STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
136 State Capitol Building
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303) 866 - 2471
(303) 866 - 2003 fax

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

B 004 09

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Continuing and Reorganizing the Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order continuing and reorganizing the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness as the Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness.

I. Background, Need, and Purpose

On August 28, 2006, Colorado conducted a summer point-in-time count of homeless people statewide. Results from a subsequent winter count will be released soon. In those counts, nonprofit agencies and volunteers fanned out to survey homeless people and families in shelters, campgrounds, soup kitchens, transitional housing facilities and other places across the state frequented by the homeless. According to the February 2007 final report of the summer count, as many as 16,203 people were homeless on the single night of August 28. According to analysis of other point-in-time surveys, it is almost certainly an undercount.

The summer survey demonstrated that homelessness is prevalent throughout Colorado. It is not solely an urban concern. Homelessness is real, though often underestimated, in the rural parts of our state. Only ten of Colorado's sixty-four counties reported no homeless people. According to the summer point-in-time count, approximately 62% of the homeless are parents and children. Fully one-third of all the homeless people identified in the count were homeless children or teens.

The count also found that Coloradans from minority racial and ethnic groups were over-represented among the homeless. In addition, it showed that homelessness is not confined to the very poor. Working people and middle-class families also found themselves homeless.

Homelessness is traumatic for those who suffer it. It may mean families cannot stay together. It may be caused by and it may exacerbate significant health problems. It may seriously scar children in both their physical and mental health. It will almost certainly impede their academic and social progress.

For a caring community, homelessness creates both moral challenges and significant economic burdens, as people who lack permanent shelter and the ability to access regular support ricochet through separate but always expensive public and charitable systems – law enforcement, hospital emergency rooms, mental health programs, substance abuse treatment programs, shelters, and emergency housing.

Colorado needs a smarter, more humane, more effective approach to the issues of homelessness. At the very least, it needs to work on assuring that public resources, public programs and public efforts work together to confront, and to the extent possible, end homelessness.

The purpose of this Executive Order is to reaffirm that we must give priority to developing consolidated, coordinated, and cooperative approaches to the issues of homelessness. This Executive Order reorganizes the membership of Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness (the "Council"), which was renamed and reestablished by two years ago by B 004 07.

II. Mission

The objective of the Council is to make cross-agency and community cooperation the norm in responding to homelessness and to use a more efficient and supportive approach in creating and implementing evidence-based plans to address homelessness and, to the extent possible, end it. To that end, the Council will work to:

- Streamline the administration of programs across agencies and jurisdictions to reduce duplication, consolidate availability of services and ease clients' ability to access services;
- Streamline funding of homelessness programs to leverage existing resources more effectively;
- Facilitate tighter partnerships and linkages among service providers;
- Integrate state policy and coordinate relationships among all levels of public and non-profit agencies working to address homelessness;
- Increase access by homeless people and families to mainstream supportive services and resources for which they may be eligible;
- Solicit input and suggestions from faith communities, advocacy organizations, the business community, the concerned public and other governmental agencies on the most effective strategies to address homelessness;

- Assemble accurate data upon which strategies and policies should be based and against which outcomes can be measured;
- Identify best practices from other states in combating homelessness;
- Educate other involved agencies, the public and the legislature about the causes and consequences of homelessness; and
- Create comprehensive plans and develop effective collaborative strategies to prevent and end homelessness in Colorado.

The Council shall serve as the advisory body to the Governor on homeless issues and shall recommend such policies and programs as it believes will assist in preventing and, to the extent possible, ending homelessness in Colorado.

III. Membership

A. The Council shall consist of the following members:

1. The Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Human Services, or his or her designee;
2. The Director of the Division of Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs in the Colorado Department of Human Services, or his or her designee;
3. The Director of the Division of Disability Determination Services in the Colorado Department of Human Services, or his or her designee;
4. The Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections, or his or her designee;
5. The Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, or his or her designee;
6. The Colorado Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee;
7. The Executive Director of the Department of Local Affairs or the Director of Division of Housing in the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, or his or her designee;

8. The Director of the Division of Employment and Training in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, or his or her designee;

9. Two members of the Colorado Senate and two members of the Colorado House of Representatives, appointed by the Governor in consultation with the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives;

10. Three representatives of county Departments of Social Services, one representing metropolitan Denver, one representing other urban areas of the state, and one representing rural counties, all appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;

11. Three representatives of non-profit providers or faith-based communities involved in housing or services to the homeless, all appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;

12. Two representatives of the philanthropic community active in homelessness issues, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;

13. One homeless or formerly homeless individual, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;

14. One representative of the Governor's Office of Policy and Initiatives, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;

15. One representative from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor; and

16. Up to three additional members, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor.

B. The Governor shall appoint a chair and vice-chair from among the members of the Council.

C. The Council may establish working groups, task forces or other structures from within its membership or with outside members to assist it in its work, perhaps by focusing on topics such as veterans' or migrants' issues,

prisoner reintegration, job access, or domestic violence in relationship to homelessness.

D. The Council shall meet regularly at the direction of its chair. Working groups, task forces or other structures established by the Council shall determine their own meeting schedules.

IV. Staffing and Resources

Each state agency shall cooperate with the Council and furnish it with such information and assistance as is necessary or useful to further the purposes of this Executive Order and the Council. The Division of Housing in the Department of Local Affairs and the Division of Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs in Department of Human Services shall share administrative duties for the Council between them.

The Council shall have the power to accept money and in-kind contributions from private entities and persons only to the extent such donations are necessary to cover its expenses. Any money contributed to the Council shall be directed to the Office of the Governor and deposited with the Treasurer of the State of Colorado in an account within the Office of the Governor's budget. Members of the Council shall serve without compensation, but may, at the discretion of the chair and approval of the Office of the Governor, be reimbursed for any actual expenses incurred.

V. Directive and Duration

The Colorado Community and Interagency Council on Homelessness is hereby continued and reorganized. This Executive supercedes and replaces Executive Orders D 017 03 and B 004 07. This Executive Order shall remain in force until modified or rescinded by a future Executive Order of the Governor.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado this twenty-fourth day of August, 2009.

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor