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Respondent
33 Anonymous

65:03
Time to complete

About the Supplemental Questions for the Council on Homelessness Membership Application

The following questions will be used by the Council on Homelessness' Nominating Panel to identify diverse applicants that can contribute unique expertise and perspectives to the Council. Answers to these questions will be evaluated in relation to the experience and qualifications desired for available member seats. Please carefully consider how your personal experiences, professional experiences, and values will contribute meaningfully to the Council on Homelessness' and the Contra Costa County Homeless Continuum of Care's efforts to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Please note, there are two required elements of the Council on Homelessness application, these "Supplemental Questions" and the County Application. Once you submit this application, you will get an response that will include the link to the County Application. You must submit the County application by 5 pm Friday, September 30, 2022 to be considered.

REMINDER: To be considered for the Council, you must complete BOTH components of the application.

Please note, this form can be filled out as a Word document and emailed to Council on Homelessness CChomelesscouncil@cchealth.org by the deadline or submitted via this online form.

Supplemental Questions

1. Which vacant Council on Homelessness seat are you applying for? *

- ☐ Affordable Housing Developer Representative
- ☐ Behavioral Health Representative
- ☐ City Government Representative
- ☐ Educational and Vocational Services Representative
- ☐ Emergency Solutions Grant Representative
- ☐ Health Care Representative
- ☒ Homeless Service Provider Representative
- ☐ Lived Experience Advisor (must have lived experience of homelessness)
- ☐ Veterans Administration Representative
- ☐ Workforce Development Representative
- ☐ Youth Representative (must be between the ages of 18-24)

More options for Responses

2. **Please briefly describe any special skills, relationships, or resources you would bring to this specific seat. If applicable, please describe any experiences that demonstrate a past professional or personal commitment to addressing and alleviating homelessness within the topic or field related to the vacant seat. (400 word maximum) ***

I've been in the field of homeless services for over a decade and a half, working in the Bay Area and specifically in Contra Costa County since 2017 for two different homeless services organizations. Bay Area Community Services, my current employer, provides comprehensive services across the housing spectrum (from prevention and CE services to permanent supportive housing) in 6 counties, and currently operates a countywide ESG-funded Rapid Rehousing program and the largest interim housing program serving over 200 residents a night in Contra Costa. As our Chief Strategy and Impact Officer, my role is to work with our funders, policy makers, government, and fellow providers to develop and implement new and innovative services models and partnerships that support overall systemic change and increased impacts within our CoCs. With respect to Contra Costa County, and a potential role on the Council representing the homeless services provider community, I believe that I, as a representative of BACS and the hundreds of individuals we serve every day across the county, would offer a unique vantage and set of skills to support the community through this critical time of growth, focus on system improvement, and development of more a performance-based approach to contracting. As a service worker who has worked at every level of the work, from outreach and case management through administrative leadership, with deep experience in Contra Costa County as well as 5 other Bay Area counties, I believe I can bring a both deeply local and more panoramic view of the service sector more generally. I have worked to design new homeless programs serving thousands of unhoused residents from the ground up, partnered to set, analyze and change then CoC policies, and participated in cross-sector working groups to reform Coordinated Entry and develop other new system improvement and increased accountability measures. It would bring an honor to support the Council and serve in this capacity.

3. **Please identify your personal connections with homelessness by selecting one of the options below: ***

- ☐ I am a person currently experiencing homelessness and living in a shelter or location not meant for human habitation (e.g., in a tent).
- ☐ I am a person who experienced homelessness within the past 5 years but is currently housed.
- ☐ I am a person who experienced homelessness more than 5 years ago but is currently housed.
- ☐ I am a family member of someone who has experienced homelessness
- ☒ I am none of the above but still invested in addressing homelessness in Contra Costa County.
- ☐ I would prefer not to respond

4. **Individuals experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa County come from diverse backgrounds (in terms of abilities, ages, sexual and gender identities, immigration statuses, and racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds). Please describe your approach and experience working with and in diverse populations. (400 words maximum) ***

Homelessness is fundamentally and inextricably linked to other forms of social injustice, including systemic racism, classism, ableism, gender violence, and queer and transphobia, among others. It is, as I consider it, a particular shape that all of these forms of violence and oppression against historically minoritized communities often takes. Given this -- that we know that the fundamental drivers of homelessness are part and parcel with these other social evils -- I believe that addressing homelessness must be framed as a social justice issue, of recognizing and rectifying historical and present injustices in our housing and social systems.

I have long worked in spaces that are disproportionately serving BIPOC communities, beginning in my work on skid row in downtown Los Angeles years ago, where over 78% of those experiencing homelessness on the streets at that time were Black. As a white cis-hetero male, I quite literally represent the whole collection of social forces that have in many ways created the unjust world in which we live. Carrying these markers, bearing the deep biases and blind spots inherent to the intersections that make up my own identity and social position, means I need to continually put myself in a place of learning and humility, in a place of using my voice and power to give power away, to uplift other voices in their own words, and take my queues and directives from those within communities so often left out, but most deeply impacted, by these systems. Through my experience in this field, though I am always still learning, always still being called in and disabused of my biases and blind spots, I have learned just how much I do not and cannot know from my own experience.

Given all of this, my "approach," as it were, to the direct work of providing homeless services and working within a system of care aimed at ending homelessness, is one of mutual empowerment -- my job being to support the empowerment and centering of the voices of those with lived experience, from BIPOC, queer, and other minoritized communities, by using my privilege and experience to support their ends, their understanding of what our systems need, and their decision making around how best we can fight to end the suffering within unhoused communities.

5. **Please describe your affiliations with organizations or agencies who serve various homeless subpopulations such as: persons with chronic substance abuse issues, persons with serious mental illness, persons experiencing chronic homelessness, persons with HIV/AIDS, veterans, families with children, unaccompanied youth, victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and seniors. (400 word maximum) ***

I work for Bay Area Community Services, which provides services across 50 contracts and 6 counties to all of the subpopulations listed above, most prominently chronically homeless adults with severe persistent mental illness. We also operate a collection of Transition Age Youth mental health and homelessness programs. As the former Director of Programs overseeing all of the housing and homeless services programs for the agency, I know work with all of our division leadership to help ensure all of our programs are meeting their goals and developing and executing service models that are impactful to the communities we serve.

In addition to this role, since 2018 I have served on the Contra Costa Health Care for the Homeless board, currently as the Vice Chair, supporting those wonderful teams in their providing medical and other health care services to unhoused residents throughout the county.

6. **If applicable, please describe your affiliations with any government and community-based organizations that are not currently represented on the Council on Homelessness. For a full list of current Council on Homelessness members, please see here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/council.php#Members> . (400 word maximum) ***

Bay Area Community Services, a long-standing homelessness and behavioral health services provider in Contra Costa County, is not currently represented (and has not to date been represented) on the Council on Homelessness.

7. **Using your personal experiences and/or professional experiences, please describe up to three (3) ways you would encourage the Contra Costa Continuum of Care to address or set priorities for addressing homelessness. Feel free to draw from current events and other sources of information. (400 word maximum) ***

- 1) Drive the wonderful work on analyzing racial equity within the CoC forward toward concretely deliverable transformations to our system, including the development of program models and services that specifically work to support individuals who exit homelessness and face greater systemic barriers thereafter (BIPOC households, etc.) with targeted resources to support their continued housing stability as minoritized communities continue to show disproportionately higher rates of return to homelessness as well, no doubt due in part to these systemic forces.
- 2.) Endeavor as a Council to re-design the Coordinated Entry process, and Continuum of Care arrangement more generally with an eye toward expanding services across the spectrum, moving away from a "tool centric" and score-based approach to seeing and serving households, and one which provides a deeper emphasis on prevention, shallow subsidies, and other interventions beyond the historical (and limited) resources that come into the county through funding for RRH and PSH.
- 3) Aggressively pursue the once in a generation levels of State funding sources such as Homekey and the Community Care Expansion program to quickly draw down capital to bring new housing and services into the Continuum, as HUD-funding and the interventions it covers, will never unto itself be enough to stem the tide as the protracted, long-term impacts of the pandemic on homelessness surely rise.

8. **Please state how many Continuum of Care (CoC), Council on Homelessness (CoH), or Youth Advisory Council (YAC) meetings you have previously attended. ***

- ☒ 3 or more meetings
- ☐ 1-2 meetings
- ☐ 0 meetings

9. **Please provide up to three (3) recommendations or thoughts you had from CoC, CoH, or YAC meetings. If you have not attended a CoC, CoH, or YAC meetings, please briefly describe any recent relevant participation in similar meetings and your recommendations or thoughts. (400 word maximum) ***

- 1) Part of why I want to be on the CoH is that it clearly is designed and meetings are planned and executed with a real intentionality and preparation that shows. It is not just a formality for the CoC, but a committed and consequential governing body. H3's and Homebase's work to prepare so diligently inspires me to show up and want to contribute!
- 2) I love how robust the participation is. It is a comparatively larger council than in some other communities and a lot of public stakeholders attend. My hope is that the governance structure can continue developing a cadence and process that helps the Council members and the various working groups to really invest in the decision making and crafting of CoC decisions vs just approving them, which is, as always, a real tension and difficulty often, given how busy everyone is. I've been excited to see that the CoH really does do more than just show up and rubber stamp whatever is agendaized. This is different and refreshing in comparison to some other communities!

10. The Council is committed to the Housing First approach (meaning no barriers or requirements as a prerequisite to housing, including sobriety, religious affiliation, or other structure not required for housing) and has established this Guiding Principle: *Homelessness is first a housing issue, and necessary supports and services are critical to help people remain housed. Our system must be nimble and flexible enough to respond through the shared responsibility, accountability, and transparency of the community.* **Are you in support of the Housing First approach and Guiding Principle described above? ***

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

11. **Please identify the level of commitment you can provide to the Council on Homelessness by selecting one of the options below: ***

- ☒ I can be available for **2 or more meetings per month**, including the standing monthly COH meeting the first Thursday of every month from 1pm to 3pm.
- ☐ I can be available **only for the standing monthly COH meeting** the first Thursday of every month from 1pm to 3pm.
- ☐ I am **not available** for the standing monthly COH meeting, **but can make other meetings 2 or more times** per month.
- ☐ I am **not available** for the standing monthly COH meeting and **may not be able to make other meetings** more than once per month.

12. Which of the following geographic areas do you spend the most time in? *

- ☐ Far East Contra Costa County (for example: Discovery Bay, Bethel Island)
- ☒ East Contra Costa County (for example: Bay Point, Pittsburg, Antioch, Brentwood)
- ☐ Central Contra Costa County (for example: Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek)
- ☐ South Contra Costa County (for example: Alamo, Danville, San Ramon)
- ☐ West Contra Costa County (for example: El Cerrito, San Pablo, Richmond, Pinole, Hercules, Rodeo)
- ☐ I spend an equal amount of time in all five geographic areas listed above.

Demographic Information (Optional)

The Council aims to engage as broad a representation as possible of abilities, ages, sexual and gender identities, immigration statuses, and racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, and geographical representation within the County. Responses to the following questions are optional and will be considered in aggregate to ensure that we have recruited a diverse pool of applicants. The Nominating Panel will not review applicants’ responses to the following questions.

13. What are your pronouns (for example: she/him/they/ze, etc.)?

14. What is your gender identity (for example: female/male/transgender/non-binary/gender non-conforming, etc.)?

15. What is your sexual orientation (for example: bisexual/straight/gay/pansexual, etc.)?

16. What best describes your age? (Check one)

- ☐

Transition aged youth (18-24)
- ☐

Adult (25-61)
- ☐

Older adult (62+)

17. What best describes your race/ethnicity? (Pick as many as apply)

- African American/Black
- Arab/Middle Eastern
- Asian
- Caucasian/White
- East Indian/South Asian
- Latine/a/o/x
- Mixed Race
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- South/Central American
- Choose not to answer
- Other

18. Is there any other information you would like to share, including anything that would help us understand how you would contribute to the diverse representation of people and experiences on the Council (for example: lived experience of homelessness, abilities, immigration status, ethnic background, or cultural background)?

Contact Information

19. Name *

Jonathan Russell

20. Email *

21. Phone Number

Application Form

Profile

Jonathan

First Name

B

Middle Initial

Russell

Last Name

Home Address

Suite or Apt

Emeryville

City

CA

State

Postal Code

Primary Phone

Email Address

[District Locator Tool](#)

Resident of Supervisorial District:

☒ N/A - Out of County

Bay Area Community Services

Employer

Chief Strategy and Impact
Officer

Job Title

Length of Employment

3 years

Do you work in Contra Costa County?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, in which District do you work?

1, 3, and 5 primarily (county-wide programming)

How long have you lived or worked in Contra Costa County?

Since 2017

Are you a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Board and Interest

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Contra Costa Council on Homelessness: Submitted

Seat Name

• Homeless Service Provider Representative

Have you ever attended a meeting of the advisory board for which you are applying?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, how many meetings have you attended?

15+

Education

Select the option that applies to your high school education *

☒ High School Diploma

College/ University A

Name of College Attended

Biola University

Degree Type / Course of Study / Major

Bachelors / Philosophy

Degree Awarded?

☒ Yes ☐ No

College/ University B

Name of College Attended

Fuller Seminary

Degree Type / Course of Study / Major

Masters / Religion

Degree Awarded?

☒ Yes ☐ No

College/ University C

Name of College Attended

Claremont Graduate University

Degree Type / Course of Study / Major

PhD (ABD) / Social Theory

Degree Awarded?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Other Trainings & Occupational Licenses

Other Training A

Certificate Awarded for Training?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Other Training B

Certificate Awarded for Training?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Occupational Licenses Completed:

Qualifications and Volunteer Experience

Please explain why you would like to serve on this particular board, committee, or commission.

I would like to serve on the Council in order share additional provider level experience from both the homeless services and the behavioral health services provider perspectives, both of which BACS has experience providing in Contra Costa County. With experience working in Contra Costa County since 2017 (from 2017-2019 working at a different, Richmond-based homeless services provider), and years of experience in social services both in the Los Angeles and greater Bay Area, my hope is that I would help bring both additional local and more regional perspective to the Council.

Describe your qualifications for this appointment. (NOTE: you may also include a copy of your resume with this application)

Resume attached.

[Upload a Resume](#)

Would you like to be considered for appointment to other advisory bodies for which you may be qualified?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Jonathan B Russell

Do you have any obligations that might affect your attendance at scheduled meetings?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please explain:

Are you currently or have you ever been appointed to a Contra Costa County advisory board?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please list the Contra Costa County advisory board(s) on which you are currently serving:

Healthcare for the Homeless Co-Applicant Governing Board

If Yes, please also list the Contra Costa County advisory board(s) on which you have previously served:

List any volunteer or community experience, including any advisory boards on which you have served.

Conflict of Interest and Certification

Do you have a familial or financial relationship with a member of the Board of Supervisors? (Please refer to the relationships listed under the "Important Information" section below or Resolution No. 2021/234)

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, please identify the nature of the relationship:

Do you have any financial relationships with the County such as grants, contracts, or other economic relationships?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please identify the nature of the relationship:

ESG Rapid Rehousing contract with H3; Delta Landing Interim Housing Program contract with H3; Don Brown Shelter contract with Contra Costa County Behavioral Health

Please Agree with the Following Statement

I CERTIFY that the statements made by me in this application are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and are made in good faith. I acknowledge and undersand that all information in this application is publicly accessible. I understand that misstatements and/or omissions of material fact may cause forfeiture of my rights to serve on a board, committee, or commission in Contra Costa County.

☒ I Agree

Important Information

1. This application and any attachments you provide to it is a public document and is subject to the California Public Records Act (CA Government Code §6250-6270).
2. All members of appointed bodies are required to take the advisory body training provided by Contra Costa County.
3. Members of certain boards, commissions, and committees may be required to: (1) file a Statement of Economic Interest Form also known as a Form 700, and (2) complete the State Ethics Training Course as required by AB 1234.
4. Meetings may be held in various locations and some locations may not be accessible by public transportation.
5. Meeting dates and times are subject to change and may occur up to two (2) days per month.
6. Some boards, committees, or commissions may assign members to subcommittees or work groups which may require an additional commitment of time.
7. As indicated in Board Resolution 2021/234, a person will not be eligible for appointment if he/she is related to a Board of Supervisors' member in any of the following relationships:
 - (1) Mother, father, son, and daughter;
 - (2) Brother, sister, grandmother, grandfather, grandson, and granddaughter;
 - (3) Husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, stepson, and stepdaughter;
 - (4) Registered domestic partner, pursuant to California Family Code section 297;
 - (5) The relatives, as defined in 1 and 2 above, for a registered domestic partner;
 - (6) Any person with whom a Board Member shares a financial interest as defined in the Political Reform Act (Gov't Code §87103, Financial Interest), such as a business partner or business associate.