



Developing a State Interagency Council on Homelessness

A Step-by-Step Guide

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

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Support for State Interagency Councils

“Homelessness is one of the most challenging issues facing us domestically. Its solutions cannot be found in the actions of any one agency. Only through bold thinking and persistence will we formulate new answers and approaches that will contribute to ending it. I encourage you to explore a state council as one such contribution.”

- **Secretary Tommy Thompson**

United States Department of Health and Human Services

"The Governors support the goal of ending chronic homelessness and recognize the shared responsibility that local, state, and federal governments have in combating this social problem . . . and for ensuring that the state government is coordinating its efforts effectively with the federal government and with local efforts including 10-year planning efforts to end chronic homelessness.”

- *Policy Statement adopted by the **National Governors Association**, March 2005*

“The partnership that we envision extends from Washington, through every State House and City Hall, to the shelters and streets of our communities. Our objective is to end homelessness for our most vulnerable neighbors. States have a pivotal role in realizing that vision.”

- **Executive Director Philip Mangano**

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

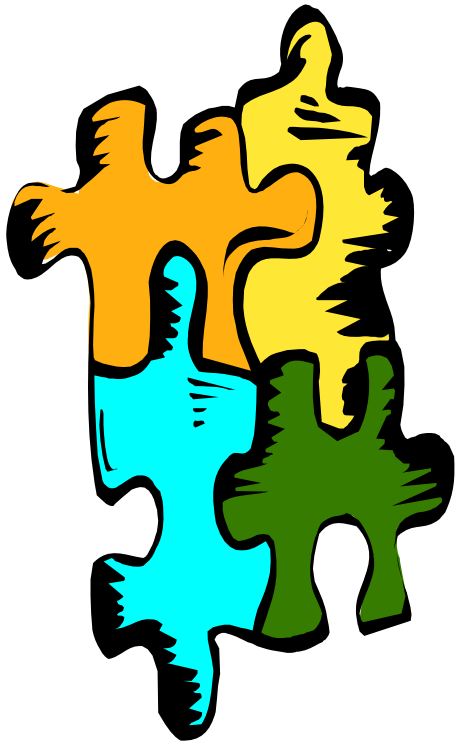


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WHY A STATE COUNCIL MAKES SENSE



- Creates a statewide partnership to end chronic homelessness and the other profiles of homelessness in the State
- Provides for a coordinated State, Federal, and Local response
- Fosters a research-driven, performance-based, results-oriented plan and implementation strategy
- Supports a non-partisan approach to address homelessness

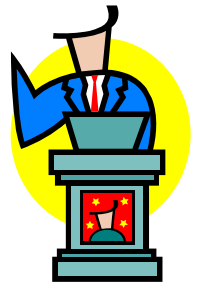


ESTABLISHING A STATE COUNCIL

State Interagency Councils on Homelessness have been established through several initiatives including:



- Executive Order of the Governor
- Executive Order and Legislative Action
- Legislative Action



The most common vehicle of creation is the Executive Order which identifies membership, meeting frequency, functions, and timeframe.

Examples of Executive Orders are posted on the Interagency Council web site: www.usich.gov



An Example Establishing a State Interagency Council

Executive Order Number 14

The Honorable Michael F. Easley, Governor of North Carolina

WHEREAS, the problem of homelessness denies a segment of our population their basic need for adequate shelter; and,

WHEREAS, several State agencies offer programs and services for homeless persons; and,

WHEREAS to combat the problem of homelessness most effectively, it is critical that these agencies coordinate program development and delivery of essential services.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in me as Governor by the laws and Constitution of the State of North Carolina, IT IS ORDERED:

Establishment

The North Carolina Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs is hereby established.





STATE COUNCIL FUNCTIONS I

The federal United States Interagency Council on Homelessness develops and implements comprehensive and innovative national strategies in state and local partnership to end chronic homelessness through interagency, intergovernmental, and intercommunity collaborations. USICH functions include coordinating federal departments, identifying needed resources, and fostering the creation of State Interagency Councils.

A State Interagency Council should...

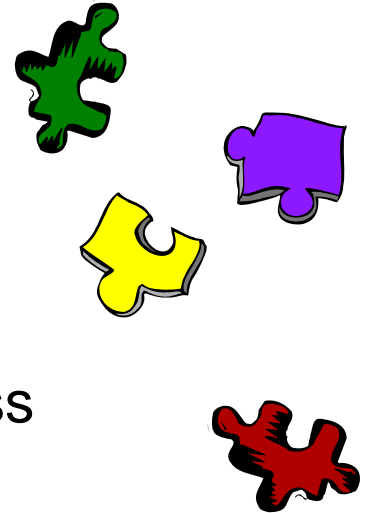
- Replicate the functions of the U.S. Interagency Council in all areas that can be carried out at the state level
- Report to Governor on progress in creating and implementing strategy



STATE COUNCIL FUNCTIONS II

Existing Councils:

- **Serve** as the single statewide homelessness planning and policy development resource
- **Develop** a state 10-year plan to end homelessness with emphasis on ending chronic homelessness
- **Articulate** an implementation strategy for a successful 10-year plan
- **Recommend** policy, regulatory, and resource changes needed to accomplish the objective
- **Ensure** accountability and results in implementation strategies

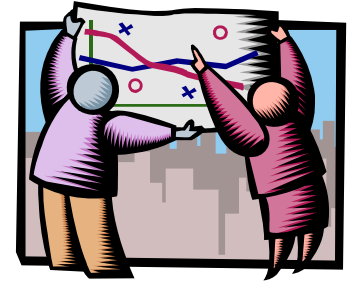




ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL I

Existing Councils have assumed the following responsibilities:

■ Create a Statewide Plan



- Develop short and long-term statewide strategies and plans to end homelessness with an emphasis on eliminating chronic homelessness within the next 10 years
- Ensure the use of baselines and benchmarks in the state's plan, with an emphasis on performance and outcomes and a concrete strategy for oversight and monitoring of progress
- Partner with cities and counties which have developed 10-year plans to end homelessness in order to identify resources and common strategies
- Seek to coordinate the activities of statewide continuums of care
- Assemble accurate fiscal and demographic information, including cost benefit analysis and research/data to support policy development and track outcomes



ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL II

- **Establish priorities (action steps) based on the plan, including:**
 - Recommend interagency strategies (e.g. funding, homelessness prevention, discharge planning)
 - Review all state activities and programs assisting homeless persons
 - Support and replicate collaborative state homelessness initiatives that demonstrate measurable outcomes
 - Promote systems integration (health, services, housing) to reduce duplication among homeless assistance programs





ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL III

Priorities, *continued*:

- Identify funding opportunities, including mainstream resources, for homeless persons
- Involve non-traditional stakeholders, including representatives from corporations, business, philanthropy, law enforcement, behavioral health systems, hospitals, civic organizations, faith-based organizations, and other community institutions
- Recommend statutory and regulatory changes to enhance strategies
- Bring problems and concerns relating to homeless people to the attention of appropriate state agencies





ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL IV

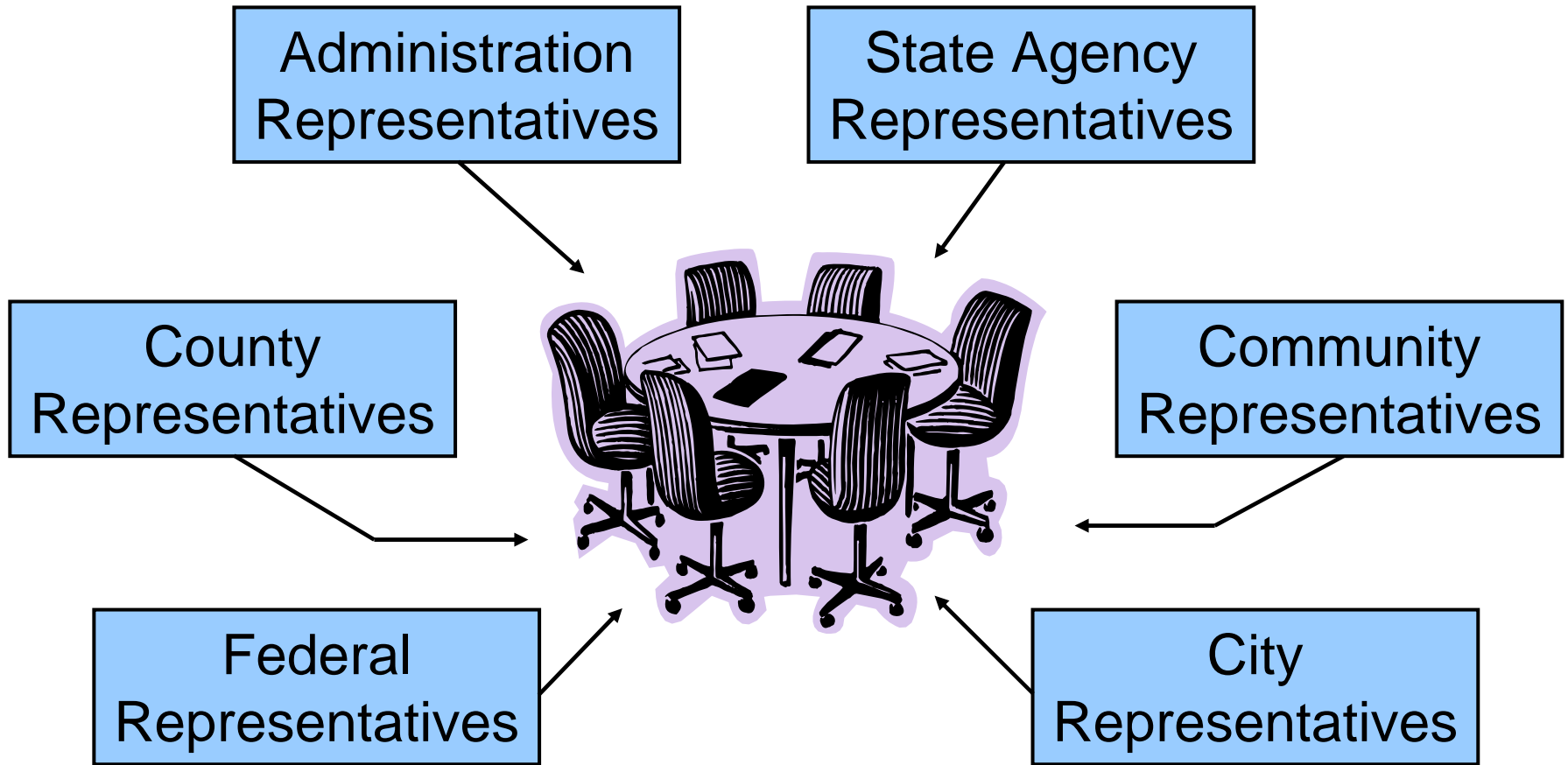
- **Promotion of the Plan and Evaluation of Progress**
 - Report to the Governor, Cabinet Secretaries, and the Legislature
 - Provide an Annual Progress Report on the Plan
 - Educate the Public
 - Disseminate information (data and best practices) to educate state officials and the public regarding issues related to homelessness
 - Host an Annual Homelessness Conference





COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP I

Government Agency Officials and Community Representatives





COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP II

Existing State Councils Include...



- Governor's Representatives
- State Agency Representatives and Legislators
- City and County Officials
- Local Federal Officials (ICH Regional Coordinator)
- Philanthropic Groups
- Business and Corporate Representatives
- Law enforcement
- Hospitals and Health Care
- Behavioral Health Systems
- Homeless People
- Providers of Homeless Services, including Veteran Serving Groups
- State Advocacy Group Members
- United Way Representatives and Community Leaders
- Non-Profit Agency Representatives
- Faith-Based Representatives
- Private Citizens
- Academia



COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP III

State Agency Officials

Representatives from the Following Elected and Appointed Statewide Offices:

Governor's Office • Lieutenant Governor's Office • Judicial Offices
Attorney General's Office • State Fiscal or Comptroller's Office

And

Secretaries & Commissioners (or their Representatives) from the Following Departments, Agencies, and Resources:

Housing & Housing Finance • Substance Abuse & Mental Health • Veterans Affairs
Office of Management & Budget • Social Security/Disability Determinations
Managed Care Entity • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
State and County Corrections/ Public Safety/Juvenile Justice
Education • Labor/Employment Services • Welfare • Medicaid • Transportation
Children & Families/Youth Services • Health & Human Services/Homeless Services



COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP IV



The Active Involvement of Representatives from key Cities and Counties is an important element in the Success of the State Council.

- Mayors •
- City Councilors •
- County Commissioners and Executives •
- City Managers •

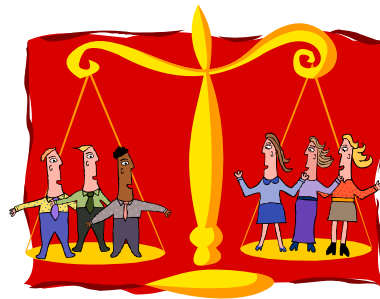


COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP V

Community Participants

All of the following have created balance and enhanced diversity and knowledge for existing State Interagency Councils:

- Faith-based Organizations Representatives
- Federal ICH Liaison
- Federal Agency Representatives
- Philanthropic Community, enlisting foundations, corporations, and businesses
- Supportive Housing Coalitions



- Corporate CEOs
- Business Owners
- Educational and Research Institutions
- Homeless service providers
- Homeless and formerly homeless persons
- Fraternal Organization Representatives
- Other Interested Parties



COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP VI

Chair, Terms, Meetings

- A Chair and Vice Chair are appointed by the Governor or selected by election from within to provide direction and focus and to address benchmarks established for State Council activities.
- Terms of the Chair and Vice Chair are set by Executive or Legislative Order or may be determined by the Council.
- Terms for members are also set by Executive or Legislative Order or determined by the Council and are generally between 1 and 5 years, with many Councils offering up to 3 consecutive terms.
- Meeting frequency can vary from quarterly to monthly.





CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL COUNCIL

- Governor Initiated
- Active participation of Governor's Office
- Council representation is maintained at the State Secretary or Deputy Secretary level for attendance.
- Staff dedicated to Council activities
- Membership is represented by the core State agencies: Housing, Welfare, Human Services, Corrections, Labor/Economic Development, and Finance.
- Membership includes city and county representation and community stakeholders and interested parties
- Council activities are performance based and results oriented with measurable outcomes that are periodically reviewed and documented in written reports.





BENEFITS OF A COUNCIL

States with existing Councils have found the following benefits:

- All stakeholders, not only homeless providers and advocates, have a say in the process
- Member Legislators are champions of the plan, strategy, and resources in the Legislature
- Coordination with city and rural 10-year planning processes is enhanced
- Savings are promoted by identifying and eliminating duplicative programs and costs



- Credible documentation of research-driven, measurable outcomes is available for future funding requests
- Buy-in is a greater possibility for elements of the strategy, including supported housing, discharge planning, and assertive engagement initiatives through expansive stakeholder involvement



RESULTS YOUR STATE CAN EXPECT



- **Significant savings in public systems from reduced use of services including hospital emergency rooms, ambulances, and EMT services (San Diego, Seattle, Boston, and other studies)**
 - **Savings in other service systems, including homeless shelters, acute psychiatric services, and corrections can result from placement of individuals into supportive housing (Culhane et al.)**



- **Enhancement of quality of life for both those who are housed and homeless**
- **Supported housing retention rates of 80% or greater**
- **More resources to address other homeless subpopulations, including youth and families**
- **Inspiration and energy from working together to help your neediest neighbors**





ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. INTERAGENCY COUNCIL (USICH)

- **Regional USICH Coordinators** throughout the country are available to provide on-site technical assistance in the development of your Council.
- **Existing State Council documents** are available to assist in the design of the mission and making of your State Council.
- **Clearinghouse of best practices and state contacts** is maintained by USICH to support the implementation of State Council strategies.



WHERE CAN YOU FIND ADDITIONAL STATE INTERAGENCY COUNCIL RESOURCES?



United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

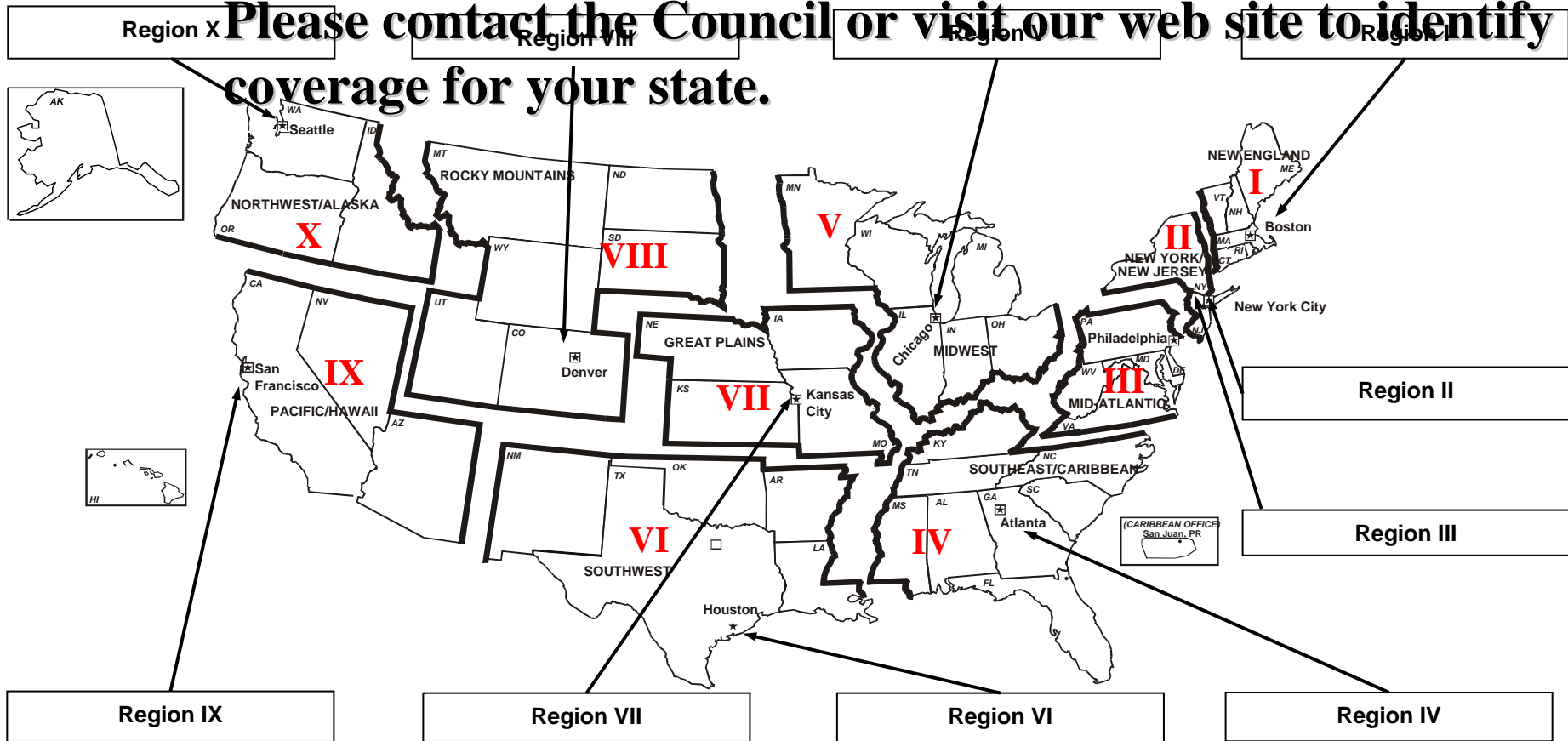
- USICH Regional Coordinators have specific local expertise and are based – Call us for more information
- USICH Website (www.usich.gov) has examples of Executive Orders creating State Interagency Councils
- USICH's weekly e-newsletter headlines new developments, innovations, partnerships, and resources focused on ending chronic homelessness: subscribe at www.usich.gov

COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

The 10 Federal Regions are served by the Council's Regional Coordinators in the field.

This map displays the organization of the Federal Regions used by the Council.

Please contact the Council or visit our web site to identify coverage for your state.





The federal United States Interagency Council on Homelessness develops and implements comprehensive and innovative national strategies in state and local partnership to end chronic homelessness through interagency, intergovernmental, and intercommunity collaborations.

Information on current State Interagency Councils on Homelessness can be found on the USICH web site:

www.usich.gov