

# FACT SHEET: Cape & Islands Regional Network on Homelessness

Barnstable County Department of Human Services

April 2021

## MISSION

The Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness is a collaborative effort of state, county and local government, social service providers, housing agencies, faith-based organizations, the business community and individuals working together to prevent and end homelessness. Through its broad-based public-private partnership, the Regional Network identifies and implements creative solutions to preventing and ending homelessness on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket. Formerly called the Leadership Council to End Homelessness, the Regional Network was created in 2009 to provide a forum for regional discussions and planning for better coordination of services aimed at reducing homelessness.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Regional Network is comprised of an Executive Committee, a Policy Board, several working groups, and a larger network of interested stakeholders. The Regional Network provides technical assistance and training on a variety of topics, convenes stakeholders to undertake specific initiatives, assists partner organizations with grant writing and leveraged resources, and is the liaison to the Massachusetts Interagency Council on Housing



and Homelessness. As the regional entity organized to carry out the responsibilities required by the HUD Continuum of Care McKinney-Vento (CoC) grant for homelessness services and programs, the Regional Network sets policy, implements the Coordinated Entry System (CES), and coordinates the annual Point in Time Count. Barnstable County Department of Human Services is the **Convening Agency**, **HMIS Lead**, and the **Collaborative Applicant** for HUD's Continuum of Care grant and provides staff assistance to the Regional Network.

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## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

At its annual meeting in March 2021, the Regional Network Policy Board renewed **six priority areas** for 2021/2022 and added three new priority areas: Youth and Young Adult Homelessness, Elder Homelessness, Employment, Engagement with Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, Emergency Response, Capacity to Respond to Funding Opportunities, Coordination of Case Management Across Agencies, Creation of a Short-Term Subcommittee to Measure Success/Identify Areas for Improvement, and Planning for 2021-2022 Winter Shelter Response.

The **2021 Annual Point In Time Count** documented the number of homeless families and individuals on the Cape and Islands on the night of the count was 343, an increase in 6 persons from the 2020 count. Counts are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and conducted annually in every CoC region across the county.

**Coordinated Entry System (CES)** was implemented in 2016 to assess homeless individuals and families in order to prioritize the most vulnerable households. CES ensures that people experiencing homelessness are assessed, prioritized and referred to available housing. At this time, CES refers only to CoC funded housing. As of January, 2020, CES has been fully operational in the CoC's **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)**.

In January of 2019 Barnstable County was awarded a multi-year grant from the Executive Office of Health and Human Services to provide prevention, case management, and flexible supports to **Unaccompanied Homeless and At-Risk Youth and Young Adults** aged 24 and under. The County awarded grants to six community based partners, including agencies on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, to implement the program.

## **FUNDING**

The primary funding for the Regional Network comes from two sources — Barnstable County and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development McKinney-Vento **Continuum of Care**. In 2021, the Cape and Islands CoC, which is governed by the Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness Policy Board, received \$2,095,743 to support nine projects providing permanent supportive housing to 137 formerly homeless households. The grant also supports CoC planning, CES administration, and the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS). As the Regional Network's convening entity, HMIS lead and collaborative applicant, Barnstable County Department of Human Services provides staffing, infrastructure, and administrative support to the Regional Network Policy Board, Executive Committee, Work Groups, and Subcommittees.

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