

Lehigh Valley Regional Homeless Advisory Board (LV RHAB) Statement of Purpose

Adopted 9/9/14

VISION: Chronic homelessness (for anyone in our community) is no longer an issue within the Lehigh Valley. Housing insecurity and homelessness prevention is a community priority. Homelessness, if it occurs, is a short-term condition, lasting no longer than 14 days.

MISSION: Covering all communities in Lehigh and Northampton counties, the Lehigh Valley RHAB is a consortium of individuals, agencies and other stakeholders that direct and coordinate community-wide efforts toward ending chronic homelessness, preventing homelessness, and addressing housing insecurity. LV RHAB functions include:

- Combining evidence-based solutions and recommendations from national partners (USICH, NAEH, HUD, VA, for example) with local community knowledge to end chronic and veteran homelessness, prevent the occurrence of homelessness and to respond quickly (within 14 days) should such an event occur.
- Fostering collaboration and interdependency between homeless service providers and mainstream and community resources.
- Conducting regular homeless enumeration, identifying unmet needs and gaps in services
- Leveraging federal, state, and community resources in cost effective ways, eliminating duplication of efforts.

LOGISTICS: The LV RHAB

- is comprised of representatives from City and County departments, social service agencies, veterans support groups, faith-based organizations, homeless advocates, and other interested parties.
- meets at least monthly to cover status of current initiatives and direct to future plans

GOVERNANCE: The LV RHAB is one of five advisory boards that make up the Pennsylvania Eastern Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC Governance Charter outlines the governance structure, membership and responsibilities of the CoC and includes the following description of the RHAB's function:

It is the responsibility of the Regional Advisory Boards to operationalize the policies adopted by the CoC, working within the community to address and end homelessness locally. The responsibilities of the RHAB include:

- *Conduct a minimum of four meetings per year, with additional meetings if needed*

- *Engage local stakeholders, and identify local leadership, ensuring representation from sectors required by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development*
- *Elect representatives for the CoC Board and volunteers for subcommittees*
- *Provide input on the design and implementation of a plan to address homelessness (CoC Plan)*
- *Provide input for the prioritization of region's needs, including recommendations to CoC Board for CoC and ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) funding*
- *Inform analysis of unmet needs and gaps in services and housing*
- *Conduct/coordinate the unsheltered Point In Time counts*
- *Identify additional resources available for homeless households*
- *Identify and share best practices*
- *Provide outreach to and mentoring opportunities for service providers*
- *Develop resource guide*
- *Maintain membership list*
- *Publish meeting notices and minutes online*
- *Encourage HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) participation and provide assistance*

Membership on the LV RHAB is open to all interested parties, although each agency has just one vote.