



## Coordinated. Connected. Committed to Ending Homelessness

December 8, 2025

TO: Coalition to End Homelessness

FR: Cynthia Stewart, Chair, Greater Pierce County Continuum of Care (CoC)

RE: Community Engagement on Homelessness

On behalf of co-Chairs Ahney King and Ivan Tudela, I am writing to ask for volunteers to participate in the Continuum of Care's Stability & Community Partnerships Committee. It is not necessary to be a CoC member to participate on one of the committees; and for this particular project, it would be very helpful to have people working with us who have the expertise you do. Additionally, this should benefit the Coalition's goals as well as the CoC's.

The purpose of the Stability & Community Partnerships Committee is to enhance housing stability within the community by fostering strong partnerships with local stakeholders and effectively communicating housing resources and policies. The committee aims to address housing needs by engaging the community through informative documents, presentations, and event participation.

This work involves the following objectives:

- Work with county entities to compile data for the unhoused in our county to assess housing needs.
- Strengthen community partnerships through targeted engagement.
- Design and distribute community-facing documents and informational materials.
- Prepare and deliver presentations to communicate policy impacts and success stories.
- Actively participate in community events to promote housing initiatives.

And these responsibilities:

- Data Collection: Gather data to create a comprehensive housing needs report.
- Community Engagement: Map potential partners and develop a strategic engagement plan. Development of a community event calendar for future use and reference.
- Document Design: Create flyers and brochures detailing unhoused data, resources and policies.
- Presentation Preparation: Develop presentations on unhoused policies and success stories.
- Event Participation: Attend community events to engage with the community.

The committee developed an outreach plan originally intended for this past Fall but that had to be deferred to 2026. That plan, which is attached, involves approaching specific target populations with presentations and suggestions of how they can be most effectively involved. The intention of the outreach plan is to improve community understanding of why so many people are unhoused (and that it is not for the reasons most people assume) and to promote the concept that we all benefit from resolving this issue in creative ways, particularly now that federal and state funding are so unpredictable.

What is now needed are volunteers who can:

- Help schedule presentations to target groups
- Make presentations (training and talking points will be provided)

The starting point for this work is the attached flyer, which will be available as a handout for any presentations in person and online for virtual meetings. The information that will be presented to the many organizations and public that are listed in the attached plan will build on that basic flyer and be much more detailed.

If you are interested, and we certainly hope that some of you are, please contact Ahney King, Committee Chair, at [Ahney.King@carelon.com](mailto:Ahney.King@carelon.com).

This could be really fun as well as important work, so thank you for your consideration and for stepping up if you can.

Attachments:

1. Community Outreach Plan as of December 2025
2. Community Outreach Flyer

## Community Outreach Plan as of December 2025

Target Audience	Message	Timeline (updated)	Tools	Other
CoC Members	<p>Equip CoC members to represent the CoC interests in the community</p> <p>Good solid information about what is actually happening; this will support public education as well;</p> <p>Charge to CoC (mission) reinforcement, regardless of HUD funding levels</p>	<p>Monthly webinars, particularly when there are no membership decisions required;</p> <p>Updates to make it clear what the CoC relationship to the URA project is</p>	<p>Data</p> <p>Graphics</p> <p>Booklet of available resources, services &amp; providers</p> <p>Social media</p> <p>Pin or other way to identify CoC members</p>	
Cities & Towns	<p>Explain CoC; ask them to send representatives to CoC;</p> <p>Explain benefits to the community at large if homelessness is reduced; it takes a whole community to solve the homelessness problem;</p> <p>Ask them to engage in planning; help be part of the solution</p>	<p>January – March 2026</p>	<p>Revised CoC web site</p> <p>Power Point templates;</p> <p>Data, including by city;</p> <p>Booklet of available services;</p> <p>One-pager with city-specific data</p>	<p>Review available graphics at <a href="https://ss4a.pcho.meless.org/">https://ss4a.pcho.meless.org/</a></p>
Community Councils	<p>Explain the CoC;</p> <p>Explain homelessness; benefits to the community at large if homelessness is reduced;</p> <p>Explain what communities can do to be part of the solution</p>	<p>February – April 2026</p>	<p>Power Point template;</p> <p>Handouts;</p> <p>List of community provider orgs to which people can donate;</p> <p>Social media</p>	
Individuals via Organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, Chambers of Commerce, Tacoma City Club, professional associations, etc.)	<p>Explain homelessness and what they can do to be part of the solution</p>	<p>March – May 2026</p>	<p>Power Point template;</p> <p>handouts;</p> <p>List of community provider orgs to which people can donate;</p> <p>Social media</p>	
Human Services Provider Agencies	<p>Encourage participation in CoC and need for their participation in CoC committees &amp; planning process</p>	<p>January – March 2026</p>	<p>Power Point template</p> <p>Other TBD</p>	

Target Audience	Message	Timeline (updated)	Tools	Other
General Public	Explain homelessness and what the public can do to be part of the solution	April – September 2026	Letters to the editor Identify ways to present on media (Bates TV, KNKX, etc.) and at libraries Power point template	
			Community forums, possibly in conjunction with elected official meetings, community councils and other events	
			Set up tables at markets, community events; coordinate with providers; Fliers, lists of organizations needing financial support, etc.; Social media	
Philanthropy	Looking for community solutions; benefits to the community at large if homelessness is reduced; Need funding partners	January – May 2026	Grant writing	

# ABOUT US

- The Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community oversight board, not a government entity.
- Established to meet federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements to coordinate efforts to reduce homelessness.
- The CoC's mandate is to promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness;
  - improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness;
  - improve data collection and performance measurement; and,
  - allow each community to tailor its programs to the strengths and challenges within that community.
- Together, we produce and oversee implementation of the CoC's Plan to Address Homelessness.



**LEARN MORE**  
ABOUT HOW YOU CAN  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**Website**  
[piercecountywa.gov/CoC](http://piercecountywa.gov/CoC)



**CONTINUUM OF CARE**  
GREATER PIERCE COUNTY

**Coordinated. Connected.**

**Committed to Ending  
Homelessness**



Join us to work on local  
solutions to make  
homelessness a short and  
rare event in the lives of  
Pierce County residents  
and all Washingtonians.

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# HOMELESSNESS IS A NATIONAL CRISIS

**Homelessness is not specific to Pierce County - it's a national crisis.**

**Reported during a 2024 one-night survey:**

- **771,480** people are unhoused in the US \*18% increase from 2023
- **158,791** people are unhoused in Washington State
- **2,955** people are unhoused in Pierce County

## Causes of homelessness:

- Shortage of 7 million affordable homes for our nation's 10.8+ million extremely low-income families.
- No one in the U.S. can afford a 2-bedroom apartment on minimum wage.
- 70% of all extremely low-income families pay more than half their income on rent.
- 25-30% of homeless persons live with a severe mental illness.

## NUMBER OF UNHOUSED IN PIERCE COUNTY

City	Population	Unhoused
Auburn	85,513	51
Bonney Lake	17,500	32
Buckley	4,345	5
Dupont	8,430	1
Eatonville	2,775	17
Fife	9,220	76
Fox Island	3,365	5
Gig Harbor	7,200	40
Graham	37,000	37
Lakebay	5,225	18
Lakewood	58,190	426
Milton	6,140	13
Orting	6,770	15
Puyallup	37,240	254
Roy	795	16
Spanaway	36,406	169
Steilacoom	6,000	5
Sumner	9,450	22
Tacoma	198,900	2,868
University Place	31,170	25
Yelm	11,715	7

## IT IS A COUNTYWIDE CRISIS



## REASONS

for Being Unhoused in Pierce County

No affordable housing	14.3%
Family Crisis/Breakup	13.9%
Domestic Violence	12.3%
Eviction/Foreclosure	11.0%
Loss of Job	8.7%
Underemployed	8.2%
Prefers not to say	6.2%
Health/Safety	5.3%
Mental Health	4.0%
Data not collected	3.9%
Substance Abuse	3.6%
Medical Condition	3.0%
No Family Support	2.6%
Criminal Activity	1.4%
Other	1.7%