

**6 MARCH, 2026**



**TO: ANNA PLUMB**  
INTERIM DIRECTOR,  
MULTNOMAH COUNTY  
HOMELESS SERVICES DEPARTMENT (HSD)

**FROM:**  
THE HOMELESS  
SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
COMMUNITY BUDGET  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**BUDGET RECCOMENDATION LETTER #1**

The HSD CBAC plans to continue reviewing the HSD budget proposal over the next several weeks, ask questions, and submit a second letter after the Chair's budget is released.

The HSD CBAC emphatically believes that the county needs to ensure that with the closure of nine shelters (675 shelter units) in FY27, that no one who is currently residing in those shelters returns to unsheltered homelessness. It is imperative that HSD has a comprehensive plan, with dedicated financial resources, to move current shelter residents into permanent housing, or less optimally into other shelter beds, *prior* to the closure of the shelters.

As a CBAC, we believe that we do not have to accept this system of housing that creates harm and instability. It will be crucial in FY27 to ensure that housing programs are sustainable and stable. We cannot continue to operate in crisis mode all the time. The instability inherent in annual budgeting for housing results in trauma, uprooting, disconnection, and burnout. We are projecting additional funding decreases in FY28, and we need to be preparing in FY27 for potential future funding scenarios, including the possibility of ramping down additional programs.

It is important to name that the proposed HSD budget will result in significant layoffs - not just at HSD but at numerous service providers, many of whom have staff with lived experience of homelessness. Less staff at HSD will also impact service providers, as they will receive less technical assistance and support to effectively and equitably provide services.

The CBAC strongly recommends that the Chair, like the HSD, prioritize budget feedback received from people experiencing homelessness, service provider employees, and community advisory bodies composed of people with lived experience of homelessness. We need to ensure that people most impacted

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by these budget decisions (people who are unhoused and unstably housed) are involved in the decision making process.

**PRIORITIES**

We agree with HSD’s policy goals for the FY 2027 budget: the county’s priorities of 1) keeping people housed; 2) prioritizing housing placements; and 3) helping people move into permanent housing, and maximizing shelter effectiveness efficiency. We encourage the county to prioritize maintaining permanent supportive housing slots and funding for placement out of shelter.

Everyone deserves to be safely and stably housed. We all believe that, and we all believe that should be a priority for our county. As the County Chair considers funding holistically for FY27, we hope that there is consideration for looking for opportunities to shift funding to the HSD whenever possible.

Overall, should more funding be made available for HSD, these are the kinds of programs we would like to see prioritized across all systems of care (adult, youth, family, and survivors of domestic violence):

- Placement out of Shelter (rent assistance, housing navigation and placement)
- Culturally Specific and Responsive Services
- Eviction Prevention and Emergency Rent Assistance
- Employment Services and Income Acquisition Supports - particularly those services that provide wages and benefits to people experiencing homelessness

**BUDGET DECISIONS IMPACT REAL PEOPLE**

Our CBAC believes that reviewing the HSD budget and providing thoughtful and careful feedback is important - and deserves additional time and consideration by the committee. While we often talk about data and numbers, we need to remember that each number represents an actual human, with a real story, and a rich life, and they deserve to be uplifted and centered in this budget process.

Thank you in advance for carefully considering our above recommendations.

Kindly,

The current members of the HSD CBAC: Amanda Garren, Anisa Ali, Cameron Foster, Darius Mani Yaw, Elizabeth Gillingham, Katrina Malachowski, Lisa Drennan, Nicki Dardinger, Wendy Lear, and William Hodsoll.

*This report was approved at the March 4, 2026, HSD CBAC meeting by Amanda Garren, Anisa Ali, Cameron Foster, Darius Mani Yaw, Elizabeth Gillingham, Katrina Malachowski, Nicki Dardinger, Wendy Lear, and William Hodsoll.*