

# Challenges and Potential Strategies to Speed PSH Placement in Alameda County



Prepared for

**Alameda County Health  
Housing and Homelessness Services (H&H)**

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## Executive Summary

Coordinated Entry is a federally-required process to identify and refer eligible people experiencing homelessness to housing programs and units. The Coordinated Entry process is used to fill certain homeless-dedicated housing programs. The process must follow broad federal guidance regarding prioritization, governance, and oversight. However, the specifics of the approach used to track and fill units are designed and implemented at the local level.

In Alameda County, the Coordinated Entry process is overseen by Alameda County Health's Housing and Homelessness Services office, the designated Management Entity for the process. The match and referral process is managed by a small staff within this office, known as Home Stretch. Home Stretch staff use information about potential tenants (people who are homeless) and homeless-dedicated housing to make matches and refer potential tenants to a range of permanent housing resources. As in most communities, the process involves extensive communication and collaboration among many partners, including the Management Entity (which includes the Home Stretch team), potential tenants, service providers working with potential tenants, housing providers, and often separate property management entities and/or public housing authorities.

The process to fill an empty unit currently takes on average 133 days from notification of an opening to move in, though the range of days can vary widely. Many factors affect how quickly a referral is made and how quickly a potential tenant is approved by the housing program and able to move in. Factors that affect the total time include:

- how difficult it is to find a match for the unit's eligibility criteria,
- how complex the documentation requirements and application process are,
- whether the site needs additional information beyond what is sent with a referral,
- whether the potential tenant is required to attend multiple appointments,
- how quickly review occurs by all parties on the housing side,
- how quickly potential tenants and service providers respond when more information is needed, and
- how well all the parties are able to communicate during the process.

Developers and property management companies that participate in Coordinated Entry in Alameda County were asked to provide input on their experience with the Home Stretch process. Seven participating housing providers were asked to describe their understanding of the process, what they felt created the greatest barriers to speed, and what solutions they

suggested. Specific questions included asking for feedback on how to address complex documentation requirements and whether shared time frames could be established for the steps in the process. Staff at Housing and Homelessness Services (including from the Home Stretch team), the Oakland Housing Authority, and experts in other communities and statewide agencies were also interviewed about their experiences and recommendations.

The result of these interviews and research indicates that there are many areas where the process is perceived as challenging and where efforts to more closely align expectations and practices could be fruitful. Areas that were reported as creating barriers within the process included challenges with communication, lack of clarity about the process, complex or unclear requirements about unit eligibility, policies regarding the timing and numbers of referrals, and perceptions of a lack of information sharing.

To improve both the working relationships between Home Stretch, property management teams, and developer partners, and to reduce the time from opening to move in, the following actions are recommended. Recommendations include 1) near-term actions that are possible without additional resources, 2) more significant steps that should be considered jointly with housing partners, 3) steps to improve Coordinated Entry that would take significant new resources, and 4) changes outside of the scope of Coordinated Entry that could impact how well the process and the inventory meet the mutual goal of housing people as quickly as possible.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Near Term Actions**

- a. Improve types and frequency of communication, develop and maintain better guidance tools, and increase cross training.
- b. Address high documentation requirements and variations, with the goal of reducing documentation barriers and standardizing expectations where possible.
- c. Develop jointly agreed standards and timeframes for each step in the process, set time reduction goals and report regularly on key metrics.
- d. Begin discussions of new projects early in the pre-development process to identify where challenges may arise in the Coordinated Entry process.

### **2. Areas for Consultation and Consideration**

- a. Explore with partners developing a universal housing application.
- b. Consider options for changes to referral ratios to increase speed.
- c. Explore process changes with Public Housing Authorities.

### **3. Improvements Requiring Significant New Resources**

- a. Provide dedicated support for document readiness and application preparation to all applicants by Home Stretch.
- b. Use resources to expand support for navigators/service providers that work with referred participants.
- c. Fund and support Home Stretch to act as a single point of contact for the process.

### **4. Changes Outside Coordinated Entry that Could Impact Placement Speed**

- a. Develop or dedicate interim housing for people prioritized through Coordinated Entry.
- b. Repurpose buildings that are most difficult to fill.
- c. Work to reduce complex subsidy layering and units with high rents.
- d. Increase funding for services within PSH to better serve higher need tenants.

# I. Introduction

Like communities across the country, Alameda County operates a Coordinated Entry (CE) process to identify, assess, prioritize, match and refer eligible persons experiencing homelessness to a range of housing intervention types. This process is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the State of California for specified State- and federally-funded housing programs. In Alameda County it is also used to make referrals to homeless-dedicated housing created with some locally controlled funds.

Coordinated Entry emerged in the late 1990's and early 2000's as a way to take the onus off of a person experiencing homelessness to apply for housing through multiple processes, and to ensure that higher needs persons were not routinely screened out of housing programs. CE began in a few communities across the country and was later adopted by the Federal government as first a best, and then a required, practice.

Alameda County defines the Coordinated Entry process as "an approach to coordination and management of the crisis response system's resources that allows users to make equity consistent decisions from available information to connect people efficiently and effectively to interventions that will end their homelessness."<sup>1</sup>

Every HUD-funded community must operate a CE process. Through regulations and notices, HUD outlines broad requirements and guidance for certain aspects of the process, including factors that must be considered in prioritizing potential tenants, as well as governance and oversight requirements. However, the prioritization methods and the matching and referral processes are locally designed and controlled and vary from community to community. Some federal and state funding is available to support aspects of Coordinated Entry work, but use of funds for this purpose typically reduces resources available for direct services and housing. It is up to communities to determine how to best support and resource the work. In most places, the process has very limited funding and is designed as a coordinated effort involving many existing parties, including local government, housing providers, property managers and service providers.

Coordinated Entry is inherently more challenging than other housing application processes, because, due to their circumstances, people experiencing homelessness are often more difficult to contact or locate than housed people and may face difficulties obtaining or retaining documentation or attending appointments. Because Coordinated Entry as a

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<sup>1</sup> From [Alameda County Coordinated Entry Policies](#), p 4, May 2024

requirement was applied after many housing programs opened, and funding sources that support the development and operations of housing often have documentation and selection requirements that differ from the low-barrier aspirations of Coordinated Entry, communities struggle to rapidly identify and successfully place potential tenants into housing through Coordinated Entry.

## **Home Stretch**

In Alameda County the component of the CE process for matching and referring to permanent supportive housing (PSH) is referred to as Home Stretch and is housed within Alameda County Health's Housing and Homelessness Services office. Currently, Home Stretch includes a supervisor and three staff who are responsible for making the matches and referrals to units in the covered inventory (which includes more than 5,000 units) and for tracking the process. Coordinated Entry manages the list of eligible persons (the "housing queue"), and Home Stretch identifies potentially eligible tenants for a given opening ("matches") and makes referrals to openings.

To complete a referral and have an eligible tenant move in, however, requires action and collaboration across many other parties, including the potential tenant, a navigator or designated service provider supporting the potential tenant, representatives of a housing provider -- typically both a property manager and compliance reviewer, and sometimes a service provider as well -- and at times a Public Housing Authority (PHA).

This report describes the process and examines the length of time it takes from when an opening is first reported to Home Stretch to when an eligible person or household moves in. It looks at many factors that have been identified by housing providers and by the Home Stretch team as creating challenges or barriers to a more rapid process, as well as some steps that have been taken in other communities to address similar challenges. It concludes with recommendations for actions that can be taken to improve the process and working relationships and ultimately reduce the time it takes for units to be filled and people to be housed.

The primary source of information for this report comes from 17 interviews and meetings with developer/owners of PSH units, and with other parties to the CE process including staff at Alameda County and outside organizations such as the John Stewart property management company and the Oakland Housing Authority. Interviews were also conducted with subject matter experts in California and staff managing Coordinated Entry in two other California communities, Los Angeles and Santa Clara counties, that have recently undertaken significant redesign work with their CE systems.

The housing providers interviewed ranged from organizations with very few units in the Coordinated Entry system to those with most of their housing portfolio covered by the CE process. Many agencies interviewed invited several people to attend, for a total of 42 people participating in interviews or meetings between late September and early December 2024. A full list of those interviewed can be found in Appendix A. An outline of the informal question guide that was used for most of these calls is included in Appendix B.

In addition to interviews, the analysis included reviewing documents provided by Home Stretch related to the placement process, federal guidance on Coordinated Entry, and a review and analysis of data for 2024 provided from the Home Stretch Salesforce data platform.

## II. Overview of Match and Referral Process

This report does not cover all aspects of the Coordinated Entry process, which begins when a person is identified as experiencing homelessness and is screened and assessed by a designated Access Point. This report focuses exclusively on the phase referred to as “Match and Referral,” during which persons who have been placed on the housing queue (after being prioritized using a local Housing Needs Assessment) are selected, contacted and referred to openings in the covered housing inventory. Further, this report focuses *primarily* on the process for units that have been previously occupied and are open due to turnover (also called “attrition units”), though some aspects of full project lease ups are also considered.

The following is a description of the basic process for filling turnover units.

### **Turnover Process**

**Step 1:** When a unit becomes available in a covered program or project, the developer or their property management agent (hereafter jointly called “the housing provider”) contacts Home Stretch by completing an electronic form, called a Notification of Opening, which is emailed to the Home Stretch team. The notification form requires information describing the size and type of unit and when it will become available. It asks for details about who is eligible to live there in terms of income, disabilities and other selection criteria, and any factors that would make the person ineligible to live there that cannot be addressed in an appeal. The form does not include a complete list of what documentation is needed to be eligible for the unit. The first time a property submits a Notification of Opening (or if it has been a long time since the property last had an opening) Home Stretch works with the site to determine

specific materials that need to be sent to the property at the time of a referral. This information is kept in a database that Home Stretch staff maintain. (See Appendix C for the Notification of Opening form.)

**Step 2:** A member of the Home Stretch staff reviews the Notification of Opening to ensure it is complete and to determine if there are any outstanding questions. If information is missing, or answers appear to be different than what is reflected in the tenant selection plan on file or what Home Stretch has in its database, Home Stretch staff reach out to the submitter for clarification. On occasion this may take multiple conversations to resolve.

**Step 3:** Once Home Stretch has a complete Notification of Opening, they begin the process of “matching” by identifying the top people on the housing queue (those highest prioritized in accordance with CE prioritization policies) who meet the eligibility criteria for the unit described on the Notice of Opening and in the Home Stretch records and who have been previously identified as being “document ready.”<sup>2</sup>

To find matches, the Home Stretch staff prioritize people who are “document ready” and meet the requirements for specific disabilities, household composition and other known eligibility criteria required by property/program. Home Stretch typically begins by matching at least five people per opening, though in practice if they believe a unit may be hard to fill, they may match more at one time (e.g., 10 or more potential tenants may be identified for certain SRO units because they have historically been harder to fill.)

**Step 4:** Home Stretch notifies identified service providers attached to each potential tenant’s record about the opening via email and uploading the document to the Files section of a person’s HMIS record; this is called a “Match Notification”. The match notification includes information about the unit such as where it is located, unit amenities when known, eligibility requirements to apply, and what documents are needed to complete a referral, such as the application, a recent income verification, etc. Steps 3 and 4 combined are expected to occur within 3 business days from the time a complete notification of an opening is received. (See Appendix C for a copy of the Match Notification.)

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<sup>2</sup> Alameda County’s Coordinated Entry policies define “document readiness” as meaning that attached to the person’s record in HMIS there is 1) a government issued photo ID for the person, or head of household if a family, 2) Social Security verification, if the person has a SSN; 3) verification of disability, dated within the past 12 months; and 4) third-party verification of homelessness.

**Step 5:** Any service provider contacted has five business days to contact their client (the potential tenant) and determine if they are interested in the opening. If the service provider can reach the client and the client is interested, the provider and the client work together to complete the application and provide Home Stretch any required documentation that they are aware of which is not already uploaded to HMIS. Home Stretch reviews the application materials received and works with a service provider if a packet is missing content.

**Step 6:** After the five days have elapsed<sup>3</sup>, if Home Stretch has received all items needed to make a complete referral for at least one eligible person they send this to the housing provider and do not send more match notifications to additional households. A complete referral from Home Stretch includes the four forms of documentation identified for being “document ready” (photo ID, verification of homelessness and disability, and SSN if needed) along with recent income documentation and the specific application materials provided by the property. If more than one complete referral is available to be sent for a single opening, Home Stretch will refer the applicant with the highest priority based on Coordinated Entry policies and may send a second person as a back-up. The policy is to send 1.5 referrals per opening. In the case of a single opening, Home Stretch works with the property to determine if one or two referrals will be sent.

If no completed applications are received, or on review none of the applicants appear eligible, Home Stretch closes the match round and continues the internal matching process, going further down the housing queue, and issues another batch of potential matches, a “second round.” This process will be repeat if necessary, until a referral is generated. Each subsequent round will be more “aggressive,” by increasing the number of matches made.<sup>4</sup>

Once an applicant has been referred, that person is ineligible to receive matches or be referred to other housing opportunities while they under consideration for the one to which they have been referred.

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<sup>3</sup> Applications can still be submitted after this 5-day window but are considered late and will be considered for referral if a complete application is not submitted during the active match round.

<sup>4</sup> If no referral has been sent after 30 days have elapsed, Home Stretch may do an “all call”, which is an open invitation to any provider working with an interested and eligible client to apply for the opening.

**Step 7:** When a referral is sent, the housing provider is sent the information and documents described above, along with information about how to contact the designated service provider and the potential tenant. At this point, the process is in the hands of the housing provider and differs depending on the building and provider. In most cases, a property manager makes an initial review of the documents for eligibility (even if additional clarification or documentation is needed) and then reaches out to the service provider, or sometimes directly to the client, to schedule an appointment at the property. There is no required time for this initial review to occur.

**Step 8:** If after seeing the property and meeting the property manager the client wants to proceed, they are instructed by the property manager about any additional application forms or documents they need to complete or to bring back. The time it takes to receive the additional documents is variable and may take more than one contact or visit. In many cases the potential tenant and their service provider may need to return to the property multiple times. Sometimes these steps require appointments rather than dropping in to drop off materials and making these appointments can add time; missed appointments also add time.

**Step 9A:** Once the housing provider determines that the documents are complete and the potential tenant appears eligible, in many cases the next step is for property management to run a background check.

If the potential tenant passes the background check, in most cases the application then goes to a compliance office within the same housing agency for review (though at least one developer contracts this work to an outside agency.) The compliance officer reviews all of the documents to check for eligibility, with particular attention to income verification and other required eligibility documents. The age of the documents provided matters, particularly for income verification, and if significant time has elapsed since the package was first sent, new documents may be requested. For some housing projects, an asset check is also required to ensure the potential tenant does not have assets that would make them ineligible. This step can be complicated because it is not always easy to eliminate the possible assets that someone may have, and in limited cases certain assets jeopardize the application, though these are rare.

**Step 9B:** If the potential tenant does not pass the background check or is rejected for another reason, they may appeal the decision. An appeal process must be initiated by the potential tenant, supported by their service provider, and follows the housing provider's process.

The amount of time all of these steps take is highly variable. Housing providers report handling initial applications quickly, typically within a week of receiving them, though this is not always the case, and there is no set standard for how long each party is required to take to review and currently no central tracking of this. If documents are missing, incomplete or inaccurate, or if the housing provider requires additional information that Home Stretch and the service provider were unaware of, it may take the potential tenant and the service provider significant time to submit or correct the information, and then for the housing provider to review again.

**Step 10A:** If the unit includes a project-based voucher, or another subsidy managed by a Public Housing Authority (PHA), the application package then goes to the designated PHA for review. The PHA has its own staff and practices for document review. By the time the application reaches the PHA, many days or weeks may have elapsed so the documentation may be “old” and need to be updated, especially the income verification.

**Step 10B:** Once the paperwork is approved by the PHA, the potential tenant must attend a voucher briefing. These are usually virtual and reportedly held weekly or may be scheduled as needed if there is urgency.

**Step 10C:** In addition to the paperwork review and briefing, the PHA must also inspect the unit to ensure it complies with HUD’s Housing Quality Standards (HQS). This requires an in-person appointment at the housing site. If the unit fails initial inspection, the housing provider will need to take action to correct any deficiency and a second or additional appointments will be needed.

**Step 11:** Once a tenant’s application and documentation have been approved by all parties, and an HQS inspection completed (if needed) the tenant is scheduled to move in. This also requires an appointment. Upon move in, the service provider notifies Home Stretch that the tenant has taken possession of the unit and the process for that unit is complete. The time from final approval to a move in is also variable, though all parties report that they attempt to make this process quick so that the unit can be occupied and the tenant can move in.

## New Building Lease up Process

A new building lease up occurs when a newly constructed or recently rehabilitated building with homeless-dedicated units is opening for the first time, or a new scattered site program is starting up, and all units or openings must be filled in a fairly short time.

Many of the steps in the Home Stretch matching and referral process and housing provider review and approval are the same as described above at the individual tenant/opening level. However, because the process requires many referrals at once it begins early with advance planning with the developer and Home Stretch and includes frequent check-ins throughout the process.

New projects generally have required time frames by which they must lease up after the building is ready to be occupied. Sometimes funding is dependent on meeting these deadlines. The process of coordinating with Home Stretch generally begins up to six months before the building is scheduled to open, and referrals begin to be made 90-120 days prior to opening. Referrals are typically made in batches, with the housing provider receiving up to 1.5 referrals per opening, allowing the housing provider to process multiple applications at once. The first referrals are sent when requested by the property and recurring meetings are held between some combination of Home Stretch staff, the housing provider, the service provider at the property, and others until the project is fully occupied.

The support and frequency of check-ins by Home Stretch once referrals have been made is reportedly similar to that provided for turnover units. However, given the urgency and consequences around initial lease up timing, the housing provider may participate in the process at higher organizational levels and regular check-ins may be calendared in advance.

This process of working closely together appears to allow for better trouble shooting and course correction. However, the core steps of matching from the list, making referrals, completing applications, gathering documentation, attending appointments, and multiparty review are largely the same as described above. Many of the same challenges therefore can occur. Delays in lease ups are also subject to outside factors, such as permit sign offs, and delays in construction or utility initiation.

### III. Current Performance

Home Stretch keeps data about individuals on the housing queue, the units in Coordinated Entry, and the core steps in the process (such as opening date, match date, referral date, and move in date) in a custom Salesforce database. Based on this information, they can track the amount of time between when a notification of opening is received and a referral is made, and from when a referral is made to when it either results in a move in or is closed due to a denial by the property, being declined by the potential tenant, or another reason necessitating a new referral.

The database does not track more granular steps in the process that are handled by the housing provider, such as when applications are with property management, the housing provider compliance office, or the PHA; when an application is found to be incomplete or when it is determined by the housing provider to be complete; and when and if an applicant is involved in an appeal.

Home Stretch staff meet weekly and review all current openings and the status of these to determine where follow-up may be needed. Home Stretch staff contact housing providers (generally someone from property management) every two weeks for an update on the status of any referrals in process. Meeting notes are used to track the status of referrals. In some cases, meetings may be scheduled, or spreadsheets may be shared back and forth between Home Stretch and the housing provider, especially in cases where a building has multiple open units (whether as part of a lease up or multiple simultaneous turnover units).

During lease ups these spreadsheets are frequently shared to jointly track progress with all relevant partners. This information, however, is not tracked in any aggregate way in the database that can be used for reporting or later analysis.

The following data is taken from information shared by Home Stretch in a March 2025 presentation entitled "[Coordinated Entry Data Updates](#)" summarizing the CE process for the 2024 calendar year, and a few additional analyses generated in May 2025 by Home Stretch for this report. A total of 636 openings were reported during this time, 362 (57%) in new project lease ups and 274 (43%) in turnover units. Home Stretch made a total of 780 referrals to 636 openings and 465 move-ins occurred during the 2024 calendar year.<sup>5</sup>

<b>Information on Turnover Units</b>	
Openings reported in 2024	274
Number of unique properties/programs requesting referrals	54
Matches made	3,200
Referrals made	342
Completed move ins	218
Referrals in process at end of year	52
Total average time from opening to move in	133 days
Average time from opening to first referral	15 days

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<sup>5</sup> Note that the number of move ins in the calendar year cannot be shown as a proportion of the total number of referrals made, as some move ins in 2024 occurred from referrals made in 2023, and referrals made in 2024 may result in move ins in 2025.

<b>Information on Turnover Units</b>	
Average time from referral to move in when only one referral needed	107 days
Average number of referrals needed per opening	1.4
Percent of completed move-ins that needed more than one referral	29%
Average time from referral to move in when more than one referral needed	199 days
Percent of potential tenants declining offer (found other housing or withdrew application for any other reason)	22.8%
Percent of properties denying tenant applicant (denied applicant or rescinded unit)	5.8%

<b>Information on Lease Ups</b>	
Number of openings	362
Matches made	2,810
Referrals made	456
Completed move ins	247
In process at end of year	186
Average time from referral to move in for units with a move-in	223 days*
* Note that this time is longer than for turnover units because the process begins long before the units are able to be occupied. The range of time for new lease ups is wide, ranging from 55 to 379 days.	

A 133-day average from opening to move in for turnover units is longer than anyone wants and has negative consequences for all parties. For developers, an opening that lasts longer than 60 days may mean a loss of rent, and failure to lease up in time can result in other consequences such as inability to compete in future funding rounds. For applicants and their service providers, greater than 60 days may mean additional work having to get updated information and verifications because initial ones have expired. For potential tenants it also means both being removed from consideration for other units for long periods, and it means remaining homeless for longer periods of time.

For all these reasons, an effort to reduce the time from a unit opening to a move-in is critical. But there is no system-wide and agreed to targeted timeframe being closely tracked and reported publicly. It is not that each party does not have strong incentives to move quickly -

all parties do - but together these incentives have not been strong enough to overcome the challenges described in this report. There is a shared desire to improve processes among all parties to decrease the timeline from match to move in.

### **Areas of greatest potential for delay**

The 11-step process described above appears linear, but there are many places where things can be held up, or go back and forth between parties, and places where timeframes can become elongated.

As stated above, specific time tracking for many of the steps after a referral is sent are not currently occurring so we cannot say which steps cause the most delay. However, there are a few steps in the process where progress can get slowed down significantly, especially in:

1. The matching phase if it takes multiple rounds to identify eligible and interested applicants;
2. If applicants who expressed interest in a unit drop out of the process after having been referred and a new match round is required;
3. Application completion and review if all requirements are not clear to the service provider and potential tenant, and the documents submitted to the housing provider or PHA are incomplete or inaccurate.
4. Compliance review of complex situations, such as asset determinations.
5. Compliance office and PHA reviews where documentation is either incomplete or expired, and/or where things are held up because an inspection cannot be scheduled or a unit requires multiple inspections to pass.
6. Appeals at either the property or the PHA.

## **IV. Findings from Interviews**

The above sections describe the core steps in the process to fill open units and the current data about how the process performs. Interviews with key stakeholders were used to describe their experiences with the process and elicit opinions about what factors contribute to the length of the process. Stakeholders interviewed included housing providers, property management staff, representatives from a housing authority, and Alameda County Management Entity staff including members of the Home Stretch staff. An informal guide for these interviews is included in Appendix B.

## 1. Communication and Role Clarity

An area that was discussed by all parties as being challenging was the quality and variability of communication between parties to the process. Most housing provider representatives said more direct communication with Home Stretch was desired and more involvement by housing providers in both developing and co-monitoring the match and referral process. The CE staff also experience challenges at times with a lack of communication from some housing providers in terms of responses to their inquiries about the status of referrals in process or better understanding why a process is delayed.

Related to the concerns regarding communication are different understandings of what each party's role in the process is supposed to be and how they are to work together. Home Stretch staff feel strongly that they have a responsibility to ensure that units get filled, and particularly that prioritized households get housed. After they make a referral, however, Home Stretch has no direct role or authority related to the review and approval phase. Home Stretch maintains communication with sites to track referrals in process. They described themselves as tracking each referral and making calls or sending emails to find out what is going on, especially when the process appears delayed, and making offers to assist.

Some developers interviewed felt that the Home Stretch staff act as partners and that their offers are appreciated and sometimes valuable to get to the bottom of a delay or help loop the service provider back in. With many things to track, one person reported he appreciated when the liaison would contact him to get clear on where things stood.<sup>6</sup> For other developers or property management partners, Home Stretch's nudging role feels like overstepping. They feel like "someone is looking over our shoulder" without an understanding of the things they must juggle. These developers and property management partners shared that the holdup is not always in their hands (it may be with the service provider or the PHA) but they are being asked to report on progress.

For a third party like the Housing Authority there was also reported role confusion between the role of the service provider, the property manager and Home Stretch. It was not clear to

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<sup>6</sup> Buildings that have MHSA units in them have dedicated staff liaisons who are clinically trained and support tenants through and after the process. It appeared that these relationships were stronger; housing providers with these units were more likely to mention County staff by name, though they did not make the types of distinctions about the liaison roles as distinct from general Home Stretch staff, which the Home Stretch staff emphasized.

some Housing Authority representatives who to communicate with and they pointed to the lack of a single point of contact. Many housing providers said they want more transparency overall about how the process works and about performance and timing of various steps. One said, "We do not understand their side of the process."

## **2. Guidance and Agreements**

People interviewed in all roles felt the process was not fully clear and that there was a lack of written guidance and agreements about how the process should work. Home Stretch enters into MOU's with housing providers which are individually established, and in some cases were reported to be out of date. Some felt that the MOUs do not act as clear guides for how the process is supposed to work or provide timing agreements. One person said about the process that the expectations for how the process should occur and what each party does "should be in the public policies, not just the MOUs."

## **3. Documentation Requirements**

Undoubtedly the greatest barriers to rapid move are, in most cases, the documentation requirements. These requirements, which can be significant, are largely the result of the funding sources used to develop and/or operate projects, and all parties are aware that this is primarily an outwardly imposed burden not controlled by any of the parties to the process.

Home Stretch and the housing provider initially negotiate which documents will be provided as part of a referral for each property, and housing providers can update Home Stretch if their needs change. Housing providers often need to collect additional documents beyond those agreed upon and provided as a part of a referral. Some housing providers have made clear to Home Stretch that they wish to collect those documents directly, once they begin to process the application.

In some cases, there also appear to be matters of interpretation or changes in document policy that occur once the housing provider has received the application, which may go beyond what is strictly required by the funding sources in the project. Two examples given were of a housing provider requiring an up-to-date disability verification for a unit that does not have disability requirement, and a provider asking for landlord references when this had not previously been shared as a requirement.

For Home Stretch staff (and reportedly for service providers as well, though none were specifically interviewed for this phase of the project) the documentation requirements can feel like "a moving target." Housing providers, on the other hand, believe the documentation requirements are more straightforward and generally remain consistent. They feel that they

have shared what is needed but that packets are still frequently submitted that are incomplete or where the tenant does not qualify. One person said “The documents come in filled out incorrectly and there is lots of back and forth and delays with any follow up... We would like someone from CE and the case manager to fully understand our documentation requirements.”

All projects require an application, but the application is different in each case, sometimes even when the owner or property management company is the same. One developer representative when asked about the potential for using a universal application said, “Why should they be different? We all need basically the same things.”

#### **4. Definitions of “Document Ready”**

Another area where there is a difference in perspective is in the use of the term “document ready.” Coordinated Entry policies outline a definition of document readiness which means the applicant has a government issued photo identification, a Social Security card (if eligible), and verifications of disability and of homelessness. Households with documents that are considered “current” based on agreements between Home Stretch and the housing provider are prioritized for openings.

However, for a housing provider, document ready means the applicant has *all* the documents required to complete a file for move in, with documents complete and up to date, including a correctly completed application, all supporting documents and any additional information, and documentation for the rest of the household. This difference in language can result in a difference of understanding around whether someone who has been referred is actually “document ready.”

#### **5. Referral Approach**

One area in which there is disagreement from some housing providers with the current process is in receiving only one or two referrals at a time for turnover units, and with having to work all the way through the top priority application before beginning on another (and in most cases, before receiving another).

As noted above, many housing providers require additional documentation once the property receives the application package. In some cases, this is because the provider and client did not submit a needed document or complete the information correctly, but in many cases, it is because the property does not ask for the documents until the property visit has been completed. Housing providers believe that the process would go more quickly if they could move to another applicant immediately.

One person interviewed mentioned that at the beginning of the CE process they had received five referrals for each opening and they preferred that process. County staff noted that these referrals came with no documentation and that this process was not widely preferred. Another person suggested that the process would be better if it worked “like the market” for both parties, in which the properties could receive many applications, and the potential tenants could also pursue more than one property at a time.

Home Stretch staff have significant concerns about making multiple referrals, especially because this removes the potential applicants from consideration for any other housing, and because of concern that people perceived as harder to house will be skipped. Home Stretch also shared their concern that if they were to allow applicants to be considered for more than one opening at a time, SROs will likely take longer to fill.

## **6. Timing of Notifications**

Another area raised as a barrier by some housing providers is in the timing of notifications of openings. Some housing providers expressed interest in being able to notify Home Stretch of a pending opening prior to getting possession of the unit. Their rationale is that with the process taking as long as it currently does, if it could begin earlier they would be less likely to experience significant periods of rent loss. In their regular portfolio they can solicit applications for units at any stage they choose, and they report this reduces the time units sit empty.

Typically, Home Stretch asks to begin the process of identifying an applicant when the property has possession of the unit and they anticipate it being move in ready within approximately 30 days. Home Stretch shared past experiences where there had been challenges with being asked to provide a referral before the property had possession of the unit and then the process lasting months or the unit ultimately not becoming available at all. They also described that if units are undergoing extensive repairs that can leave referred tenants without the housing they were expecting.

## **7. Reporting and Transparency**

As cited above in the Current Performance section, Home Stretch has key information available through its Salesforce database and can use that database to track some key steps in the process, though they are not able to analyze more closely where delays occur after a referral is sent to a housing provider. Aggregate information from the system is reported out a minimum of once annually, including how many openings were reported, how many

referrals were made, how many people were housed, and how long the process took on average.

Information about how the referral system is performing is not available in real time to housing partners. Annual reporting has been primarily focused on presentations in meetings with service providers and to committees of the Continuum of Care (CoC). Housing providers generally report not seeing these reports and say they do not have a sense of how things are going. Many of them feel that the system has a “lack of transparency” and accountability and would like to see more granular data about the process shared on a more frequent basis.

## **8. Concerns about Support for High Needs Individuals**

One of the goals of Coordinated Entry is to ensure that the critical housing resources to address homelessness among people with high needs are available to them, and that people are not routinely screened out or unable to access housing that is intended to meet their needs.

The result of using Coordinated Entry is that the population of people referred to PSH units, on the whole, appear to have greater needs than those who were housed in the past prior to CE. Factors other than prioritization may be at play here (e.g., people experiencing homelessness are aging, addiction and other disabilities may be getting more acute) but overall CE does appear to work in this regard, and part of it working is that higher need individuals receive priority for housing.

While housing providers understand this purpose and goal, they express concerns about their ability to adequately serve some of the people referred to them. Especially in older properties, what one housing provider referred to as “legacy PSH,” they do not feel that they have adequate services for the tenants they are asked to house, and some reported low levels of confidence that outside services were providing what they should. Some housing providers feel there needs to be more work done to refer potential tenants with the highest needs to properties that are prepared to serve them appropriately, and that some people’s needs may be too high for PSH in general.

High needs, or the perception that someone has them, is not a basis for denying applications. Only 6% of referrals in 2024 were denied by the housing provider. However, it is possible that concerns about the ability to meet tenant needs, or fears that they will be disruptive or endanger other tenants may impact whether someone gets in or how quickly a referral is approved. It also impacts how housing providers feel about the CE process as a whole.

## Challenges Outside of the Coordinated Entry Scope

In addition to the areas of concern raised above that are within the Coordinated Entry process and approach, several people raised other issues that are broader than the scope of CE process but impact the process.

### **1. Turnover in Staff**

Most people interviewed either raised first, or acknowledged when asked, that the field has a very high turnover rate at this time. This has particularly affected the property management agencies/arms of the housing providers, as well as the service providers who act as liaisons to the potential tenants. One Home Stretch staff said they worked with “a revolving door of providers.” Turnover was identified by many as the cause, or an exacerbator, of some of the more difficult examples of delays, where loss of someone in a key role led to long delays or loss of critical information in the middle of the application or move in process.

### **2. Age and Desirability of Buildings**

Buildings in the PSH portfolio vary greatly in terms of age, location, size and amenities. Some of the older buildings in the Alameda County portfolio are both less desirable in terms of size, location and condition, and often have fewer resources to provide supportive services or other supports to tenants. The impact of this combination of factors is that some buildings, particularly SROs and shared housing, tend to be viewed as less desirable by potential tenants, and often take longer to identify an applicant through the CE process. This is especially true when concurrently there are one or more new project lease ups occurring and potential tenants are aware of the potential to get a new unit.

### **3. Rent Levels and Income Requirements**

Units in the PSH portfolio range in their expectations of the tenant’s rental contribution, from those that have vouchers or other permanent subsidies attached in which tenants pay 30% of their adjusted gross income, to units with set rents that are based on a target income range but are not specific to the tenant’s actual income. A household with \$1,500 in monthly income would pay approximately \$450 for a one-bedroom unit with a voucher or deep subsidy attached. That same household would be expected to pay as much as \$832 in a building that does not have a voucher attached and uses set rents based on a percentage of area median income, even for a unit that is targeted to people with incomes below 30% of area median income. This is both more than many people are interested in paying, and a concern regarding sustainability. Additionally challenging, most people in the housing queue

are not able to be considered for such units, as many projects have guidelines that require tenants to have at least twice the rent income.

#### **4. Complex Levels of Subsidy Layering or Eligibility Criteria**

It is more difficult for Coordinated Entry to find appropriate matches when a project has multiple restrictive funding sources that significantly shrink the pool of potential tenants. For example, if an opening requires verification of chronic homelessness, a specific disability, and an income of SSI-level or greater, there will be fewer eligible households for that opening than for projects with none of these requirements.

Such challenges also can impact lease up efforts. For example, one of the buildings leased up in 2024 required prospective tenants to be able to pay 30% of area median income rents, while also meeting criteria for chronic homelessness, a specific disability, and being a frequent health care system utilizer. Complex eligibility requirements, often needed to make projects financially viable, can result in challenges with identifying people within the housing queue that meet all the requirements. The more varied and complex the eligibility criteria are, the fewer households meeting the criteria are likely to have been connected to Coordinated Entry.

## **V. Examples from Other Communities**

Interviews conducted for this report included conversations with representatives from two large California communities that have recently redesigned their match and referral processes, Santa Clara and Los Angeles Counties. They were asked about improvements to their Coordinated Entry process after recent changes. Below are some of the steps they reported that, in their assessment, led to improvement in the placement process and results.<sup>7</sup>

**Time and vacancy reduction goals:** Both Los Angeles and Santa Clara experienced long delays in placement and significant vacancies in their portfolios before they revised their processes. Los Angeles has reduced the average time to 80 days and set a goal to reduce the process to 45 days. Santa Clara has reportedly reduced vacancies from 18% to under 2% and placement time from several months to weeks.

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<sup>7</sup> This information comes from separate research conducted by Katharine Gale and Focus Strategies for Alameda County and San Francisco for a presentation called Coordinated Entry Innovative Practices.

**Regular meetings with housing providers:** Both Santa Clara and Los Angeles hold monthly meetings with a range of building owners/property managers to review the status of all the people in process and to troubleshoot obstacles. This is separate from weekly meetings that are held about specific properties during a lease up.

**Universal Housing Application:** Both Los Angeles and Santa Clara County have developed Universal Housing Applications. In Los Angeles this application is currently being used for new project lease ups with the intention to eventually use it for all referrals. The application is a multi-tab electronic form that is available to complete and review online and all parties to the process, including a housing authority, can review and approve the file. In Santa Clara, a Universal Housing Application was developed with the John Stewart Company, which manages 54% of the units in their Coordinated Entry portfolio. This allows potential tenants to complete a single application for all properties they manage.

**Dedicated document gathering and application support:** Santa Clara County has taken housing applicant support completely in-house, working with prioritized individuals all the way from document gathering through the application and move-in process. They have also separated the collection of prioritization information (the CE assessment) from the process for determining individual eligibility, needs and preferences. Only those who are in a smaller pool and are anticipated to receive a housing referral are asked for detailed information about their conditions and housing preferences, and they are directly supported through the process of gathering documents and completing applications. Santa Clara has increased their coordinated entry team in the Office of Supportive Housing to 30 Eligibility Specialists, who work with the top 1,000 people on the queue at a time.

**Expanded training:** Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) has added a dedicated team of 11 people who support housing and service providers to understand the coordinated entry and housing referral process, and to know how to complete housing applications and collect documentation. Regular training and refreshers on the process are offered.

**Large batch referrals:** Santa Clara County uses its dedicated team to work with up to 1,000 people on the queue at a time. Approximately 300 of the thousand are in active match status at a time, meaning they have been referred to multiple openings, and roughly 200 openings are being worked at a time (between lease ups and turnover). Housing providers receive multiple completed and qualifying applications, but applicants are not removed from consideration for other open units and may exercise choice in which they apply for.

**Strong coordination with Housing Authorities:** Santa Clara County reported having frequent coordination with its Housing Authority partner, meeting regularly and having a strong working relationship. A significant portion of the CE inventory in Santa Clara includes Public Housing Authority (PHA) subsidies. In Los Angeles, the Housing Authority approval process utilizes the universal application. The Los Angeles process does not involve connection directly between the PHA and the tenant applicant, and briefings did not seem to be needed for units with Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs).

**Dedicated interim housing for prioritized people:** Santa Clara County has invested in having interim housing specifically set aside for people who are prioritized and are in the document gathering or referral process. In 2024, there were 80 such beds but this was expected to increase to more than 200 beds in the future. Dedicated interim housing allows them to shelter prioritized individuals and have an easier time finding and working with them. In Los Angeles, people staying in interim housing are prioritized for housing referrals.

## VI. Recommendations

Based on the findings and observations above, this analysis yields the following recommendations, broken into four categories: (1) Actions that can be taken in the near term with a minimum of additional resources, beyond staff time; (2) Steps that should be considered or explored in collaboration with housing and service partners to determine jointly whether they should be pursued; (3) Actions or approaches that would require significant additional resources but could make significant impact; and (4) Actions by the homelessness response system that fall outside of Coordinated Entry and could make a difference in placement rates and impact.

### 1. Near Term Actions

These are steps that Home Stretch, housing providers and other partners could begin right away. It is suggested that the first step be a meeting with housing providers to review this report and its recommendations and lay out steps to begin work on near-term actions.

- a. Improve types and frequency of communication, develop and maintain improved guidance tools and cross train on roles.** Home Stretch should work with its housing partners to schedule and hold regular meetings. While Home Stretch meets with individual housing providers to plan and during lease ups, and when there are multiple openings in a building, there are no regular meetings with groups of developers and property managers. Such meetings could be used to keep housing

providers appraised of how the process is going overall, troubleshoot challenges and adjust and modify policies and practices. In addition, Home Stretch should work with housing partners to identify their preferred communications strategies, including alternatives to email.

Working together, Home Stretch and housing and services partners should develop clearer and more specific guidance for what the roles and expectations of each party to the process. These expectations should be published as part of adopted guidance and policies. In addition, the parties should work together to increase cross training on the roles of each party in the process, and to ensure that new staff including property management staff are provided support to understand the Coordinated Entry process, its requirements, and the roles of all parties. Currently Home Stretch provides frequent training and coordination with service providers but there is no similar approach to property management partners. Such cross training should ensure not only that property management staff understand the Home Stretch process but also ensure that Home Stretch staff and service providers understand the meaning and purpose of required steps or documents, including what they must look like and how they are used.

**b. Address high documentation requirements and variations, with the goal of reducing documentation barriers and standardizing expectations where possible.**

Currently, Home Stretch and housing providers communicate individually on the requirements for each project. This means in effect that every project has different documentation requirements, and those expectations may change without Home Stretch knowing. In some cases, housing providers request or require documentation that, based on federal guidance, should not be needed to establish eligibility for units that are intended to be low barrier for people experiencing homelessness. Every additional document that is required and needs review potentially impacts the timeline to fill a unit. Home Stretch and housing providers should work together to establish a standard for requiring the least documentation possible while protecting housing providers.

**c. Develop agreed standards and timeframes, set a joint time reduction goal and report on key metrics.**

Home Stretch has timing goals for its own areas of work but there are no agreed upon response timeframes for communications and coordination between the key parties. Home Stretch and its housing and service providers should

work together to establish standards for each step in the process. These partners should set a joint time reduction goal for the entire process and track progress closely and in real time. Reducing the process from the current average of 133 days to below 60 days would be a dramatic improvement that would have positive effects for all parties but would be extremely challenging. Targeting a 25% reduction in overall time (below 100 days) could be a good initial step.

It may not always be possible to meet the target timeframes that are established but having clear targets and agreements about what happens when those targets are not met would potentially help reduce time and should reduce the current frustration stakeholders experience when they do not know or don't agree on where the holdup is occurring. Whatever timeframes are agreed to, key metrics that track time and placement rates should be shared with all stakeholders frequently and reviewed jointly. Data should be made available as close to real time as possible, not less frequently than quarterly.

- d. Begin consultation for new projects in the predevelopment phase:** Developing deeply affordable projects that address the needs of people with extremely low incomes is very challenging and often requires funding from a variety of different sources with competing requirements and interests. Understanding in the pre-development stage how certain requirements may create barriers to filling the units may help the parties to make agreements earlier about how to ensure that a building is both financially viable and able to be kept occupied. Coordinated Entry staff would like to be partners at this earlier stage to offer insights related to how proposed project requirements may impact the ease with which eligible households are able to be identified for referrals.

## 2. Areas for Consideration and Consultation

These steps would take a longer time to carry out and a significant investment of time from partners but might pay off in simplification down the line. Home Stretch should begin by consulting with housing and service providers partners about whether and how to undertake these actions.

- a. Explore working with partners to develop a universal housing application:** A universal housing application allows potential tenants to complete one application for many units and projects. It also is much easier for service providers and navigators who work with clients to understand and be accurate in completing than working with

many different applications. Such an application can be set up virtually to allow multiple parties to review it and even approve it electronically. The work to create such an application would likely be significant, though examples now exist in other communities that may be replicable.

**b. Consider options for changes to referral ratios:** Housing providers feel strongly that receiving more than one application would speed the process of filling a unit. Home Stretch has concerns about doing this because: 1) currently every applicant who is referred is removed from consideration for other units; 2) if housing providers can select from among multiple applicants some applicants may be skipped over and unable to secure housing; and 3) some housing providers have been inconsistent in following procedures around closing out back-up applications that have been sent. To address these concerns:

- Consider a change in policy to routinely send one or more back-up referrals and to allow households that are sent as “back up” referrals to continue to apply to other housing units.
- Pilot sending more than one primary referral to some projects that work to enact other changes that reduce time, such as eliminating second visits to the site, accelerating processing time or ensuring concurrent reviews. Make agreements that multiple referrals will only be made on an ongoing basis if the total time to housing is reduced significantly so that multiple potential tenants are not removed from consideration for other resources for long periods.
- Consider batching openings to a provider. If a housing provider is likely to have multiple openings within a defined period (at one or more buildings) it may be possible to send referrals in batches (multiple people to multiple openings). It may also be possible for housing providers to keep the additional referrals made and move immediately to them when they have a next opening, while still allowing the potential tenant to be matched to other opportunities. For buildings with infrequent openings this may not be possible, but for projects that experience more frequent turnover, the potential tenant could opt to be considered for the next available opening.

**c. Explore potential process changes with Housing Authorities:** The Public Housing Authority process typically begins after the housing provider’s property management and compliance review and has its own set of internal steps and processes. The County and its housing partners should explore with housing authorities the potential

to do concurrent document review (materials sent to housing authority and developer's compliance team at the same time). One developer described a process they have for a building with project-based vouchers (that is not included in CE) where they run their review process parallel with the Housing Authority's review process rather than consecutively. Housing Authorities should explore whether there are steps that can be streamlined or eliminated for project-based vouchers, such as eliminating briefings.

### 3. Improvements Requiring Significant New Resources

The current system is limited by the small number of staff available to manage the Coordinated Entry process and coordinate a large number of openings. As more housing is added, more resources will be needed to maintain the growing workflow. Additional resources could be used to change the process to address some of the most frequent barriers. If new resources become available:

**a. Provide dedicated support for document readiness and application**

**preparation to all applicants by Home Stretch:** As described above, Santa Clara County has moved virtually all responsibility for the application process from the service providers to a dedicated team of County workers. Their team of 30 people follow 1,000 clients at a time through the process. To do this would require significant growth of the Home Stretch team, or a similar dedicated office, and would require a much larger investment than is currently made in the CE process. Local resources could be considered to support this type of expansion.<sup>8</sup>

**b. Consider other resources to expand support for navigators/service providers:**

If it is not possible to bring the support process inhouse or to hire and train enough staff to support the applicants, another option may be to strengthen navigation services and/or to narrow which service providers take on this work with clients and support these dedicated providers with training, funding and other supports that give them greater ability to focus attention on the process. Cal-AIM may be a source that can be used to support some of this activity (it is already used for housing navigation and tenancy sustaining services.)

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<sup>8</sup> A Continuum of Care application for a similar expansion of CE services was submitted to HUD in 2024 but was not funded. The application may serve as a blueprint for adding services with other resources.

- c. Provide a single point of contact for the most complex referrals:** One recommendation from a few interviewees was that the process should be managed by a single point of contact. Rather than the housing provider and Housing Authority both working with each other, Home Stretch, the service provider, and the potential tenant, coordination would come from Home Stretch, which would communicate with all the other parties. Given the amount of follow-up that Home Stretch currently does, it is not clear how much additional work this would be, and it is also not clear that this would be widely supported by housing providers. This could be discussed and, if there is interest and resources can be dedicated to trying it out, it could be attempted as a pilot.

#### 4. Changes Outside of CE that Could Impact Placement Speed

Finally, there are a number of features of the current homelessness response system that are not under the control of the Coordinated Entry process that impact the speed at which units are filled. These recommendations would have to be considered and adopted by Homelessness and Housing Services, stakeholders within the Continuum of Care, and/or other system funders.

- a. Develop or dedicate existing interim housing for prioritized and/or referred persons:** While not strictly within CE control, some communities have used resources to set aside interim housing (shelter) locations where unsheltered people who are prioritized for housing placement can stay while they are in the placement process. This both makes it easier to find and work with potential tenants and reduces the negative impact of unsheltered homelessness on their well-being during this process. This would take resources to create new beds or could be done through dedicating existing buildings to serve as interim housing sites.
- b. Repurpose buildings that are hard to fill:** As cited above, older SRO buildings are much harder to fill, sometimes have high turnover rates, and frequently have more limited services. There is interest among some housing providers in considering repurposing certain older properties to other uses, such as interim housing. This is a complex task given the regulatory agreements in place for most properties and would take additional resources in most cases to modify physical plants and to increase service levels. Alameda County could work with these properties to determine the feasibility and resources needed for such conversions.

**c. Work to reduce subsidy layering and units with high rents:** This is an area that is particularly challenging given that developers must seek resources where they are available, and most projects take many sources to complete. However, simplified funding would reduce placement hurdles as well as making development and operations overall less challenging. Alameda County could consider ways to use local funds to invest in and incentivize buildings with less complex requirements and lower rents.

**d. Increase funding for services:** Providing a higher level of service support, especially to older or “legacy” buildings, could make the units more desirable or, at least, allow housing providers to provide support services to tenants with higher needs. Having the resources to meet tenant’s needs more fully would reduce some of the unhappiness developers report with the CE process and improve outcomes for tenants.

## VII. Conclusion

People throughout Alameda County, at Coordinated Entry and in housing and services agencies, want to see a Coordinated Entry system that works quickly and well on behalf of people experiencing homelessness. Many people are working hard every day to ensure that people in need are housed and units are filled. Many factors contribute to the challenge of achieving a high quality and rapid CE process. This report has identified several challenges and recommendations for improving collaboration and reducing the amount of time that it takes for prospective tenants to move into units filled through CE.

Not all the issues that were identified can be corrected within the CE process. Many of the challenges are inherent to the reason that Coordinated Entry exists in the first place: people who are unhoused lack a fixed address, often do not have phones or computers and may have difficulty obtaining and storing documents. Other challenges are imposed by outside requirements related to how affordable housing is funded, and many are exacerbated by a lack of resources to provide an ideal level of support. Nonetheless, a concerted effort to improve communication, develop deeper shared understanding, troubleshoot critical steps in the process, and reach agreements across all parties involved in this process may improve working relationships and contribute to reducing move-in time frames.

## Appendix A: Organizations and Persons Interviewed

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Persons and Titles</b>
8/27/2024	Home Stretch/Housing Services Coordination Meeting	Anna Fellers, Coordinated Entry Manager Kawal Ulanday, Senior Program Specialist William Crary, Program Specialist Letty Elenes, Program Specialist Danielle Driver Bellino, Program Services Coordinator Amanda Olson, Housing Liaison
8/28/2024	Corporation for Supportive Housing - State of CA	Sharon Rapport, Director, California State Policy
9/17/2024	Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern CA (NPH)	Natalie Bonnewit, Consultant
10/1/2024	Housing Consortium of the East Bay	Lisa Hopkins, Portfolio Manager Darin Lounds, Executive Director Marichelle Alcantara, Director of Programs
10/1/2024	Eden Housing	Diana Mastroianni, Director of Property Operations Malissa Vizard, Associate Director of Property, Operations and Training Zuly Garcia-Uicab, Property Supervisor Fahim Merzaie, Associate Director of Property Operations Julia Fromme, Associate Director of Property Operations
10/2/2024	John Stewart Company	Ezra Strange, Senior Regional Manager Uella Laughlin, Regional Director Ron Bowen, Regional Director
10/2/2024	Abode Housing and Abode Property Management	Jon White, Chief Real Estate Officer Juana Nunley, Chief Property Management Officer
10/3/2024	Oakland Housing Authority	Michelle Hasan, Chief Housing Operations officer Dominica Henderson, Chief Local Impact Officer Jianhao Ruan, Housing Assistance Manager Teela Carpenter, Assistant Director, Leased Housing

		Carmella Farr, Housing Manager, Leased Housing Joetta Farrow, Assistant Director, Leased Housing
10/7/2024	Resources for Community Development	William Mendoza, Asset Manager Courtney Pal, Policy Manager Nick Griffin, Director of Asset Management
10/15/2024	Corporation for Supportive Housing - Los Angeles	Sabrina Fields Alesana, Senior Program Manger Lewis Brown, Senior Policy manager
10/17/2024	Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA)	Sara Abramowitz-Hill, VP of Asset Management and Compliance Angeli Cheng, Director of Compliance Adis Bajramovic, Staff Operations Supervisor Angela Cavanaugh, VP of Property Management
10/17/2024	Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing	Shelly Barbieri, Acting Deputy Director
10/22/2025 10/30/2024	Alameda County Housing and Homelessness Services (H&H), Housing Services	Anna Fellers, Coordinated Entry Manager
11/12/2024	Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority	Marina Flores, Director of Systems and Planning Gabriela Martinez
11/19/2024	EBALDC	Michelle Blackwell, Director of Resident and Community Services Billy Daniels, Associate Director of Property Management
11/19/2024	Alameda County Housing and Homelessness Services (H&H), Housing Services	Kawal Ulanday, Senior Program Specialist (Behavioral Health Liaison)
11/20/2024	Alameda County Housing and Homelessness Services (H&H), Home Stretch	William Crary, Program Specialist
11/20/24	Alameda County Housing and Homelessness Services (H&H), System Access and Equity	Anna Fellers, Coordinated Entry Manager Alan Guttirez, Director of System Access and Equity

## Appendix B: Interview Questions

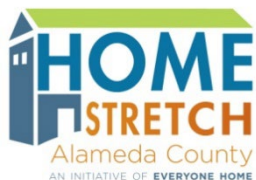
1. Please introduce yourselves, your role in your organization and how long you have been doing this work?
2. How much of your portfolio goes through Alameda County CE process (Home Stretch)?
3. Can you describe to me how that process works?
  - a. Who initiates a referral being requested on your end and when do they do that?
  - b. Once it's requested, generally how long do you wait to get one?
  - c. What happens after that (generally, setting aside big bumps or problems.)
4. Typically, how many players are involved from your side (Property Management, Services, Compliance?) How many external parties are involved (CE, OHA, etc.)
5. When things go well, what are the primary factors that influence that?
6. What do you see as the primary barriers to timely referrals/verification and move in?
  - a. Do you have thoughts about how to address these?
7. One thing I have heard is that there are moving targets around documentation requirements. Do you have thoughts about why this might happen or how to make the documentation requirements clear and consistent?
8. Another thing I have heard is that there are no system agreements about response time frames. Do you have internal rules or timeframes to process things or respond?
  - a. Do you think it would be possible to reach agreements with developers/PM about response and communication time frames?
  - b. If there were agreed to time frames for all parties would that speed things up?
9. Do you work with any other CE processes in other communities (or other dedicated referral sources)? How would you compare the Alameda County process to those?
10. Is there anything that we have not talked about that you would like to share with me about the process?

# Appendix C: Notifications

Notification of Opening

and

Notification of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Match



# Notification of Permanent Supportive Housing Opening

Please fill out this form for EACH available unit. Complete forms can be sent via encrypted email to Home Stretch at [homestretch@acgov.org](mailto:homestretch@acgov.org). Incomplete forms can result in delays.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Expected Date of Unit Availability: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

PSH Unit Information:	
<p><b>Property/Program Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Property Address (skip this if unit search needed):</b> _____ _____</p> <p><b>Unit Description (ie. #100, etc.):</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Name of Tenant who vacated unit:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Date unit was vacated:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Reason unit was vacated:</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Unit Type:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Site-based/Building</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Scattered-site/Unit Identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Scattered-site/Unit Search Needed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____</p> <p><b>Unit Size:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Shared Bedroom      <input type="checkbox"/> Shared Common Area</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> SRO    <input type="checkbox"/> Studio    <input type="checkbox"/> 1bdrm    <input type="checkbox"/> 2bdrm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3bdrm    <input type="checkbox"/> 4bdrm    <input type="checkbox"/> 5bdrm    <input type="checkbox"/> TBD- unit search needed</p> <p><b>Allowable Reasonable Accommodations (specify):</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Required Eligibility Criteria:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chronically Homeless</p> <p>OR</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Literally Homeless (<i>if either is ok, check "literally"</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check this box if the unit does <b>NOT</b> require social security card or other verification of citizenship status</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MHSA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Age (specify): _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> HOPWA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veteran</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence History*</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Specific Disability: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p><small>*Provide details if history must be within a certain time or requires verification</small></p>
<p><b>Unit Specifications:</b></p> <p>Occupancy Standards (household size): Min. _____ Max. _____</p> <p>Income Requirements: Min. _____ Max. _____</p> <p>Tenant's Monthly Rent: _____</p> <p>Deposit: _____</p> <p>Utilities Included:      <input type="checkbox"/> yes      <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>Pets Allowed:            <input type="checkbox"/> yes      <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>On-Site Support Services: <input type="checkbox"/> yes      <input type="checkbox"/> no</p>	<p><b>Non-Appealable Exclusion Criteria:</b></p> <p>If the property's Tenant Selection Criteria includes <b>any</b> criteria that would result in a denial that cannot be appealed, please specifically note below so households can opt out of applying.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Criminal History: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evictions: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rental History: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Credit/Debt: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> None of the Above</p>
<p><b>Property/Program Management (PM) Contact Info:</b></p> <p>PM Name: _____</p> <p>PM Phone: _____</p> <p>PM Email: _____</p>	<p><b>Notes:</b> _____</p>

Contact **HOME STRETCH**

email: [HomeStretch@acgov.org](mailto:HomeStretch@acgov.org), phone: (510) 567-8017, fax: 1 (855) 658-5466

# Notification of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Match

Before submitting your application, carefully review the eligibility criteria.

DATE OF NOTICE: \_\_\_\_\_

TO:

\_\_\_\_\_ is eligible for a referral to the following PSH opening:  
(Head of Household: HMIS ID/ Name)

**Property/Program Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

City (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ # of bedrooms (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Rent Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

PSH subsidy type:      shared housing                      site-based                      scattered-site rental assistance (voucher)

If scatter-site, cities subsidy can be use in: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit is ADA Accessible:      Yes      No      Unknown

<p><b>Subsidy / Unit Eligibility Criteria:</b></p> <p>Household Composition: _____</p> <p>Homeless Status: _____</p> <p>Income Restrictions: _____</p>	<p><b>Additional Eligibility (if applicable):</b></p>
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This household's prioritization number\* for this housing opportunity is: \_\_\_\_\_. In order for us to refer this person to this housing opportunity, please return **ALL** the following documents to Home Stretch within **5 business days**: \_\_\_\_\_  
(due date)

**Ensure all required documents are submitted to Home Stretch (HomeStretch@acgov.org) or uploaded to HMIS "Files". If you've uploaded documents to HMIS, email Home Stretch to request processing of application. To avoid delays, verify that all documents are complete, valid, and filled out correctly. An application is only considered complete once all required documents have been accurately submitted.**

**Documents Required :**

- Government Issued Photo ID Not Expired (color copy preferred)
- Social Security Card (SSC) (signed and copy preferred) or Government issued verification of SSN
- HUD-compliant Verification of Disability dated within 12 months; Specific Disability (if required):
- HUD-compliant Verification of \_\_\_\_\_ Homelessness, dated within 30 days
- Verification of Income (VOI) dated within 30 days (i.e. statement of benefits, 3 months of pay stubs)
- Subsidy Program / Property application
- Additional Household Member(s) Requirements: ID, SSC, & VOI (For All Adults) and Birth Certificate & SSC (For All Minors)
- Other:

\*NOTE: Applications will be processed in the order prioritized through Coordinated Entry. Responding to a PSH match does not guarantee this person will be considered for this housing opportunity. Multiple matches are sent for every opening to ensure vacancies are filled promptly.