

Memo

Date: August 9, 2022

To: Councilmember Andrew Lewis, Chair, Public Assets & Homelessness Committee
Councilmember Alex Pedersen

From: Michael Bailey, Deputy Director, Human Services Department

Subject: Response to HOM-018-A-001 - Request that HSD provide a quarterly report on activities responding to unsheltered homelessness

Introduction

This report is offered in response to 2022 Statement of Legislative Intent [HOM-018-A-001](#) (SLI), which requests a quarterly report from the Human Services Department (HSD) providing basic performance metrics and information on the Homelessness Outreach and Provider Ecosystem (HOPE) Team. This report provides data collected by the HOPE Team from Quarter 2 (Q2), which spans April 1 – June 30, 2022.

Beginning this year, the [King County Regional Homelessness Authority](#) (KCRHA) assumed oversight of City of Seattle-funded outreach and shelter contracts. The City and KCRHA work in collaboration by making shelter beds available and ensuring offers of shelters are made by outreach providers to people living unsheltered, including advanced outreach to sites prior to removal. Once a site has been posted for removal, System Navigators from the HOPE Team are on-site to ensure offers of shelter and referrals until the site is resolved.

The City's Unified Care Team, which includes HSD, continues to work in close collaboration with KCRHA. Over the past quarter, the City of Seattle worked with KCRHA to ensure outreach partners received information about calendared removals 30 to 60 days in advance. This improvement allows additional time to establish relationships to meet our shared goal of helping all those living on-site connect with appropriate shelter or housing. This approach allows for improved collection of site-specific data and individual needs. That information is then used to inform engagement, resource allocation, and displacement reduction efforts.

King County Regional Homelessness Authority Update (as provided by KCRHA)

As KCRHA now manages the contracts previously held by the City of Seattle with outreach providers, performance metrics and other reports from outreach providers are submitted to KCRHA. KCRHA renewed the pre-existing outreach contacts without any changes in 2022, which includes the following reporting requirements:

- Number of new household enrollments in the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS);
- Number of total household enrollments in HMIS;
- Number of (duplicated) outreach contacts made; and
- Percent of household members that consent to participate in HMIS.

In addition, outreach providers are required to demonstrate that 60 percent of households receive a referral to emergency shelter, an authorized encampment, or permanent housing.

The performance metrics for outreach providers from April through June of 2022 has not been aggregated as of this report. KCRHA anticipates providing the aggregated data for July through September 2022 in the next SLI response. Currently, KCRHA plans to re-compete homelessness outreach contracts this winter, and will evaluate what data to collect and report on as part of that process.

Q2 2022 Outcomes

Referrals and Enrollments

In Q2, the HOPE Team, in collaboration with 19 outreach providers, made 458 total shelter referrals to 421 unique individuals from 83 encampment sites across the City, receiving 1,170 shelter recommendations from providers.¹ This increase of 132 referrals is 40% higher compared to Q1 2022, and 6% compared to Q2 2021. Additionally, there was a slight increase for recommendations quarter-over-quarter. HOPE Team referrals in Q2 were to 24/7 enhanced shelter spaces (67%), tiny houses (32%), or permanent housing (<1%).²

For shelter referrals where data on race was collected (89% of Q2 referrals), 52% were made to people experiencing homelessness who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). As evidenced by the [2022 Point in Time \(PIT\) Count](#) and the [Homelessness Management Information System \(HMIS\) data](#), such individuals are disproportionately represented in King County's homeless population. According to the 2022 PIT, BIPOC groups comprise roughly 52% of unsheltered individuals.

HSD confirmed 173 individuals enrolled into shelter in Q2 from HOPE Team referrals, an increase of 71% from the prior quarter. This represents an overall enrollment rate of 41% for the quarter compared to an enrollment rate of 32.5% in Q1 2022. As mentioned in previous reports, shelter enrollment tracking is challenging due to the data match required between the HOPE Team and HMIS.³ Individuals need to opt-in to share personally identifiable information with HMIS, resulting in approximately 25% of shelter enrollments having anonymized data. The anonymized data makes fully reconciling with HOPE Team referrals indeterminable. HSD is in the process of requesting KCRHA's assistance with addressing the above-mentioned gap by developing and deploying a data reconciliation process. Until such a process is developed, the enrollment data provided by HSD is likely to remain an undercount.

¹ The number of recommendations represents a duplicated number of individuals, as multiple recommendations may be submitted for one person.

² Types of shelter are defined as follows:

- **Enhanced Shelter** - shelters with 24/7-hour service and that provide many services such as meals, hygiene services, storage, and case management staffing to support individuals in leaving shelter for permanent housing.
- **Tiny House Village** - offer temporary accommodations for people who are living unsheltered and include small living structures, community kitchens, hygiene services, and case management to support exits to permanent housing.

³ The match between HOPE Team and HMIS data is imperfect for several reasons. This includes approximately 25% of enrollments lacking personally identifiable information (PII) due to the HMIS data share mentioned above; individuals providing different PII (such as a name) to the HOPE Team or HMIS; individuals enrolling at a shelter over 48 hours after a referral is made; or individuals enrolling at a different shelter than which they were referred.

Operations

Ensuring that the language needs of unsheltered individuals are met is a critical piece of the HOPE Team's work. System Navigators, in collaboration with outreach providers, collect language needs for prioritized encampments through engagement. If a translator is not available the team utilizes City approved translation software to ensure language assistance is available before, during, and after a removal. In Q2, System Navigators worked with the Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs to receive additional training and strengthen its capacity to provide language assistance. The HOPE Team remains committed to assisting UCT's work to ensure that onsite language access needs for people experiencing homelessness are met.

Finally, in prior submissions, the HOPE Team reported on its support specific to construction and maintenance projects through engagement and supports for people experiencing homelessness within affected areas. To allow for improved outcomes, this work is now coordinated across City departments through the Unified Care Team and includes coordinated outreach and offers of shelter. Any shelter referrals by the HOPE Team from this work are captured in the team's overall referral totals.

Key Outreach Activity

Beginning in January 2022, the HOPE Team, as part of the City's Unified Care Team, and in partnership with Councilmember Dan Strauss, KCRHA, REACH, and community leaders, coordinated outreach to the Woodland Park encampment resulting in offers of shelter to over 100 individuals and 89 referrals to shelter and housing alternatives. Of those referrals, 60 individuals were referred to tiny house villages, 25 to enhanced shelters, and four to permanent housing alternatives. These efforts also included HOPE Team coordinating direct transportation to shelters once a person received a referral, helping to reduce barriers to enrollment.

The HOPE Team is partnering with KCRHA, contracted providers, and City departments to support outreach at RV Remediation sites. In June, prior to a City scheduled RV Remediation, the HOPE Team, REACH, and Catholic Community Services' SCOPE Team conducted outreach at a SW Andover Street encampment with multiple RVs, vehicles, and tents. This work led to 12 individuals receiving shelter referrals, including five individuals referred to tiny home villages, five to enhanced shelters, and two to permanent housing alternatives, in addition to the provision of vehicle maintenance support. Throughout the coordinated efforts with RV residents, a significant amount of interest has been expressed in both the RV Safe Lot and the RV Safe Storage Lot. The KCRHA-related programs will provide much needed safe spaces and services for RV residents to utilize.

Future HSD Efforts

HSD and KCRHA continue to discuss ongoing outreach and shelter referral process improvement. Both teams are committed developing additional strategies for reducing harm, preventing displacement, and supporting individuals with accessing shelter.

CC: Deputy Mayor Tiffany Washington
HSD Acting Director Tanya Kim

For additional detail on Q2 2022 results, please see the Table below:

Reporting Element	Q2		
Total Number of Referrals to Shelter, Duplicated	458 (337 HOPE Team System Navigator Initiated Referrals)		
Total Number of Referrals to Shelter, Unduplicated	421		
Number and Percentage of Shelter Referral Demographics	Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
	Male	320	70
	Female	124	27
	Trans Female	3	1
	Trans Male	1	0
	Gender Non-Conforming	1	0
	Data Not Collected	9	2
	Refused	0	0
	Race		
	American Indian or Alaska Native	29	6
	Asian	13	3
	Black/African American	130	28
	White/Caucasian	195	43
	Multiracial	37	8
	Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2	0
	Data Not Collected	52	11
	Ethnicity		

	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	367	80
	Hispanic/Latino	3	1
	Data Not Collected	88	19
Breakdown of Referrals to Specific Shelter-Types by Quarter	Enhanced Shelter	309	
	Tiny House Village	147	
	Permanent Housing	2*	
Number of Enrollments to the Referred Shelter Within a 48-Hour Period Following Referral, Duplicated	180		
Number of Enrollments to the Referred Shelter Within a 48-Hour Period Following Referral, Unduplicated	173		

**Woodland Park referrals to permanent housing are not included within this table as they were coordinated by outreach providers.*