



WEST VIRGINIA SHELTER POLICY KEY MESSAGES

- Shelters that are lower-barrier and provide housing-led homeless services are essential for the system of care across West Virginia. We want vulnerable people to be able to access shelter, and we need shelters to play an active role in helping people realize housing again.
- Our approach to re-orienting the shelter system is based upon the main currents of thought and practice in the field, both nationally and internationally.
- Shelters will be supported in realizing the intended focus of shelter delivery. This will occur through training opportunities, as well as feedback provided through monitoring.
- The reality for people served by shelters in West Virginia is that we need shelters to be trauma-informed given the widespread nature of trauma; we need shelters to practice harm reduction given the widespread impacts of substance use across the state; we need shelters to be strengths-based and progressively engaging and motivational if we want people to realize their fullest potential; we need shelter services to be appropriate and safe to respond effectively to differences within the clientele served; and, we need shelters to be non-judgmental and compassionate in order to meet people where they are at.
- The WVCEH will use a competitive Request for Proposal process to direct investment towards shelter providers that align their operations to the intended objectives of diverting people from homelessness when safe and appropriate to do so, and rapidly resolving homelessness when it does occur.
- Ongoing engagement through conversation, work groups, data review, monitoring and the like shall demonstrate that reorienting the shelter system across West Virginia to be lower-barrier and to have more housing-led homeless services is a shared responsibility between shelter providers and the WVCEH.
- The WVCEH will continue to advocate for changes in policy and funding from the DoHS when appropriate and necessary, as well as other funders and allies, to ensure shelters can achieve the intended results in service delivery.
- The WVCEH is committed to continuous improvement. We acknowledge that transformations are a work in progress. Collectively we will learn and adjust through this process.