Homeless Youth Program Plan

Fiscal Year \_2021

Updated 1/15/21

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| **Region:** | **Three County (Berkshire, Franklin & Hampshire Counties)** |

1. **Grantee:**

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| **Grantee Name:** | **Community Action Pioneer Valley** |
| **Grantee**  **Organizational Mission:** | *Community Action Pioneer Valley assists people who have low incomes to achieve economic stability and security and works to build communities in which all people have the opportunity to thrive.* |
| **Program Director Name:** | **Lisa Goldsmith** |
| **Program Director Title:** | **Homeless Youth Services Manager** |
| **Address**: | **393 Main Street** |
| **City, State, Zip**: | **Greenfield, MA 01301** |
| **Phone Number**: | **(413) 376-1117** |
| **Email**: | **lgoldsmith@communityaction.us** |

1. **Subgrantees** (*Add Subgrantees as needed)***:**

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| **Subgrantee Organization Name:** | **DIAL/SELF Youth and Community Services** |
| **Subgrantee Organization Mission:** | *DIAL/SELF helps young people become independent by connecting them with housing, employment, education and civic opportunities through youth-driven services that build on their strengths and provide enhanced community support and collaboration.* |
| **Homeless Youth Program Contact Name:** | **Philip Ringwood** |
| **Title:** | **Executive Director** |
| **Address**: | **196 Federal Street** |
| **City, State, Zip**: | **Greenfield, MA 01301** |
| **Phone Number**: | **413-774-7054** |
| **Email**: | [**pringwood@dialself.org**](mailto:pringwood@dialself.org) |

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| **Subgrantee Organization Name:** | **Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority** |
| **Subgrantee Organization Mission:** | *The mission of BCRHA is to develop opportunities that will assist Berkshire County households in securing the skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to achieve self-sufficiency and household stability by: - Developing and implementing a continuum of services and programs that address the underlying causes of household instability and homelessness. - Assisting households to develop strategies to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency. - Collaborating with other human service providers, including grass roots organizations and faith-based organizations, to alleviate the causes and effects of household, housing, and community instability.* |
| **Homeless Youth Program Contact Name:** | **Brad Gordon** |
| **Title:** | **Executive Director** |
| **Address**: | **1 Fenn Street** |
| **City, State, Zip**: | **Pittsfield, MA 01201** |
| **Phone Number**: | **413-443-4816** |
| **Email**: | [**bradg@bcrha.com**](mailto:bradg@bcrha.com) |

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| **Subgrantee Organization Name:** | **Louison House** |
| **Subgrantee Organization Mission:** | *To meet the needs of our neighbors experiencing homelessness and housing instability. We do this through providing affordable safe housing programs and by providing prevention of homelessness through programs and referrals.* |
| **Homeless Youth Program Contact Name:** | **Kathy Keeser** |
| **Title:** | **Executive Director** |
| **Address**: | **149 Church Street, PO Box 773** |
| **City, State, Zip**: | **North Adams, MA 01247** |
| **Phone Number**: | **413-663-6323 EXT 2** |
| **Email**: | **kkeeser@louisonhouse.org** |

1. **Program Location(s)** (*Add other Program locations as needed)***:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Address of Primary Program Location** (if known): | **393 Main Street** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **Greenfield, Massachusetts 01301** |
| **Organization Name:** | **Community Action Pioneer Valley** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | **(413) 774-2318** |
| **Email** (if known): |  |

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| **Address of Other Program Location** (if known): | **196 Federal Street** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **Greenfield. MA 01301** |
| **Organization:** | **DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | **413-774-7054** |
| **Email** (if known): | [**dialself@dialself.org**](mailto:dialself@dialself.org) |

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| **Address of Other Program Location** (if known): | **16 Miles Street** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **Greenfield. MA 01301** |
| **Organization:** | **DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | **413-774-7054** |
| **Email** (if known): | [**dialself@dialself.org**](mailto:dialself@dialself.org) |

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| **Address of Other Program Location** (if known): | **131 W. Main Street** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **Orange, MA 01364** |
| **Organization:** | **DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | **413-774-7054** |
| **Email** (if known): | [**dialself@dialself.org**](mailto:dialself@dialself.org) |

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| **Address of Other Program Location** (if known): | **1 Fenn Street, 4th Floor** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **Pittsfield, MA 01201** |
| **Organization:** | **Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | (413) 344-4826 |
| **Email** (if known): | [**bradg@bcrha.com**](mailto:bradg@bcrha.com) |

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| **Address of Other Program Location** (if known): | **149 Church Street** |
| **City, State, Zip** (if known): | **North Adams, MA 01247** |
| **Organization:** | **Louison House** |
| **Phone Number** (if known): | **413-663-6323** |
| **Email** (if known): | **kkeeser@louisonhouse.org** |

1. **Program Services:**
2. **Core Services: Regional Totals**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grantee/Subgrantee Name** | **Services/Activities** | **Metric** | **Total Projected Number** | **BCRHA** | **DIAL/SELF** |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Street Outreach  \*Includes those who move/do not move to assessment | Outreach Contacts | 30 | 10  \*decreased based on COVID impact | 20 \*decreased based on COVID impact |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Referrals Received | Incoming Contacts  (walk-ins, calls, referrals from partners) | 190 | 90 | 100 |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Assessment/Case Management/Case Coordination – Prevention/Diversion | Number of Youth | 135 | 40 | 95 |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Assessment/Case Management/Case Coordination – Rehousing  \*Note: These numbers reflect the changing nature of YYA housing status while in services | Number of Youth | 75 | 40 | 35 |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Direct Financial Assistance | Recipients | 42 | 12  \*dependent on available flex funds | 30  \*dependent on available flex funds |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Referrals to other providers/units | Number of Youth | 185 | 90 | 95 |
|  | Other (describe) | Continuing in case management from previous fiscal year | 45 | 10 | 35 |
|  | **Total Youth Served (Unduplicated):** | | **250** | **107** | **150** |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grantee/Subgrantee Name** | **Services/Activities** | **Metric** | **Total**  **Projected Number of YYA** | **BCRHA** | **DIAL/SELF** |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | EOHHS-funded YYA-dedicated winter shelter beds  \*\*flexible funds will be targeted for additional emergency response | Number of Beds | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | Other beds (YYA-dedicated winter shelter beds not funded by EOHHS) | Number of Beds | 4 | 0 | 4 \*under 18 non-systems youth US HHS BC |
|  | **Total Youth Served (Unduplicated):** | | **6** | **2** | **4** |

1. **College Student Services** (*if applicable*)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grantee/Subgrantee Name** | **Services/Activities** | **Metric** | **Total**  **Projected Number** | **BCRHA** | **DIAL/SELF** |
|  | \*Pilot regions only  Transitional Housing and Case Management services (enrolled students) | Number of Pilot Program students receiving Transitional Housing and Case Management services | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| DSYCS & BCRHA | \*All regions | Number of College students not officially enrolled in the campus pilot program that are receiving services | 13 | 5  \*Our intent is to do more outreach to BCC w/ additional staff | 8 |

1. **Youth/Young Adult Action Board/Engagement Activities**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grantee/Subgrantee Name** | **Services/Activities** | **Metric** | **Total**  **Projected Number** |
| CAPV | Youth/Young Adult Action Board | Number of Meetings | 75 |
| CAPV | Youth/Young Adult Action Board \*We reduced this as COVID continues to affect outreach activities | Number of unduplicated participants | 6 |
|  | **Total Events (Unduplicated):** | | **75** |

1. **Outcomes**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Services/Activities** | **Metric** | **Projected Number of YYA** | **BCRHA** | **DIAL/SELF** |
| **Prevention Outcomes**  **(Follow up)** | a. Number of YYA contacted for follow up 3 mos. after receiving prevention services | 62 | 30 | 32 |
| b. Number of YYA who remain housed 3 mos. after receiving prevention services | 50 | 25 | 25 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rehousing Outcomes** | a. The number of youth who transition into stabilized housing | 51 | 25 | 26 |
|  | b. Number of YYA contacted for follow up 3 mos. after receiving rehousing services | 44 | 25 | 19 |
|  | c. Number of YYA who remain in housing 3 mos. after receiving rehousing services | 38 | 23 | 15 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TOTAL SERVED** | **Total number of unduplicated YYA served through EOHHS funding** | **280** | **80** | **200** |

*Include discussion of planned modifications to existing services, COVID- emergency response (congregate and non-congregate options), proposed implementation of new services or development of new partnerships in the upcoming state fiscal year, or any other relevant information.*

* *Our projected numbers are cautiously based on the uncertainty of the impact of COVID-19.*
* *YHDP projects and implementation process will increase our engagement and connection with YYA and additional community partners.*
* *The addition of a 75% staff person will enable BCRHA to provide greater outreach, which will include increased connection to the local community college.*
* *Increased outreach/engagement by BCRHA through the creation of a social media page dedicated to YYA outreach will provide important information and include times and places to see YYA case managers.*
* *DIAL/SELF will continue using non-congregate shelter with existing contracts with motels in the region and BCRHA, in partnership with Louison House, will add two YYA-dedicated emergency beds, will develop relationships with motels for short-term stays for YYA, and will continue working with the local shelters for additional options for YYA. Additionally, BCRHA will work with the Community Health Program (CHP) and MEMA to create designated hotel slots for those diagnosed with COVID without the need for hospitalization. Lastly, they will offer mediation and case management to try to preserve existing permanent housing options, when appropriate.*
* *Expanded supplemental funds will be focused across all counties to create expanded emergency capacity. While we do not believe this will result in a significantly larger number of YYA served, it will allow a higher level of service, housing and safety options for programs to respond with.*
* *Program investment in YYA transportation supports will help to address historic inequalities in transportation due to the rural nature of our region, and will also address added safety concerns about transporting YYA during an active pandemic.*

**Add Framework Response Here:**

**EOHHS-Three County Region**

**Homeless Youth/Young Adult Emergency, Housing and Equity Response**

**Emergency Response**

**Current Regional YYA-specific Emergency Capacity**

Our region currently has 4 year-round emergency YYA specific beds, which are a combination of beds in a warming center and motel rooms located in Franklin and Hampshire Counties, accessed through DIAL/SELF Youth and Community Services and their intake process.

**Plans for Additional Emergency/Winter Capacity**

Through YHDP, we have 6 transitional housing beds coming on line in Franklin County, with pregnant and parenting YYA prioritized, but individuals will have access to this if there is space. Although based in Franklin County, we are able to serve YYA that may be temporarily in another county in our CoC/region, but have significant connection to Franklin County. These units will be accessed through our YYA-specific Coordinated Entry process.

We are also adding YYA-specific RRH and PSH units, so hope to move YYA into these quickly to reduce the need for emergency services. YYA will access these through our Coordinated Entry system and our newly created separate YYA CE Case Conferencing meetings. We will also be completing an assessment of our YYA CE system over the next few months to improve the experience and outcomes for YYA involved in our system. Through this, we plan to work on increasing our prevention services in order to reduce the need for emergency services.

**Plan for Regional Emergency Capacity for YYA with Additional Funds**

During the planning process related to our response, we met with our YAB to discuss their ideas about best models for an emergency response. They suggested having a range of options to allow for choice and felt it was important to have access to individualized units in motels to respond to any need to isolate YYA in the midst of the pandemic. They agreed that this would also provide flexibility in a very large geographic region. However, they were concerned that YYA might experience prejudice going to motels, so that should be a consideration in our planning. They would like to us to consider host homes to provide YYA support in a home-like setting, but to be sure there are a lot of supports for both families and YYA around this, and master leasing of apartments that could be accessed for emergency purposes if either of these were affordable and resources were available.

We also had some meetings of regional partners to discuss our plans related to emergency housing and all agreed that the lack of emergency housing in Berkshire County was something we wanted to address. We considered the input of the YAB and what we have learned previously from our experiences working with YYA in our region. YYA in DIAL/SELF services that have been provided emergency support usually choose motels over other options as this allows them a place to stay and leave their belongings rather than having to leave shelters during the day, particularly when there are no places to be during the pandemic. DIAL/SELF has worked out processes/procedures around the use of motels, including daily check-ins with YYA and have agreements with a few motels in place in order to make the process as YYA-friendly as possible, and are willing to share their knowledge and procedures with staff in Berkshire County. Cleaning expenses and time are additional considerations during the pandemic and motels provide this.

Based on this information, we decided to use some of the additional funds to add 2 YYA-specific emergency beds in Berkshire County through a partnership with Louison House and additional flexible funds targeted for emergency housing in South County and the Pittsfield area, as well as additional flexible funds in Hampshire and Franklin Counties for the same purposes. Louison House will have space within their shelter for 2 YYA-specific beds once construction is complete, but will master lease 2 hotel rooms to meet the need until that time. These beds would be accessed through BCRHA staff, who will provide case management while the YYA are in Louison House emergency housing. The targeted flexible funds would be for “non-traditional emergency shelter support,” and be used to cover short-term motel stays, kinship placements, or provide camping gear and covering the cost of campsites for YYA in order to allow them to safely camp; All of which would allow for an approach that is tailored to YYA needs.

We are also using some funds in order to purchase a vehicle that will be made COVID-safe. This will allow us to transport YYA to emergency housing options, other services to support their needs, view apartments and move-ins when longer-term options become available. Transportation is critical in our region, which has very limited public transportation and alternative transportation options.

**Housing Response**

We have added 6 transitional housing, 22 rapid rehousing and 8 permanent supportive housing units to our system through the Franklin County YHDP. We have also added YYA navigation services in order to support those experiencing homelessness with finding and transitioning into housing. We will also have a higher amount of flexible funds in our region in order to provide additional financial supports for young people to obtain/maintain housing throughout our region.

In Berkshire County, we are involved with a number of partnerships to increase YYA housing opportunities. We are working with our partners there around the planning related to the Moving To College Housing Scholarship Program with the hope to include some Berkshire County YYA in this program, as well as continuing our work with DCF and the Stockbridge Housing Authority to support additional YYA being referred/supported with housing vouchers in the Foster Youth to Independence Program.

**Equity Response**

Our region has been having ongoing discussions around creating services that are more equitable. There are a few areas we have been focusing on and will continue to focus on:

1. Tracking and reviewing the data related to YYA in EOHHS services and making appropriate changes
2. Participating in the larger CoC work on racial equity and creating and implementing YYA-related strategies
3. Engaging the YAB for ongoing input

This year, EOHHS asked us to report on demographics for housing outcomes and we decided to also report and review the demographics of those receiving flexible funds, as part of our Flexible Funds Policy. We found that in FY’21 Quarter 1, the YYA with positive housing outcomes included 27% people of color and 24% who identify as LGBTQ compared to 18% people of color and 20% LGBTQ in all YYA served.  In the YYA that were provided flexible funds, 10% were people of color and 43% identified as LGBTQ. We are going to work to ensure we capture accurate demographic information and continue tracking these for a few quarters and make a plan once we can get a sense of any patterns with the data.

Within EOHHS services, we are also going to review referral sources to see where there are gaps and work to develop new and/or stronger partnerships with organizations that interact and/or serve YYA of color and LGBTQ YYA to ensure that there is equitable access to services and sufficient supports to ensure that all YYA have what they need to be successful. Our initial plan includes increased outreach to the criminal justice and child welfare systems, but we will consider additional outreach in the future as we learn more.

One of our partner agencies, DIAL/SELF Youth and Community Services, has also been doing some internal work to look at their services and how they could make changes to improve access for YYA. A number of months ago, DIAL/SELF noted that the YYA in their programs represent a higher percentage of non-white and LQBTQ YYA than the region’s averages. They also learned about some negative experiences of their staff of color while working in the community and committed to working to address this.  In response, they have committed extensive time to providing staff training and completing policy review.  They are now in the process of re-writing polies based on the review and have also already started making changes to job description language and compensation bonuses for case managers with Spanish fluency and lived experience.  The agency continues to seek added expertise on this process and is working to determine the best way to integrate more non-white YYA voice/expertise in program practice review and revisions. The agency has committed to continuing to devote 2+hours per week of staff time specifically dedicated to creating an agency and program culture embodying diversity, belonging, equity and inclusion. We look forward to seeing their plans and encouraging other YYA-providers to undertake their own process and consider implementing some of their strategies.

We have also been involved in the creation of a CoC racial equity action plan, which is focused on the following areas: Coordinated Entry, Data, Organizational Training and Development, Housing, Lived Experience and Legislative Policy and include strategies within each of these. All of these strategies will affect YYA in our region, such as developing more equitable tools and strategies for our Coordinated Entry system; taking a deeper look at our data and making system changes to reduce disparities in performance measures; encouraging organizations to increase anti-racism work and increase hiring, retention and leadership development of diverse populations; increasing the accessibility of shelter and low-barrier housing for people of color; engaging more people with lived experience in the CoC workgroups and committees, making meetings more accessible, and supporting leadership development for people with lived experience; and developing a racial equity policy agenda and advocacy plan. The plan also includes strategies specifically related to YYA, including working to increase the diversity of the YAB and training the YAB around legislative process and advocacy.

In the coming months, we are going to do some additional work focused on YYA-specific strategies. This includes training providers on trauma-informed data collection and holding meetings and providing individual support for our YYA providers focusing on centering racial equity in programs, policies and outcomes. This will include reviewing screening/intake procedures and program policies to help with access and completion of programs.

We also plan to build additional HMIS reports to look more deeply at our data related to people of color and those who identify as LGBTQ and addressing any disparities that we see. As we move into having additional YYA providers in our region, we will be working to increase the number of providers that are collecting the RHY data points and using this data to better inform our community regarding YYA outcomes.

All of these plans have been informed and will continue to be informed by our YAB, which meets weekly and is continue to work to expand their membership to include YYA from Berkshire and Hampshire Counties. We had discussions with the YAB about this response and they participate in many of the CoC committees and work groups, such as the CoC Board, Racial Equity Work Group, PIT Work Group and YYA Homelessness Committee; all of which include discussions regarding equity. We are also planning some focus groups facilitated by our racial equity consultants to get their input on how to improve our practices around identification, assessment and ongoing engagement of YYA and will do some leadership development around racial equity work with them as well.

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| **Table 1: Comparison of regional bed capacity and PIT count** | | | | | | |
| **Region** | **Total YYA served FY20** | **Total # of YA specific winterbeds from FY21 program plan** | **2019 HUD PIT Count: # of unaccompanied youth 18-24** | **Reference** | **%YYA bed capacity** | **NOTES** |
| Three County | 448 | 6 | 16 | [MA507](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-507-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 25% |  |
| Hampden | 122 | 10 | 23 | [MA504](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-504-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 44% |  |
| Worcester | 439 | 6 | 80 | [MA506](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-506-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 8% |  |
| Bristol | 165 | 5 | 16 | [MA519](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-519-2019_MA_2019.pdf); [MA515](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-515-2019_MA_2019.pdf); [MA505](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-505-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 31% | 2 +2+12=16 |
| Cape Cod | 130 | 29 | 8 | [MA503](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-506-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 362% |  |
| Plymouth | 112 | 8 | 15 | [MA511](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-511-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 53% |  |
| Essex | 112 |  | 32 | [MA510](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-510-2019_MA_2019.pdf); [MA502](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-502-2019_MA_2019.pdf) |  | 11+20= 32  Does not include BoS towns |
| No. Middlesex | 207 | 9 | 9 | [MA508](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-508-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 100% |  |
| MetroWest | 165 | 30 |  | 40/43 BoS | 75% | Using 40/43 of the BoS #s of YYA |
| Metro Boston | 614 | 86 | 215 | [MA500](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-500-2019_MA_2019.pdf); [MA509](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-509-2019_MA_2019.pdf); [MA517](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-517-2019_MA_2019.pdf) | 16% | 157+47+11 =215  Does not include BoS towns (Arlington, Waltham) |
| BoS |  |  | 43 | [MA516](https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_MA-516-2019_MA_2019.pdf) |  |  |