



Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness

<https://pchomeless.org/> - info@pchomeless.org

How should the county prioritize rental assistance funds and what key factors should determine eligibility?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 9.16.22

Should be prioritized

- Households who are not able to work due to a temporary illness should be prioritized for assistance.
- Rents have increased. Households whose rents have increased excessively should be prioritized for assistance.
- Groups disproportionately impacted by evictions should be prioritized. Must use good accurate data to assess.
- General priorities identified as those under 30% AMI, fixed income (esp disabled, seniors, disabled with children).
- Consider maintaining BIPOC residents in communities where they have generational presence.
- Priority for people who have been incarcerated and have gotten housing but are at risk of losing their housing and at risk of recidivism. If landlord accepts funds they should make it easier to house people with criminal background.
- Small landlords who can't afford to carry unpaid rent bills.
- People who need only a small amount to keep them in their housing.
- Explored a "micro-funding" kind of approach where small amounts might preserve existing housing rather than seeking to find new housing.
- Prioritize families at risk of losing housing, especially those with children.
- Groups of individuals sharing housing where the funding can keep multiple individuals in sustainable housing (multi-dweller units).

Should not be prioritized

- Rental Assistance should not be provided to households residing in subsidized housing. They can request to have their rent calculation updated.
- Some concerns that reaching out with the "greatest need" (experiencing chronic homelessness) might burn through the funding very quickly.

Other considerations

- Screen for homeless history for folks who live in crisis mode. Those who have been homeless are more likely to re-enter.
- We should have a baseline of the county. Then they should give the organizations they partner with the guidelines for distribution. It should be outcome driven instead of compliant-driven.
- Develop a risk matrix modeled after the SSVF program, scoring applicants based on particular risk factors, including hx of homelessness, disability, family factors, etc. Those who score high enough are eligible.



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- Also, integrate a problem-solving conversation into the process (like Coordinated Entry) to explore the use of natural supports, for those that are eligible or not eligible. Also integrate potential shared housing solutions.
- The discussion about how to prioritize rental funds first went to how uncomfortable it is to try to decide who is suffering more. How can a scale be put on someone's suffering? Almost invites forms of discrimination.