

**Mississippi Balance of State CoC**  
**Southwest Regional Coalition**  
**Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
Tuesday, May 19, 2015  
10:00 a.m.

**TIME AND PLACE**

The Southwest Regional Coalition Meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was held at the WINGS DV Shelter – Conference Room (3167 US 51, McComb MS 39648)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Reginald Glenn, MS CoC Coordinator called the meeting to order.

**PRESENT**

Annie May (WINGS), Jean Spring (WINGS), Constance Cowart, Tommy Morgan, Dawn M., Michel'le Austin (WINGS), Leah Howard (WINGS), Earnestine Varnado (St. Andrews Mission), Cynthia Jackson (CC SSVF), Dorothy Sylvester (CCI), Jessica Howell (WINGS), Reginald Glenn (MS BoS CoC)

**REVIEW OF MINUTES**

*A motion was made by R. Glenn to adopt the minutes for the meeting on April 14, 2015. The motion was seconded.*

**ADOPTION / REVIEW OF AGENDA**

*Attendee adopted a motion to accept the agenda. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. All in favor by acclamation.*

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**I. Agency Report: WINGS**

- a. **WINGS is a domestic violence program for women and children who are victims of domestic violence.** They provide services for the counties of Pike, Amite, Lawrence, Lincoln, Franklin, Walthall and Marion County or for any person(s) immediately affected by domestic violence, in need of shelter and safe haven.
- b. **Mission:** Is to empower the survivors of Domestic Violence to make informed choices, which lead to self sufficient, independent and violence-free lives through the provision of safe shelter and supportive services including counseling, education and advocacy.
- c. **Program Services**
  - i. **Crisis Hotline**
    - 1. 24 Hour assistance
  - ii. **Emergency Shelter**
    - 1. Residential and nonresidential housing
      - a. **Emergency Shelter – Columbia, MS**
        - i. 7 Bedrooms each with in suite Bathrooms.
        - ii. Separate corridors for the resident coordinator.
        - iii. In-house laundry room
        - iv. Living room area
        - v. Kid's Play room
        - vi. Large Kitchen equipped with 2 refrigerators and a deep freezer
        - vii. Dining area

viii. Playground for the children

**b. Emergency Shelter – McComb, MS**

i. 5 Bedrooms

ii. 3 Bathrooms

iii. Fully Equipped Kitchen

iv. Dining area

v. Living Room

vi. Outside Playground

vii. Conference Room

**iii. Case Management**

1. Individualized plan for each client

2. Rapid Rehousing/Homeless Prevention

**iv. Counseling**

1. Group and Individual

2. Serenity Outpatient

**v. Victims Advocacy**

1. Legal Services, law enforcement, social service

**vi. Education**

1. Job Training and Job Placement

2. CWJC (Christian Women’s Job Core)

**vii. Children’s Program**

1. Counseling, Tutoring

**viii. Information and referrals**

1. To other community Programs

**d. Meeting Their Needs** - Outside from counseling, we offer to help with the needs of our clients. Our 2 thrift stores, McComb and Columbia provide clothing, furniture, linens, and other personal needs for our clients. We also use the profits from the stores to help maintain our facilities and staff.

**e. Helping the Community: Rapid Rehousing and Homelessness Prevention** - At our office locations we provide housing assistance for qualifying clients. Rapid rehousing is a program for homeless individuals that need assistance with getting a home. Homeless prevention is a program for qualifying clients that are already in housing but are facing evictions.

**f. FOR INFORMATION**

WINGS Columbia office: 601-633-5078  
309 Church Street  
Columbia, MS 39429

WINGS Columbia hotline: 601-736-5454

WINGS Boutique - Columbia: 601-736-9723

WINGS McComb office: 601-684-9344  
PO Box 2278  
McComb, MS 39648

WINGS McComb hotline: 601-684-9111

WINGS Boutique - McComb: 601-680-4402

WINGS Petal office: 601-336-4261

**II. Agency Reports – We want to know more about what your agencies do!**

**a. We want all agencies to be able to give a brief report concerning the programs and initiatives:**

i. 5 -10 Presentation during coalition meeting

ii. PowerPoint capability provided if needed

iii. Each agency must volunteer to present a month

- iv. VOLUNTEERS slated for NEXT MEETINGS
  - 1. July 2015 – St. Andrew’s Mission
  - 2. August 2015 – N/A
  - 3. September 2015 – N/A
  - 4. October 2015 – N/A

**III. PIT Count 2015: Revision of Results**

**a. CoC Total (Unsheltered & Sheltered Persons)**

- i. January 2014: 954
- ii. January 2015: 809
- iii. Difference: -145

**b. PIT Totals (By County)**

**i. To see a map of county breakdown:**

[https://mteh.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/2015\\_pitcountbycounty\\_coalition\\_map\\_web.pdf](https://mteh.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/2015_pitcountbycounty_coalition_map_web.pdf)

**ii. PIT Count: Results – Numbers Breakdown**

Coalitions	Sheltered Persons	Unsheltered Persons	Total Persons
Central	213	53	<b>266</b>
Delta	98	84	<b>182</b>
Northeast	99	27	<b>126</b>
North Central	15	8	<b>23</b>
Pine Belt	121	67	<b>188</b>
Southwest	20	4	<b>24</b>

**iii. Notes**

- 1. A more thorough report will be provided for each Coalition in our next meeting (July 2015).
- 2. There will be a CoC-wide PIT Presentation provided at our next Quarterly Membership Meeting (Annual Meeting) on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**I. Coordinated Entry Process Development**

- a. An effective coordinated entry process is a critical component to any community’s efforts to meet the goals of Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. HUD’s primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present.
- b. To assist in development of the Coordinated Entry, HUD has released the [Coordinated Entry Brief](#)
- c. We will continue the discussing a coordinated entry process in the Central Coalition in later meetings.

**II. Diversion (Adapted From: “Diversion 101” | Written by Iain De Jong, President & CEO, OrgCode Consulting, Inc.)**

**a. Coordinated Entry: Diversion**

- i. Diversion occurs at the “Front Door” of the Homeless Services System before people are admitted to shelter.
- ii. Diversion helps connect people with alternatives to shelter, exhausting all other supports first.

- iii. Ultimately, diversion is a homeless prevention strategy.
  - iv. The goal of diversion is to find a housing solution—even if temporary—that stabilizes their housing without shelter access.
  - v. Diversion is the 1st step in progressive engagement...the “lightest touch” possible so that if an individual/family can end their own homelessness without considerable assistance that doing so happens
  - vi. Diversion exists because the majority of people that use shelters exit within a short period of time, suggesting they may not have needed shelter at all in the first place
  - vii. To be clear, diversion is not about turning people away from service.  
DIVERSION IS A SERVICE.
- b. Prescreening & Assessment**
- i. Diversion Assessment happens when an individual or family seeks admission to shelter.
  - ii. Diversion assessment must be consistent across service providers.
  - iii. Shelter admissions occur only after diversion efforts have been exhausted.
  - iv. Housing triage and support assessments occur only after an individual/family has been unable to get themselves out of shelter.
- c. Candidates for Diversion**
- i. Diversion should be attempted with people seeking shelter.
  - ii. There is no evidence to suggest that a particular group or subpopulation will not benefit from diversion.
- d. Diversion Services**
- i. Family Reunification/Accessing help within family
  - ii. Landlord Mediation
  - iii. Access to Housing listings
  - iv. Assistance accessing other community-based supports and resources
  - v. Navigating other systems of supports
  - vi. Very short-term case management
  - vii. Very shallow assistance (e.g. grocery gift cards)
- e. Why Advocate for Diversion?**
- i. More efficient use of available resources by tailoring the amount of support provided to what people actually need to end their homelessness or avoid homelessness
  - ii. Enables people to access direct interventions to help them resolve their housing issues as quickly as possible while avoiding shelter environment
  - iii. Evidence from shelter diversion programs in N. America and UK suggest between 30-50% of people seeking emergency shelter can be diverted.
- f. Diversion and Financial Assistance**
- i. Opportunity only for those households that most clearly resemble existing chronically homeless population
  - ii. Need to differentiate between one-time assistance and access to ongoing assistance. Ties into mainstream benefits are critical.
- g. Diversion Steps**
- i. **Step One** - Explanation of the diversion conversation.
    - 1. “Our goal is to learn more about your specific housing situation right now and what you need so that together we can identify the best possible way to get you a place to stay tonight and to find safe, permanent housing as quickly as possible. That might mean staying in shelter tonight, but we

want to avoid that if at possible. We will work with you to find a more stable alternative if we can.”

**ii. Step Two**

1. Why are you seeking emergency shelter today?
2. What are all the other things you tried or thought about trying before you sought shelter today?

**iii. Step Three**

1. Where did you stay last night?
2. If staying with someone else, what is the relationship between them and you?
3. How long have you been staying there?
4. Where did you stay before that?
5. Would it be safe for you to stay there again for the next 3-7 days?
6. (If couple and/or household with children under 18) Would your whole household be able to return and stay there safely for the next 3-7 days?
7. If indicated the place where they stayed is unsafe, ask why it is unsafe.
8. If cannot stay there safely, or if were staying in a place unfit for human habitation, move to Step Six.

**iv. Step Four**

1. What is the primary/main reason that you had to leave the place where you stayed last night?
2. Are there additional reasons why you can't stay there any longer?

**v. Step Five**

1. Do you think that you/you and/or family could stay there again temporarily if we provide you with some help or referrals to find permanent housing or connect with other services?
2. If no, why not? What would it take to be able to stay there temporarily?

**vi. Step Six**

1. If no, is there somewhere else where you/you and your family could stay temporarily if we provide you with some help or referrals to find permanent housing and access other supports? For example, what about other family members? Friends? Co-workers?
2. What would it take for you to be able to stay there temporarily?

**vii. Step Seven**

1. What is making it hard for you to find permanent housing for you/your family—or connect to other resources that could help you do that?
2. For example, do you or does anyone in your family have special needs or a medical condition? How does this affect your housing situation?
3. Do you owe money for rent or utilities?
4. Are you new to the area?

**viii. Step Eight**

1. What resources do you have right now could help you and your family find a place to stay temporarily or find permanent housing?
2. For example, are you getting any help from other family members or friends?
3. Do you have income?
4. What are the sources?
5. Are you involved with any other services right now?

**ix. Step Nine**

1. If admitted to shelter, there is still an expectation that you will be attempting to secure permanent housing for you and your family.

2. What is your plan at this point for securing housing if you are admitted to shelter?

### III. HUD Exchange Notes of the Month

#### a. SNAPs in Focus: Family Homelessness, Part I

- i. Between 2013 and 2014, CoCs reported a **4.7 percent decline** in the number of households with children experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. This is important progress – especially the **20.5 percent reduction** in the number of households with children living in unsheltered situations.
- ii. Right now, about 40 percent of CoC Program funds serve households with children, a number that is roughly proportional to the number of people in families in the PIT Count.
- iii. With this in mind HUD has released some key steps that all communities can take to ensure that as a nation we end family homelessness by 2020.
- iv. Download via [https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/SNAPS-In-Focus-Family-Homelessness-Part-I.pdf?utm\\_source=HUD+Exchange+Mailing+List&utm\\_campaign=d7933515e3-SNAPS+In+Focus%3A+Family+Homelessness+Part+I&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_f32b935a5f-d7933515e3-19263849](https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/SNAPS-In-Focus-Family-Homelessness-Part-I.pdf?utm_source=HUD+Exchange+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=d7933515e3-SNAPS+In+Focus%3A+Family+Homelessness+Part+I&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f32b935a5f-d7933515e3-19263849)

#### b. Additional Notes

- i. To join the HUD Exchange Email List, visit: <https://www.hudexchange.info/maillinglist/>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### I. Vote: CoC Governing Council

- a. The MS Balance of State Continuum of Care will be voting for a Governing Council that consists of representation from a total of 15 chartered voting members who will be the primary decision-making group of the CoC membership. Agencies will also voting be for the CoC Executive Committee consisting of an Executive Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer.
- b. Every person designated with voting authorization will receive the email containing the online ballot link. If not, email [rglenn@muteh.org](mailto:rglenn@muteh.org).

### II. MS Balance of State Quarterly Membership Meeting

- a. CoC Annual Meeting
- b. Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> – Location: To Be Determined

### III. Balance of State Membership Dues (7/2015 - 6/2016)

- a. The BoS will be issuing invoices concerning 2015-2016 Membership Dues. **Membership Dues are now set at \$10 annually for individual and agency members of the BoS.** This **MINIMAL FEE** is set to encourage participation from all subpopulations that have an interest in the work of the CoC.
- b. Anyone who attends meetings of the CoC (including Regional Coalition meetings) can complete the membership application and pay membership dues. See the CoC Governance Charter for more details.
- c. **If you would like to join the CoC Membership and pay dues, contact the CoC Coordinator via email: [rglenn@muteh.org](mailto:rglenn@muteh.org).**

### IV. Next Central Coalition Meeting: July 2015 @ a location TBD

### V. MPR Agency Grade Rankings

- a. **Published on [muteh.org](http://muteh.org/#/hmis/mpr-trends) monthly. See Rankings here: <http://muteh.org/#/hmis/mpr-trends>**

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.