

January 28, 2021
3:30-4:50PM

Human Services Information Sharing Regarding Covid-19

Hosted by DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform

Purpose of Meeting:

- 1) Hear updates from Public Partners.
- 2) Listen to Key Community Leaders.
- 3) Listen to attendees to hear how things are going for their constituents.

Public Partners:

Representative from Sean Casten's Office, United States Representative (D-IL 6th District) Jason Nerad: Interested to learn of your concerns. Reach out to us with constituent issues.

District Director for the office of Bill Foster, United States Representative (D-IL 11th District) Hilary Denk:

Through Joliet Jr. College (JJC), they will be hosting a Facebook Live Event for Vaccine Information (this information is relevant for the whole region). In addition, people are encouraged to check out their updated website for vaccine information related to their region.

Additionally, organizations are encouraged to send focus their way if/when individuals are having trouble getting other resources such as, SVA loans, the new PPP Program, difficulties getting their \$600 direct payment, or any other federal issues.

Representative from Lauren Underwood's United States Representative (D-IL 14th District), Washington D.C. Office

Jack DiMatteo, (Handles Health Policy for the Congresswoman)

Congresswoman Underwood has just introduced a new bill (a reintroduction of a bill she brought forward last Congress), called the, **Healthcare Affordability Act**.

Link here. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/369?s=1&r=76> This legislation has been featured in the President's, American Rescue Plan. This has expanded access for subsidies for healthcare premiums. These are eligible for people of all incomes, as opposed to the current cutoff at 400% of the federal poverty line. Which means the size of these subsidies are increased across the income distribution.

What this means: Every American, regardless of their income, has access to a health insurance plan, for no more than 8.5% of their income.

To better understand: For instance, if a lower income individual who makes just above the threshold for Medicaid eligibility, they would now be able to purchase a marketplace plan for zero dollars. This making effective public coverage through the marketplace.

*Note: **This is pending legislation and is not currently in effect.**

*An important flag: President Biden announced on January 28, 2021, that they will be reopening the ACA Marketplace for an open enrollment period for an extension period, starting in February. This estimates that nearly 8.9 million Americans would be eligible to enroll in a plan for either no premiums at all, or for a subsidized premium.

Panel Presentations:

Prairie State Legal Services, West Suburban Office

31W001 E North Ave. Suite 200, West Chicago, IL 60185

(630)690-2130

www.pslegal.org

Marisa Wiesman, Managing Attorney:

Update on Eviction Prevention & Ways that Human Services Can Help

Prairie State is free, legal, help to tenants in North and Central Illinois, outside of Cook County. Tenants can and should call them for eviction advice. They provide both translation services, as well as weekly Facebook Lives that are then posted to their page until no longer relevant (English FB Lives are held Thursdays at noon, and Spanish FB Lives are held on Fridays).

Illinois's current moratorium expires February 6, but that date may be extended or changed. (Moratorium dates can be extended and changed on a thirty-day bases). The current moratorium prohibits landlords from filing some residential eviction cases **on not all cases, but some**. There is a requirement that eligible tenants who are facing eviction for nonpayment of rent, must complete a written declaration form.

Separate from this filing prohibition, there is a second prohibition in place that prohibits Law Enforcement from enforcing most, residential evictions, while the moratorium is in place. While evictions based on the **health and safety of other tenants** and **a severe risk to the property** are allowed.

*Note: **A written declaration must be provided by the tenant before eviction.** If the tenant does not provide the declaration, then the renter has the option to go online and fill out their own declaration form.

DuPage PADS

www.dupagepads.org

(630)682-3846

Scott Austgen, VP of Program & April Redzic, CEO:

For the past ten months and next foreseeable future, PADS has been operating out of three hotel operations. Their screening process has changed; PADS now has a triage of longer hours where clients can go through a variety of steps to see what the client's next steps will be, or if they will be accepted into the hotel program. With limited space and resources, PADS proposed their new **Diversion 101, 401 & 601** plan.

- 101 Level Diversion
 - Rapport-building
 - Problem-solving
 - Empowering
 - Referring
 - Facilitating discussion

- 401 Level Diversion-
 - Financial resources are accessible to keep people housed or to become quickly re-housed.
 - Skilled case management staff provide support – with enough intensity and length to meet a person's needs.

- 601 Level Diversion
 - Diversion embraced in community and homelessness prevention approach.
 - Integrated with full continuum of services.
 - Financial sustainability.
 - Data driven.

E.g., A client may be requesting housing, but another solution could be obtainable. Perhaps if they receive \$30 for transportation and food services, a friend or family member might let this individual move in with them.

If Human Service Professionals join DuPage PADS in mission for Diversion 101, they will be joining PADS to help find individual's holistic needs.

*Note: CEO, April, predicts that **church overnights will likely not commence until at least the Fall.**

Roundtable (In Chronological Order):

Bridge Communities

www.bridgecommunities.org
(630) 545-0610 ext. 20

Will Moeller:

In addition to DuPage PADS, Bridge Communities also helps individuals and families who are bounding from home to home; or anyone who finds themselves on a slippery slope for housing. If anyone knows of a homeless family or one that is being diverted, please call Will at the extension posted above.

They currently have apartment openings.

Dr. James Shannon, *Peoples Community Church*:

Dr. Shannon mentioned the day program that his church created for homeless members of the community. The program would pick up the attendees in a bus, bring them back to his church, then provide showers, optional Bible studies, TV, food, and more.

Dr. Shannon is **wondering if the team had an idea of when a group like this would be able to recommence/ are there currently any programs where homeless clients can go during the day?**

Amy LaFauce, *Catholic Charities*:

Some of the needs that Catholic Charities is finding, is that **they need more affordable housing for individuals without homes, individuals with poor credit, and individuals with a criminal background.**

HOPE House has been a huge help but cannot solve all their needs.

Ann Marie Bianchi, *Northwestern Medicine*:

Northwestern continues to find ways to support the community - want to be of great help wherever they can be of assistance.

Asma Jarad and Munazza Shahzad , *ICNA Relief*:

They are a Transitional Housing Provider, for homeless women and children. They are focused on a holistic approach to care. Providing counseling, case management, and other resources needed by the client.

Their challenge is that their emergency shelter has not been able to work quickly enough to find resources.

Beatris Gonzalez, *Local Office Administrator, Illinois Department of Human Services, Family Community Resource Center - DuPage/Naperville Office*:

They remain open, but at very limited staff. Less than 10% of their staff is in the office. As a result of this, they have increased their number of caseworkers, which has been working phenomenally.

Clients are urged to call with any needs, to mitigate the number of in-person visits, as their lobby is very small. They return phone calls within a 48-hour period.

Carolyn Wahlskog, *360 Youth Services*:

Along with other organizations, Youth 360 is noticing the immense **need for affordable housing**. They have also noticed the **massive impact that Covid-19 has had on their client's mental health**. Carolyn is having a lot of conversations with parents who can no longer tolerate their child's substance abuse issue; therefore, they are putting their children out of the house.

Using Diversion 101, Youth 360 is trying to communicate with their clients to find other options such as substance abuse treatment, before they essentially throw their child out.

Cecilia Najera, *DuPage Legal Aid*

Cecilia seconds everything Carolyn at Youth 360 said before her. They are seeing many of their clients struggle with mental health issues.

Legal Aid seeks to help low-income and bankrupt clients with various aspects of legal aid (bankruptcy, divorce, guardianship, orders of protection, and parentage). **Since the Covid-19 pandemic, they have seen an increase in domestic violence victims, not knowing where to reach out for shelter, because they know so many of the shelters are already full.**

Gretchen Knowlton, *AgeGuide*

Age Guide is an agency that offers community-based services adults ages 60+, in DuPage and neighboring smaller counties.

They are not only are struggling to find housing, but they are also struggling to help their clients with social isolation. It is on a scale that they have never faced before, as a direct result of Covid-19. While they do have electronic services and groups, not all clients are not comfortable with meeting on a virtual platform.

Hannah Auch, *World Relief*

Aurora, Carol Stream, & Chicago:

World Relief serves immigrants, regardless of their status. They focus on a wide range of variables: those facing homelessness, individuals unable to pay their rent, etc.

It has been helpful for them to hear all the resources provided in this meeting.

Jennifer Coyer, Client Service Director, *DuPage PADS*:
Jen is directly overseeing individuals in the hotels.

Janice F. Guider, *MPH, CHES*

Comments that there is an overwhelming, monumental, task before them. Comments that the needs of individuals who are homeless because of Covid-19 are different than those who have become homeless in the past (e.g., social isolation, medical treatment, etc.).

More Comments from Scott & April:

Scott: More families with children and infants are becoming homeless. Their needs are different (e.g., needing Wi-Fi in hotels for children's online learning). DuPage PADS is no longer just looking at the needs of the head of the household, but also the needs of the family's composition.

April: They are seeing families who have never been homeless before. They would like to connect individuals with mental health services.

Kerry O'Brien, Attorney, *Prairie State Legal Services*:

Since the Pandemic, their operations have continued. The only major difference is that they had to switch offices. Their previous office was walking distance from DuPage PADS. They welcome clients on a regular basis, as well as virtually. Clients are advised to call before entering the office.

***They have a rise in unemployment cases.**

***They have a rise in family law/cases in child support (E.g., because of the pandemic, more children are learning virtually, and more parents need help with childcare).**

Mary Boulos, *Loaves and Fishes Community Services*

They are emergency financial services to Naperville and Naperville Township. They also recently acquired a property in Aurora that will help them reach more clients in need of food and other services.

They provide delivery services in several models (online ordering, curbside pickup, home delivery, and eventually shopping in the pantry once Covid-19 has become more managed).

With tax season coming up, on **Monday February 8th**, they will have **VITA appointments that clients can schedule (available to all Illinois residents)**.

Mary Keating, *Director of Community Services of DuPage County*.

They are deciding where and how the Covid-19 Relief Package will be allocated. **It does not allow for mortgage assistance, only rent assistance.**

Stay Tuned

Shefali Trivedi, *Giving DuPage*

Please post any volunteer needs or support to them.

They recently posted their second ***Giving DuPage Days Event***. This is a multi-charity fundraiser with a budget of \$300,000. It will be hosted virtually through their webinar and any Human Services organization is welcomed to register if they feel this event will be right for them. They currently have 25 charities registered, out of 100 possible slots. **The final day to register is February 19th.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dave Roth, or email Nina Schmidt at, intern@duaqefederation.org