

Regional Homelessness: Coordination Category

The purpose of this document is to offer a range of actions communities can consider as they participate in the regional response to homelessness. Additional refinement to these tactics will include measurable outcomes and the identification of possible funding sources and partners as the action plan is developed, refined with stakeholder input, and offered for action in the fall of 2021.

The document includes both strategies and draft tactics for consideration. The strategies were adopted by the MAG Regional Council on May 26, 2021, with additional support from the MAG Management Committee, the MAG Human Services Community Initiatives Committee, and the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care Board. Local providers and key stakeholders participated in weekly strategy sessions to propose the following draft “tactics” (next steps) as options for implementing each strategy. These tactics will be reviewed at the June 10 Capstone Event and further refined with continued, collaborative stakeholder input.

As the draft tactics are reviewed, please consider the following questions:

- Which of these tactics are underway now?
- Which resonate the most with you?
- How might you help move these tactics forward?
- What are we missing?

Lead agencies are noted as applicable for each strategy when the work is already underway. If the work is not yet underway, lead agencies will be identified as part of the process to develop the action plan.

Strategy/Lead	Potential Tactics
Include People with Lived Experience of Homelessness , Especially People of Color, in Decision-Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide multiple opportunities for the Lived Experience of Homelessness Council to choose to direct, oversee, or collaborate on major projects throughout the region. This includes oversight on the implementation of strategies outlined in this report and leadership on efforts to examine data from homelessness and other systems, to understand and address racial disparities and evaluations of system and program impact.

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<p>Roles Throughout the Homeless System of Care</p> <p>Lead: Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a regional toolkit focused on elevating promising local and national practices for engaging individuals with lived experience, including resources like action steps, sample stipend policies for participation in engagement efforts, recruitment processes, and workforce development.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Host a series of capacity-building workshops that support toolkit implementation as a community practice.• Integrate consumer feedback loops and participation in program design and implementation as criteria for consideration in local funding awards.• Build an annual local training series focused on supporting individuals with lived experience of homelessness interested in participating in advocacy efforts (e.g., Introduction to the Systems Perspective, Public Speaking Skills, Terminology and the Local Landscape). Consider providing a basic needs stipend for individuals who participate in the series.• Coordinate and embed the perspectives of individuals with lived experience across implementation efforts for all 13 other priority strategies.
<p>Continue to Examine Data from Homelessness and Other Systems to Understand and Address Racial Disparities</p> <p>Lead: Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a regionwide commitment statement around data tracking, analysis, and racial equity in partnership with key systems, such as the legal system (including the Court system), behavioral health, and homeless systems. Develop community data collection standards around race and ethnicity.• Establish a process for regularly analyzing racial disparities in the homeless system’s performance alongside disparities in other systems of care, particularly behavioral health and criminal legal systems. Integrate discussion of the analysis as part of existing community leadership processes, such as the Maricopa Region Continuum of Care (MRCoC) Board meetings.• Establish regional accountability measures focused on eliminating the overrepresentation of individuals of color experiencing homelessness. These measures can be used to guide policy-making decisions and funding prioritization across the region. Consider publicizing progress toward these accountability measures with a public dashboard.• Coordinate and embed racial equity data analysis and findings across all 13 other priority strategies.

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<p>Develop and Sustain a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce and Organizations that are Committed to Antiracism</p> <p>Lead: Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with regional stakeholders (such as executive leadership with housing providers, service providers, philanthropy, and key nonprofits) to establish a Statement of Shared Values regarding racial equity, including diversity targets for boards, executive leadership, and key committees (e.g., MRCoC Board). Track progress toward diversity targets on an annual basis.• Implement a regional racial equity training series — focused on topics like implicit bias, cultural humility and sensitivity, and the root causes of homelessness — for leadership, direct service staff, and individuals serving on boards and committees. Consider featuring local organizations that are particularly culturally responsive (e.g., Chicanos por la Causa, Trans Queer Pueblo) and individuals with lived experience to discuss their experience.• Develop a regional series of capacity-building workshops focused on sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce among providers serving individuals experiencing homelessness. Workshop topics could include equitable hiring processes, conducting a Human Resources Audit, and cultivating talent among Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals. Consider positioning this training series within existing local technical assistance efforts (e.g., Vitalyst Health Foundation).• Collect and disseminate information about promising local practices for supporting individuals with lived experience in the workforce (such as valuing lived experience as a qualification, flexible work schedules, inclusive recruitment processes).• Create opportunities for systemwide mentorship to support people of color in staff and leadership roles.• Coordinate the development of a diverse and inclusive workforce and organizations that are committed to antiracism with all priority strategy work, especially as decisions are made about the entities and people who lead and do the work under each strategy (e.g., housing and services providers).
<p>Build and Coordinate Cross-Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen pathways for ensuring that all people experiencing homelessness are enrolled in available resources and benefits, including ensuring each organization in the homeless system of care is connecting clients to the Closed Loop Referral System and AHCCCS.

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Relationships with other Systems

- Expand existing housing-focused programs that leverage **state and county behavioral health resources** for clients with severe mental illness and substance use disorders and deepen integrated housing and behavioral health programming targeted to youth and young adults.
- Expand **partnerships between behavioral health providers and the Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care** to leverage behavioral health resources such as Assertive Community Treatment Teams, housing navigators, and other programs that support obtaining and retaining housing for clients with complex behavioral health conditions.
- Establish **shared messaging and advocacy partnerships** across key systems (e.g., homeless system, behavioral health, education, domestic violence, local governments) to advocate for additional state funding dedicated to increasing deeply affordable housing and underscore the importance of housing in addressing behavioral health issues.
- Build additional **supports for families** with children experiencing and at risk of homelessness including co-located services located on school properties, free childcare programs with extended hours, incentives for families with children with regular school attendance, and messaging that supports families in accessing resources without fear of stigma or separation.
- Deepen **partnerships between programs serving survivors of domestic violence and the homeless system of care** to streamline resources to ensure survivors have access to housing and other resources across the system.
- Coordinate **discharge planning** for individuals exiting institutional settings (such as behavioral health in-patient treatment or legal settings) to prevent exits to homelessness.
- Deepen **regional partnerships** to support people experiencing homelessness with steps to overcome housing barriers, including expungement of criminal records and support to obtain photo IDs, birth certificates, social security cards, and addresses where mail can be received.
- Expand **support for clients navigating behavioral health systems and other benefits**, including offering annual homelessness provider trainings on connecting clients to benefits that engage local stakeholders across systems, fostering understanding of unfamiliar systems, and increasing fluency in partner-system programs and eligibility criteria to improve client care and connections. Consider expanding training to other key partners (e.g., law enforcement) and positioning these trainings within existing technical assistance efforts (e.g., Community Bridges).

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinate the cross-sector coordination strategy with the prevention and diversion and housing flexible funding pool strategies, as well as the employment assistance strategy. |
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