

COVID-19 and the HCH Community

Six Crises Leading into Winter 2020

As communities continue to cope with the impact of COVID-19, the upcoming winter season presents additional challenges to organizations providing care for people experiencing homelessness.

NEW Webinar Series

November 6, 2020

**COVID-19 &
Flu Season**

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**Disasters &
Cold Weather**

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**Evictions &
Social Upheaval**

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1. COVID-19

Given the endurance of COVID-19 in the United States, the trajectory of vaccine development, and disparate reopening policy among local governments, the pandemic is likely to continue affecting Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) health center operations throughout the winter and beyond. HCH programs should continue infectious disease control measures.



2. FLU SEASON

Due to a higher risk of chronic and acute illnesses, lack of access to hygiene facilities, and crowded service venues, people experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to the flu in the fall and winter months regardless of a pandemic.



3. DISASTERS

Natural disaster response protocols (e.g. crowded shelters, mass evacuation and displacement) often conflict with infectious disease control measures and fail to address the unique needs of people experiencing homelessness, which exacerbate inequities and jeopardize clients' health.



4. COLD WEATHER

Local cold-weather response policies (i.e. Code Blue) must evolve to reflect infectious disease control guidance. HCH programs, HUD Continuum of Care, local governments, and other community organizations must proactively collaborate to plan effectively for the multifaceted challenges of the coming months.



5. EVICTIONS

The economic devastation from the pandemic threatens eviction for thousands. The current CDC moratorium is scheduled to expire mid-winter and does nothing to alleviate the rent due upon expiration, likely precipitating an historic increase in displacement and homelessness.



6. SOCIAL UPHEAVAL

The United States is in widespread social crisis. Uprisings in response to police violence and racial injustice (and the violent responses to these protests) combined with a polarizing national election contribute to collective trauma that affects the HCH community and their ability to manage other crises.

