shall be to identify trends in the homeless and near-homeless community, improve existing programs and services, initiate new programs and services, maximize the use of available resources of and enhance collaborative efforts among agencies in State Government and providers of services for the benefit of the homeless and the near-homeless.
5. The Council shall create a statewide plan with short-term and long-term strategies to end homelessness, prioritize the strategies, promote the plan, and evaluate its progress.
6. The Council shall oversee the development and implementation of statewide goals and objectives for programs designed to benefit homeless persons and the near-homeless.
7. The Council shall be appointed by the Governor and composed of the following members, who shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Governor.
 - a. One representative of the Governor’s Office of Economic Opportunity.
 - b. One representative of WorkForce West Virginia.
 - c. One representative of the Community Development Division, West Virginia Development Office, Department of Commerce.

- d. One representative of the Bureau for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Resources.
 - e. One representative of the Bureau of Public Health, Department of Health and Human Resources.
 - f. One representative of the Bureau of Medical Services, Department of Health and Human Resources.
 - g. One representative of the Bureau of Behavioral Health Services, Department of Health and Human Resources.
 - h. One representative of the West Virginia Housing Development Fund.
 - l. One representative of the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety.
 - j. One representative of the Division of Veterans Affairs, Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety.
 - k. One representative of the Department of Education.
 - l. One representative of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Education and the Arts.
 - m. One representative of a private non-profit entity committed to preventing and addressing homelessness.
 - n. Two representatives of the homeless community who are now experiencing, or have experienced, homelessness.
 - o. One representative of each of the three congressional districts who serve the homeless and/or their families.
8. The Governor also shall invite representatives from relevant agencies of the federal government to serve as non-voting members of the Council.
 9. A chairperson shall be appointed by the Governor.
 10. The chairperson of the Council also shall serve as the designated contact person for the purpose of receiving and disseminating information and communications received from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 11320(a).

11. The Governor, at his discretion, may appoint additional members to the Council.
12. The Council shall present to the Governor a plan of action no later than December 31, 2007.
13. The Council shall continually review the progress in achieving its goals, oversee various cooperative agency efforts, update and change programs and services when necessary, and report all endeavors to the Governor.
14. The Council shall report its progress to the Governor prior to the first day of December of each year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol, in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the fifteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Seven, and in the One Hundred Forty-Fourth year of the State.

GOVERNOR

By the Governor

SECRETARY OF STATE