

STREET OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

This Collaborative Subcommittee will make recommendations on 1.) compassionately connecting with individuals experiencing homelessness by offering consistent outreach; 2.) personalized support; and 3.) pathways to stability by linking individuals to essential resources, safe shelter and long-term solutions.

MEETING INFORMATION

Subcommittee Name	Street Outreach & Engagement
Date	August 6, 2026
Time	10:30am-12:00pm

ATTENDANCE — MEMBERS PRESENT

 Member Name	✓	Member Name
✓ Alex Modeas, Chair		Erica Allen, Doula
✓ Janell Stanton, DSHA		Elaine Ansah, DCADV
✓ Vivian Wiggins, DSHA		Alta Porterfield, Div. Libraries
✓ Shelby Polce, BCCS		Lt. Harold Bozeman (WPD)
✓ Dawn Fischer (Attack Addiction)		

Guests Present	
Amy Hopkins, Social Contract	Jason Burden, Girl Scouts Chesapeake Bay
Michelle Statham, DSHA	Lisa Rice, member of the public
Samuel Quinn, DSHA	Shannon Tiberi, member of the public
Kim Eppehimer, CEO of One Big House	

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Purpose

The Street Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee convened to continue assessing Delaware’s current street outreach and encampment response landscape and identify opportunities for greater statewide coordination. The discussion focused on shared outreach principles, mapping current providers and practices, geographic differences, and the potential development of a statewide street outreach framework or guide.

The discussion supports the Collaborative’s broader responsibility to coordinate resources, identify service gaps and improve Delaware’s response to homelessness.

Key Discussion Points

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- The July 2, 2026 meeting minutes were presented for approval.
- No edits or concerns were raised.
- A motion to approve was made by Dawn Fischer and seconded by Kim Eppehimer.
- The minutes were approved for posting to the DSHA webpage.

1. Subcommittee Charge and Current Focus

The Chair reviewed the Collaborative's broader homelessness response roadmap and emphasized the Street Outreach & Engagement Subcommittee's role in improving how Delaware reaches and engages individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

The Subcommittee reaffirmed its focus on:

- Compassionate and consistent outreach.
- Personalized engagement and support.
- Connecting individuals to shelter, housing, behavioral health, health care, documentation and other essential services.
- Strengthening street outreach and encampment response initiatives.
- Creating pathways toward long-term housing stability.

Members emphasized that **consistency is particularly important for building trust** with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

2. Principles for Street Outreach and Encampment Response

Members discussed principles that should guide outreach and encampment response statewide.

Priority principles included:

- **Trauma-informed practice**
- **Respect and dignity**
- **Person-centered engagement**
- **Safety for both individuals experiencing homelessness and outreach workers**
- **Consistency and relationship-building**
- **Coordination across agencies and providers**

Members emphasized that outreach should recognize the experiences and goals of each individual rather than rely on a uniform approach.

The Subcommittee also discussed the relationship between **community perception and trust**. Members noted that stigma surrounding homelessness can influence how communities and systems respond and can create barriers to effective engagement.

3. Housing Stability and Prevention

Members identified several issues that extend beyond initial street outreach but directly affect long-term outcomes.

Discussion included:

- The need for additional housing options and pathways from unsheltered homelessness into stable housing.
- The importance of continuing support after an individual enters housing.
- Eviction prevention and tenant education.
- Assistance understanding leases, landlord expectations and housing requirements.

- Preventing individuals from cycling from homelessness into housing and back into homelessness.

Because several of these issues overlap with the work of other Collaborative subcommittees, the group discussed sharing relevant findings with the **Community Education** and **Prevention** subcommittees.

4. Statewide Street Outreach Mapping

The Subcommittee continued developing a map of Delaware's current street outreach and encampment response system.

The mapping exercise is intended to identify:

- Who identifies encampments.
- Who conducts street outreach.
- Who determines what response or action is taken.
- Roles of law enforcement, public health, behavioral health and shelter providers.
- State, county and municipal roles.
- Follow-up practices after outreach.
- Funding sources.
- Existing strengths and challenges.

Members identified additional organizations and stakeholders that should be reflected in the mapping, including **Brandywine Counseling, Redemption City, Friendship House, nonprofits, community organizations and faith communities**.

Members also noted that organizations may provide outreach without state or federal funding and therefore may not appear in traditional government inventories of funded providers.

5. Funding and Service Delivery

Members identified multiple funding streams supporting outreach, including:

- Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG).
- Home for Good.
- HUD funding opportunities, including funding associated with street outreach and encampment activities.
- Private donations.
- Foundation grants.
- Potential state, county and municipal resources.

The group discussed how funding requirements can influence the services organizations provide and the outcomes they are expected to achieve.

Members also highlighted services that may be part of street outreach beyond housing navigation, including assistance obtaining **birth certificates, identification and Social Security documentation**, basic-needs assessments, behavioral health and substance use treatment connections, workforce services and ongoing case management.

6. County-Level Differences

Members agreed that street outreach and encampment response are **not fully consistent across Delaware's three counties**.

Key observations included:

- Available providers and resources differ by county.
- Local government approaches and community context can influence responses.
- Funding availability varies geographically.
- Statewide principles can be consistent while implementation remains flexible enough to reflect local conditions.

The Subcommittee supported restructuring portions of the mapping exercise to more clearly distinguish practices and resources in New Castle, Kent and Sussex Counties.

6. Proposed Statewide Street Outreach Guide

The Subcommittee expressed strong support for continuing to explore a statewide street outreach and encampment response framework or guide.

Potential components discussed included:

- Purpose and shared values.
- Guiding principles for outreach.
- Reporting and outreach processes.
- Assessment and service coordination.
- Agency and organizational roles and responsibilities.
- State, county, and municipal roles.
- Housing, shelter, and service connections.
- Encampment response and resolution.
- Follow up after outreach.
- Statewide resources and partner information.
- Coordination and handoffs between organizations and systems.

Members emphasized that additional work is needed to define how state, county, municipal, and community-based partners interact and where handoffs occur.

Intended Role of the Guide

Members discussed whether the document should function as a prescriptive "how-to" manual or as a broader description of Delaware's coordinated response.

There was support for creating a framework that:

- Clearly explains what Delaware's coordinated response is and how it works.
- Helps providers understand where they fit within the existing system.
- Encourage collaboration rather than duplication.
- Establishes shared principles without limiting providers' ability to respond flexibly to individual needs.
- Reflects organizations operating with different funding structures and service models.

Members emphasized that broad stakeholder participation will be necessary to ensure the framework accurately reflects the organizations conducting street outreach throughout Delaware.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Buy-In

The Subcommittee emphasized that the success of a statewide framework will depend on meaningful participation from organizations conducting outreach.

Members recommended:

- Bring additional street outreach providers into the discussion.
- Increasing information sharing across providers and counties.
- Using data to better understand needs and movement across counties.
- Seeking input from organizations before identifying them in a statewide resource guide.
- Considering organizational or agency endorsement once the purpose and structure of the guide are more clearly defined.

The group cautioned against developing a framework that is overly prescriptive or inadvertently excludes organizations that operate outside traditional government funding streams.

7. Public Comment

A member of the public encouraged greater public education regarding homelessness and outreach, including helping communities understand that individuals may not always be ready or willing to accept services when they are first offered.

The Subcommittee acknowledged that public education and awareness are important components of building community support for effective street outreach and noted potential alignment with the Community Education Subcommittee.

ACTION ITEMS

Task	Owner	Due Date	Status
Distribute updated mapping and draft guide outline for member review	Alex Modeas, Chair	Before next meeting (9/13/26)	In progress
Review resources mapping and guide outlines and provide feedback	Subcommittee Members	Before next meeting (9/13/26)	In progress

NEXT MEETING

Date	September 3, 2026
Time	10:30am
Location / Virtual Link	Teams, invite to follow

DSHA Subcommittees

- Prevention
- Street Outreach and Engagement
- Coordinated Entry
- Shelter Capacity and Operations
- Transitional and Supportive Housing
- Community Education and Advocacy
- Data and Outcomes
- Stability and Intervention for Families and Youth
- Code Purple
- Cycle Breaking Tools

Minutes Approved By: _____ Date: _____ Posted to PMC: ☐