

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

City of Seattle

And

King County

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) sets forth the terms of agreement between the City of Seattle (“City”) and King County (“County”) for the purposes of strengthening our ongoing government to government cooperation and to review and make recommendations on joint governance structures for programs affecting people experiencing homelessness countywide.

The purpose of this MOU is to further strengthen coordination and ensure our systems are improving outcomes for people who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness countywide. Just as homelessness does not respect municipal borders, our cooperation on homelessness services and housing investments must expand beyond municipal boundaries. This MOU establishes the Homeless Services and Housing Governance Partnership (“Partnership”) consisting of City and County staff, All Home, and regional partners.

The Partnership will have the following goals:

- Review current system governing homeless service and housing investments to identify existing service gaps and duplicative efforts between the County and the City.
- Set principles and outcomes that a new system governing homelessness service and housing investment should address.
- Engage stakeholders to discuss desired revisions to the existing governing system in order to better serve our homeless community.
- Work with cities in King County and other regional partners to ensure coordinated investments provide a comprehensive network of services countywide.
- Study current models governing public health, homeless services, and housing investments in other U.S. cities. Consider what elements of these governance models could be implemented to reach set principals and outcomes.
- Establish shared budget priorities and joint planning efforts to meet the needs of King County and Seattle’s homeless population.
- By December 1, 2018, make governance recommendations to the King County Executive and Mayor of Seattle regarding potential system revisions to increase the effectiveness, reach, and efficiency of our countywide homelessness system.

While the work of the Partnership continues, the City and the County commit to the following short term deliverables.

- Seattle Human Services Department (“HSD”), Seattle Office of Housing (“SOH”), and County Department of Community and Human Services (“DCHS”) will coordinate in advance on all Request for Proposals (“RFPs”) from the signing of this MOU to 2020.

- HSD, SOH, and DCHS will use joint contract language and joint monitoring of programs on all RFPs from the signing of this MOU to 2020. Contracts will require providers to provide information necessary to review efficiency, ensure accountable, and demonstrate success of services. These requirements should complement and support the systemwide performance targets and minimum standards established in the MOU signed September 6, 2016 between the City, the County, and United Way of King County.
- HSD, SOH, and DCHS directors will report monthly to the Mayor of Seattle and King County Executive on their joint progress.
- HSD and DCHS will commit to a review of HMIS data-based analytic models and develop a plan for system improvements that would allow us to target future homelessness investments that align data, performance, and impact evaluation efforts across the city and county. The City and the County will engage regional partners, the City's Performance and Innovation Team, and regional tech businesses on best practices for improving current data sharing, privacy and security practices, and analytical tools. The plan should include recommendations for resourcing of potential improvements. This builds on ongoing work at HSD, DCHS, and All Home to improve publicly facing dashboards. The City and County data teams will also explore developing reporting tools to allow the public and decisionmakers to more frequently track progress serving the homeless populations. DCHS and HSD will ensure that data teams engaged in projects under the MOU have the HMIS access necessary for the execution of Partnership-initiated projects.

Background

The coordination of funding between the City of Seattle, King County, and other cities in King County is a consistent challenge in effectively serving our homeless population. Though Seattle has the largest concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness, we know that some of that population originates from other cities in the county, making this a shared crisis affecting all of the county's municipalities. It is essential that we look for every opportunity to further coordinate our investments countywide so that we are reaching people in need in their community.

We also have a responsibility as stewards of taxpayer funding to ensure our homeless investments are making the biggest impact for the most people. This will ensure our resources continue to improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. King County residents have been generous in the provision of funds to this crisis – through initiatives such as the Seattle Housing Levy, the King County Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy, and the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Sales Tax. However, there remain large unfilled gaps countywide. Coordination on investments in shared priorities between the City and the County continues to be an area where improvement is needed.

All Home, the Seattle/King County Continuum of Care, has traditionally been responsible for coordinating homeless service investments across government entities in our region. However, we continue to experience challenges in harmonizing administration of homeless services between our many governing structures. This Partnership will work closely with All Home and other stakeholders countywide, to make our system more resilient, responsive, and effective.