

WEBINAR TO BEGIN AT 2:00PM EDT



EFFECTIVE DIVERSION: A KEY STRATEGY FOR ENDING HOMELESSNESS

October 15, 2020

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Housekeeping & Announcements

- All attendees are on mute, and video options are turned off.
- The Zoom chat function has been disabled. Please enter your questions in the **Zoom Q&A box**.
- **Upcoming webinars:**
 - October 22nd at 2PM EDT - [Researching an End to Homelessness: Election Year Policy Ideas \(The Affordable Housing Crisis\)](#)



Agenda

- Welcome, Housekeeping, and Introductions
- Overview: Diversion, Homelessness Prevention, and Eviction Prevention
- Diversion: What, How, and Why
- How communities are and can use diversion as an effective strategy to end people's homelessness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond
- Questions & Answers

AN OVERVIEW:

Diversion, Homelessness Prevention, and Eviction Prevention



Diversion, Homelessness Prevention, and Eviction Prevention

IMPACT ON HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM

HIGH

MEDIUM

LOW

Diversion

TARGETED TO:

People who have lost housing and are about to enter shelter or sleep outside

FUNDED BY:

- Homelessness system funds

Homelessness Prevention

TARGETED TO:

Extremely vulnerable people who are about to lose their housing

FUNDED BY:

- Mainstream “feeder system” funds
- Homelessness systems that have served their entire homeless population

Eviction Prevention

TARGETED TO:

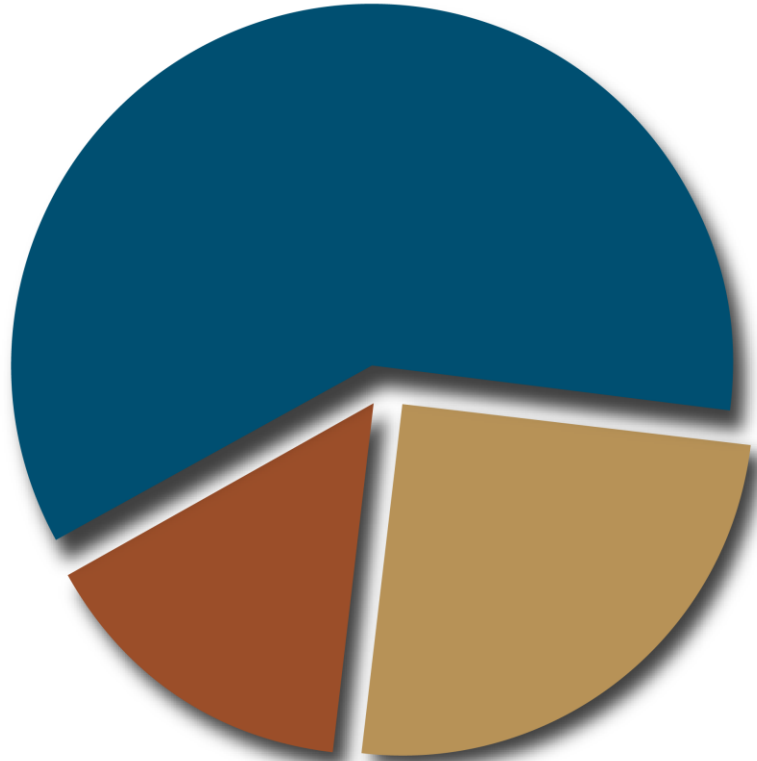
Low income people who have received an eviction notice

FUNDED BY:

- Federal, state, and local housing funds
- Legal assistance funds



Which Strategy Has the Greatest Impact on a Community's Response to Homelessness?



DIVERSION

- Serves people who have lost housing and are facing **IMMINENT** entry into shelter or sleeping outside
- Reduces number of entries to a system
- Lowers demand for shelter beds
- Shortens wait lists

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

- Serves extremely vulnerable people who are about to lose their housing
- Only effective when targeted to those most at risk of becoming homeless

EVICITION PREVENTION

- Serves low income people who have received an eviction notice
- Most recipients **DO NOT** face imminent risk of homelessness

What Do People Mean When They Talk About Preventing Homelessness?

Assisting people who have lost their housing avoid entering shelter or unsheltered homelessness by helping them identify alternative places to stay.	Helping people at high-risk of homelessness and facing imminent housing loss stay housed (in current or new housing).	Helping low-income people threatened with eviction or housing loss remain housed (in current or new housing).	Helping low-income people achieve long-term housing security (e.g. through providing permanent housing subsidies).
Diversion	Homelessness prevention	Eviction prevention	Addressing affordable housing need

Homelessness Prevention Programs

- Homelessness prevention programs are narrowly targeted interventions that are designed to reduce entries into homelessness among those who are at heightened risk of homelessness.
- Effective programs rely heavily on data to identify populations at heightened risk as well as knowledge of “precipitating events” that increase the likelihood of an imminent homeless episode to target resources.
- While using data increases the chance that dedicated resources will prevent literal homeless episodes, even the best targeting tools are imperfect.

Eviction Prevention Programs

- While homelessness prevention programs are designed to reduce entries into homelessness among people at heightened risk, eviction prevention programs are designed to help people under threat of eviction to retain their housing.
- People typically served by eviction prevention programs are people behind on their rent, often due to external events (lost job, family crisis). Programs may require households to demonstrate the ability to sustain housing independently after receiving minimal assistance and/or demonstrate they are behind in rent through “no fault of their own”.
- Eviction prevention programs also often have broad income eligibility criteria, for example, families with eviction notices and with incomes below 100 percent of AMI. Since eligibility criteria is broad and eligible populations is large, resources may be depleted within days (if not hours).

Moving Eviction Prevention Programs Toward Homelessness Prevention

- Lessons learned from homelessness prevention interventions can be applied by eviction prevention programs so they too can become more impactful in reducing homelessness.
- Steps to achieve this may include:
 - Aligning eligibility criteria to reflect the characteristics of families/individuals entering homelessness;
 - Serving secondary tenants;
 - Targeting eviction prevention services to highly vulnerable leaseholders (e.g. people living in subsidized housing);
 - Narrowing eligibility criteria to poorer households;
 - Adopting universal screenings to identify highly housing insecure people in high-risk groups as part of public social service delivery (e.g. adults receiving MH services who are reliant on SSI).

DIVERSION: WHAT, HOW, AND WHY



What is Diversion?

- An intervention designed to immediately address the needs of someone who has just **lost their housing and become homeless**.
- A **client-driven approach** to help a household find safe alternative housing immediately, rather than shelter or unsheltered homelessness.
- An intervention **intended to ensure**:
 - The homeless experience is as brief as possible
 - To prevent unsheltered homelessness, and
 - To avert stays in shelter

How Does Diversion Work?

Through an intensive service interaction utilizing a problem-solving conversation to:

1. **Understand** what caused a person's housing crisis
2. **Explore** what immediate solutions to the crisis may be possible, and
3. **Help** them pursue a solution(s)

Safe alternative short-or longer-term options may include:

- A negotiated return to their previous housing
- Short-term, non-shelter accommodations
- Shared housing
- Returns to family

6

STEPS TO A PROBLEM-SOLVING CONVERSATION

Why Do Diversion?

- To provide a positive alternative to entering shelter or unsheltered homelessness
 - Shelter can be traumatic
 - Unsheltered homelessness creates a higher risk for negative outcomes
- Diversion is a much more effective intervention for homeless response systems and in ending homelessness
 - Stems inflow to shelter
 - Less costly
 - Avoids emergency-related costs of unsheltered homelessness

NORTH CAROLINA COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

Denise Nuenaber, Executive Director



Diversion Strategies with ESG Funding

Denise Neunaber, Executive Director

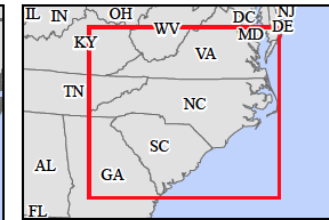
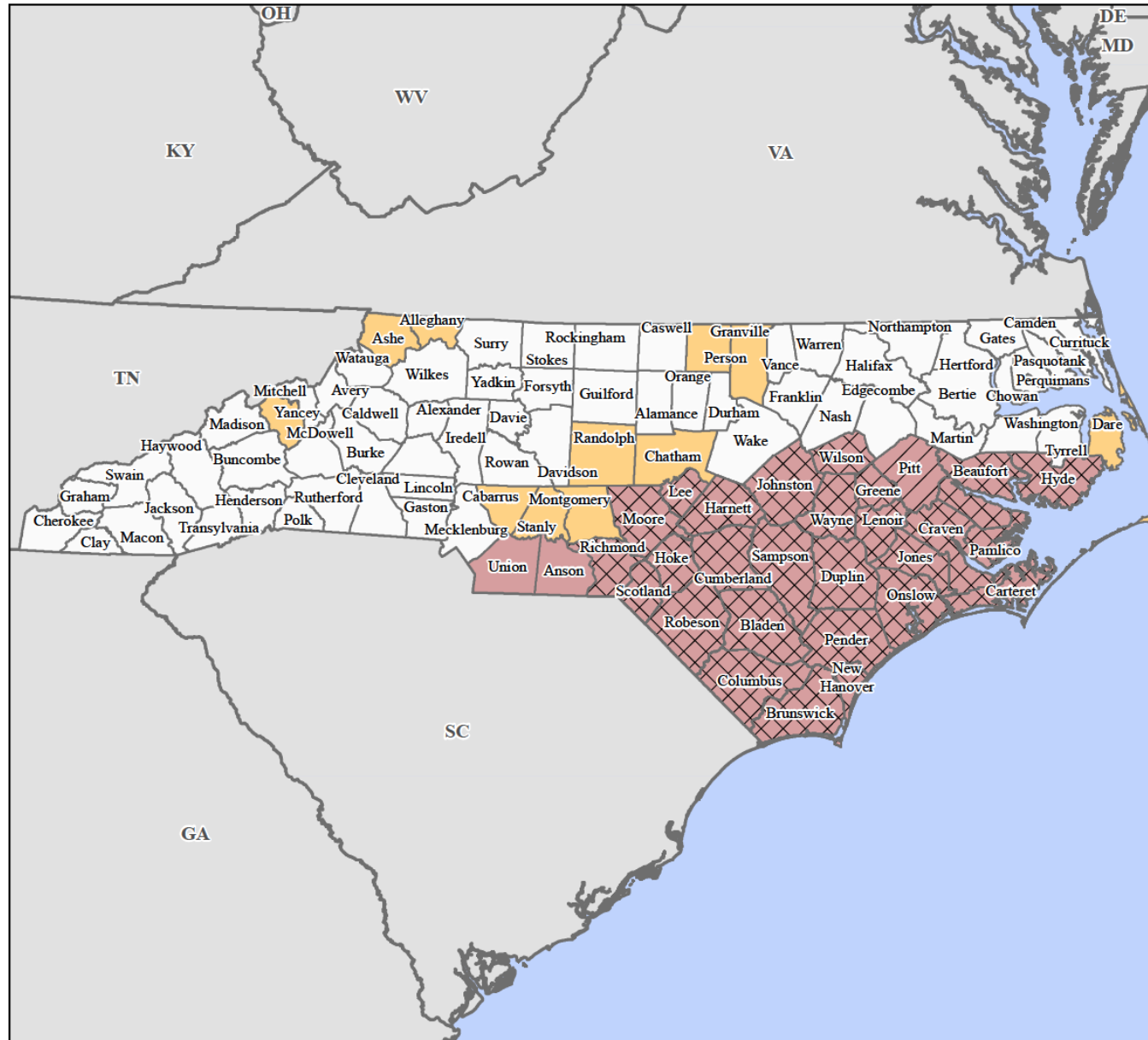


NC COALITION to end
HOMELESSNESS

FEMA-4393-DR, North Carolina Disaster Declaration as of 10/14/2018



FEMA



Data Layer/Map Description:
The types of assistance that have been designated for selected areas in the State of North Carolina.

All designated areas in the State of North Carolina are eligible to apply for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Designated Counties

- No Designation
- Public Assistance
- Individual Assistance and Public Assistance
- Individual Assistance and Public Assistance (Categories A and B)
- Individual Assistance and Public Assistance (Categories A - G)



0 25 50 75 100
Miles

Data Sources:

FEMA, ESRI;
Initial Declaration: 09/14/2018
Disaster Federal Registry Notice:
Amendment #6, 10/14/2018
Datum: North American 1983
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic

MapID 84c93f1c1f50915182103hqprod



NCCEH



BACK @ HOME

NORTH CAROLINA





WATER



SOAP



AGITATION

Exit to Permanent Housing Person Centered
Literally Homeless Rapid Exit Most Vulnerable Rapid Rehousing
Returns to Homelessness Progressive Engagement Housing First
Low Barrier Diversion Light-Touch Services Return Prevention
Trauma Informed Targeting Prevention Transitional Housing
Emergency Shelter Continuum of Care Self-Resolve
Increase Income Permanent Supportive Housing At Risk
Coordinated Intake Coordinated Entry Coordinated Assessment
Right-Sized Doubled Up Comprehensive Services Stabilization



**AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**



**APPROPRIATE
SERVICES**



**ADEQUATE
INCOME**



**TARGET
POPULATION**



DURATION



**INTENSITY OF
ASSISTANCE**

Back@Home Activities

Flexible Financial Assistance

Rental Assistance

Utility Assistance

Rental + Utility Arrears

Deposits (Rent, Utility, Pet)

Barrier Busters*

Moving Costs

Household Goods*

*Private dollars

Housing Navigation

Housing Search

Liaison/negation with rental properties

Move-In Fees

Upfit + Repairs*

Housing Stabilization Case Management

Legal Services



REALITY



Back@Home Eligibility using ESG-CV

Back@Home-CV Eligibility Requirements	Homelessness Prevention	Rapid Rehousing
Income	<30% AMI AND	None (<30% AMI at recertification)
Eligible Living situation(s)	Forced to leave current housing in 14 days AND one of below living situations	Emergency shelter/transitional housing OR
	In hotel/motel (not paid for by non-profit/government) OR	Streets/place not meant for human habitation OR
	Living in campsite/trailer OR	Fleeing DV OR
	Living in the home of another because of economic hardship OR	Institution for less than 90 days, literally homeless before institutionalization
	Unaccompanied youth (under 25) who cannot stay with family members with no stable place to live OR	
	In housing that is leased OR	
	Exiting institution AND	
	Have no other safe, appropriate residence (whether temporary or permanent) AND Not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless	And household does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to exit literal homelessness independently

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	Have no other safe, appropriate residence (whether temporary or permanent) AND Not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless	And household does not have sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to exit literal homelessness independently

Households at higher lethality risk or with a large number of barriers will be prioritized.

Example

Priority Category	Order Served
Priority 1: Medically vulnerable to COVID (as defined by CDC) OR Fleeing DV	1a. Literally homeless OR Fleeing DV
	1b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness
Priority 2: 8 or more barriers from exiting homelessness AND community-defined priority	2a. Literally homeless
	2b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness
Priority 3: 6 or more barriers from exiting homelessness	3a. Literally homeless
	3b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness
Priority 4: 4 or more barriers from exiting homelessness	4a. Literally homeless
	4b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness
Priority 5: 2 or more barriers from exiting homelessness	5a. Literally homeless
	5b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness
Priority 6: 1 or No additional barriers from exiting homelessness	6a. Literally homeless
	6b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness

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	3b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness	
Priority 4: 4 or more barriers from exiting homelessness	4a. Literally homeless	
	4b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness	
Priority 5: 2 or more barriers from exiting homelessness	5a. Literally homeless	
	5b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness	
Priority 6: 1 or No additional barriers from exiting homelessness	6a. Literally homeless	
	6b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness	

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	6b. Imminently at-risk of homelessness

Barriers for Prioritization

Households are asked about barriers to getting and keeping housing.

- No income
- Unaccompanied youth (under 25)
- One or more children under 6 and/or pregnant
- Currently at-risk of losing housing subsidy or subsidized unit (Targeted Homeless Prevention only)
- Household from disproportionately impacted populations
- Victim of DV in prior 6 months
- No lease in name in last 3 years
- Adult in household has severe and persistent disabling condition
- Unsheltered (RRH only)
- Felony conviction among household members
- Household size of 5 or more
- 2 or more episodes of homelessness in prior three years
- Vacated a unit 3 or more times in prior 7 years and/or ongoing rental arrears
- Current homeless episode is 1 year or longer
- Veteran, not eligible for VA services
- Child in household has a severe and persistent disabling condition

CONNECTICUT

Bobbi Riddick, Assistant CAN Coordinator, Meriden/Middlesex/Wallingford (MMW)

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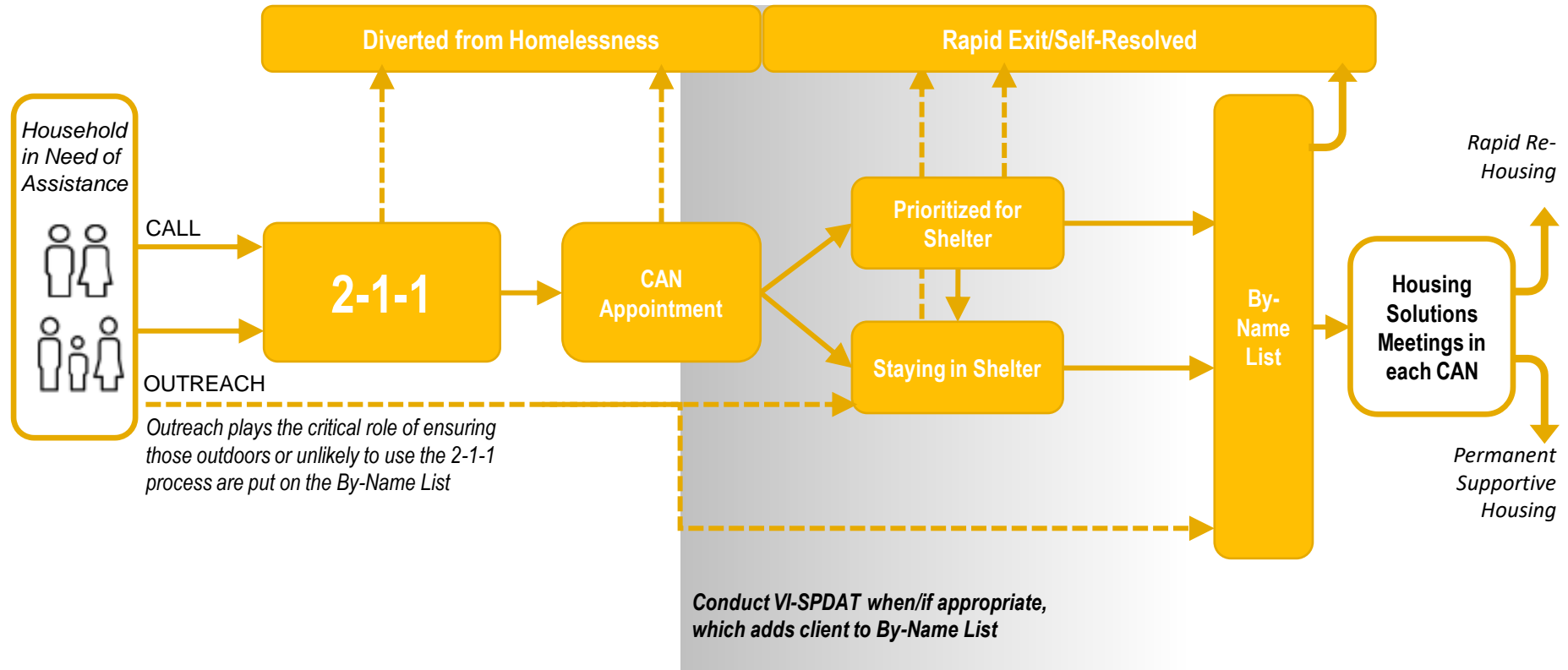
Let's share a common
goal to make episodes...

**RARE, BRIEF, and
NON-RECURRING!**



CAN System Overview

A high-level diagram of the coordinated access process from entry to exit



Why shelter diversion is effective and important

- Reduces trauma
- Cost effective
- Limited space available in emergency shelter
- Builds on client's strengths – It's empowering!
- Takes into account client choice



Shelter Realities

- Low-barrier
- Wet shelter
- Reduction of rules/policies
- Privacy
- Safety
- Minimal Staffing
- Hours
- Trauma
- Congregate setting during current pandemic
- SHELTER IS NOT HOUSING – IT IS A **TEMPORARY** SOLUTION!

Creating a “Housing Stabilization Plan”

- Identify barriers that a household might face in finding stable housing
- Address any issues concerning household income
- Connect client to “natural” resources (family/friends)
- Refer household to other community supports
- Provide limited time financial assistance when appropriate

Best Practices in Problem Solving Conversations

- Practice Motivational Interview
- Take a Strength's Based approach
- Always remain client choice oriented – conversation should be client led
- Be trauma informed
- Exercise cultural awareness
- Use Active and Empathetic Listening
- Meet the client “where they are at”

Coordinated Entry during the Pandemic

- Accessibility of available resources to **Everyone** in need
- Virtual/Phone only assessments
- State issued phones – usage of minutes and access to WiFi

Questions & Answers

