

Delaware Interagency Collaborative to End Homelessness

Street Engagement and Outreach Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes July 2nd, 2026

Members in Attendance: Karen Records (DSAMH), Elaine Ansah (DCADV), Michelle Statham (DSHA), Janell Stanton (DSHA), Alex Modeas (DSHA), Sam Quinn (DSHA), Caitlin DelCollo (HAD), Vivian Wiggins (DSHA)

Member not in Attendance: Dawn Hess-Fischer (Attack Addiction), Lt. Harold Bozeman (Wilm PD), Erica Allen (DoCareDoula), Alta Porterfield (Div. Libraries), Shelby Polce (BCCS)

Members of the Public: Lisa Rice, Brianna Fletcher

Meeting Summary:

The Street Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee convened to discuss Delaware's current approach to street outreach and encampment response, with the goal of identifying opportunities to strengthen coordination, improve engagement with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, and develop recommendations for the Interagency Collaborative. Alex Modeas opened the meeting with an overview of the subcommittee's purpose, emphasizing the importance of examining both encampment response and the broader homelessness response system, from initial outreach through permanent housing.

Members discussed the importance of meeting individuals "where they are" through a person-centered, system-wide approach that prioritizes consistent outreach, coordinated entry, shelter access, and supportive housing. Public participants raised questions about homelessness prevention, available resources, and increasing public awareness of existing services. Members noted that many individuals' experiencing homelessness are unaware of available programs until they are already in crisis.

The committee reviewed national best practices for encampment response, including building trust before enforcement actions, minimizing unnecessary displacement, coordinating across agencies, maintaining consistent outreach, and prioritizing health and safety. Karen Records emphasized that trauma-informed care should be a foundational principle of any outreach framework, highlighting the importance of respectful engagement, thoughtful communication, and avoiding approaches that may overwhelm individuals experiencing homelessness.

Members also discussed Delaware's existing street outreach infrastructure and available funding sources. Karen Records described DSAMH's PATH-funded outreach teams and Bridge Clinic encampment teams, which connect individuals experiencing homelessness to behavioral health treatment, supportive housing, and public benefits. Additional funding streams discussed included Home for Good, ESG, Continuum of Care, and Shelter Connect. Members suggested compiling a comprehensive inventory of funding sources and strengthening partnerships among

outreach providers, shelters, healthcare providers, law enforcement, veterans' organizations, and other community partners.

Discussion also focused on the need for flexibility while maintaining consistency in outreach practices across Delaware. Members agreed that responses should be adapted to the unique needs of different communities and populations while maintaining shared principles during encampment closures. Existing strengths identified included established provider relationships, mobile case management, and strong local partnerships. Challenges included limited housing stock, fragmented communication among agencies, inconsistent coordination with community partners, and the need for improved information sharing across systems.

The meeting concluded with discussion of guiding principles that should inform future recommendations, including respect, dignity, safety, trauma-informed practice, housing-focused interventions, person-centered services, transparency, coordination, public health, and community impact. Members expressed interest in developing a statewide framework for encampment response that promotes consistency while allowing for local flexibility. The subcommittee agreed to continue refining these concepts and reconvene at its next scheduled meeting.

Action Items

- I. Continue developing a statewide framework for street outreach and encampment response grounded in trauma-informed, person-centered practices.
- II. Compile an inventory of existing outreach funding sources, outreach programs, and key community partners to identify opportunities for improved coordination.
- III. Identify strategies to strengthen collaboration among state agencies, healthcare providers, shelters, law enforcement, veterans' organizations, and community organizations involved in street outreach.
- IV. Refine guiding principles and recommendations for compassionate, coordinated encampment response prior to the next subcommittee meeting.