



# Oregon

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## **Department of Human Services Report to the Legislature on Runaway and Homeless Youth Oregon Revised Statute 417.799**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) is submitting this report to the Legislature as required by ORS 417.799 Runaway and Homeless Youth, a result of House Bill 2232 enacted in the 2015 Legislative Session. This report provides a status of the system of services and supports for Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) developed by DHS, and information about the committee appointed to advise and provide expertise to DHS related to the needs of Runaway and Homeless Youth in Oregon.

### **Program Updates**

The department continues to engage in several approaches to develop the system in Oregon for RHY:

- A. Learning Opportunities
- B. Service Updates
- C. Homeless Youth Advisory Council
- D. Partnerships

The RHY Program had been housed in the Department of Human Services Child Welfare Office since its movement from the Commission on Children and Families in 2012. The program was initially allocated a half-time position. In September 2018, the program moved to the DHS Self-Sufficiency Programs (SSP) and a full-time was able to be resourced to ensure that this population is more appropriately served. Self-Sufficiency management was excited for the opportunity to commit resources to align programming for this population in conjunction with their mission to promote family stability and help people become self-supporting.

Prior to this transition the RHY Coordinator visited each of the current grantees to discuss programmatic updates and to allow for the provision of extensive input on current and future RHY operations. The coordinator also engaged in conversations with

the Homeless Youth Advisory Council and other involved parties on what the move to SSP would look like. Responses were overwhelmingly consistent that a shift to the program into SSP would be a benefit.

### **A. Learning Opportunities:**

The following information details learning opportunities DHS has conducted or taken part in during the reporting period. These events provide opportunities for DHS to collaborate with state and nonprofit entities and to identify and promote of the best practices for service delivery.

DHS continues its involvement in training presentations and information sessions, as well as membership in local and statewide stakeholder groups. Some of these include:

- May – September 2019 – Continuum of Care youth partnership presentations
- May 2019 – Collaborate Oregon for Everyone Everywhere Data Convening panelist
- May 2019 – Klamath Falls’ Youth Rising discussion with Child Welfare and Licensing
- April 2019 – Boys & Girls Club of Portland RHY & STEP meeting
- April & May 2019 – Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP) planning with Balance of State CoC
- April 2019 – Kinship Care Navigator grant convening
- March 2019 – Lane County Community Access Workgroup
- March 2019 - Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth meeting
- February 2019 – Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected youth planning
- February 2019 – First Generation Student Success Convening
- February 2019 – Oregon Shelter Study via Office of Housing & Community Services participant
- January 2019 – Self Sufficiency All Programs Steering Committee
- January 2019 – Scaling up Second Home Initiative orientation meeting
- January 2019 – Portland Community College and role in homelessness discussion
- January 2019 – City of Hillsboro homelessness initiatives discussion
- November 2019 – Children’s First for Oregon information session
- November 2018 - [\*Policy for Transformed Lives\*](#) by CLASP participant
- November 2018 – A Way Home America State-by-State Peer Collective planning session
- September 2018 - Oregon Coalition on Housing and Homelessness annual conference

- September 2018 - A Way Home America State-by-State Peer Collective teleconference
- Monthly - A Way Home America State-by-State Peer Collective
- Bi-Monthly – Workforce Roundtable
- Bi-Monthly – Homeless Youth Oversight Committee (Multnomah County)
- Quarterly – Healthy Transitions Statewide Steering Committee

### **October 2018**

DHS attended the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) and National Safe Place Network (NSPN) National Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Grantees Training in Austin, Texas. This is the first year that attendance for non-FYSB grantees was allowed.

### **November 2018**

Through a partnership with A Way Home America, DHS became involved in a State-by-State Peer Collective. This group includes representatives from six states who have dedicated Runaway and Homeless programs/initiatives, as well as eight representatives from partners like the True Colors Fund, Raikes Foundation, and the Pride Foundation. This collective attended a one-day convening in Austin, TX to create a more formal nationwide collaborative and set future goals.

Reconvening for the State-by-State Peer Collective continued in January 2019, with the group adding two additional states. Telephone calls have been occurring on approximately a quarterly basis. Initial discussions were focused on formulating plans for the next year and determining where this collective should put its energy. There was also discussion about how the work being done could aid the states currently involved, and future states interested in this work. Though there were many identified potential outcomes that the committee desired – data collection, cross-sector engagement and toolkits for State agencies, legislative opportunities – more focused discussions landed on two primary nationwide challenges – the creation of effective Statewide youth boards and effective services for rural locations.

### **February 2019**

DHS attended the Solutions for Individual Homeless Adults in San Diego, CA, put on by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH).

### **April 2019**

DHS participated in the West Coast Convening (WCC), a series of day-and-a-half-sessions involving government and program staff from the states of Oregon, Washington, and California. In addition, members of the Multnomah County Homeless

Youth Continuum, of which there are also participants on Oregon's Homeless Youth Advisory Council (HYAC), were in attendance. West Coast Convening in Portland included presentations on:

- Meaningful, Inclusive Hiring and Program Development
- Trans, Two-spirit, and Gender Non-Conforming Health Panel
- Powerful Ink: How Tattoos and Branding Shape the World of Human Trafficking
- Exploring the [Homeless Youth Handbook](#)
- [Outside of the Frame](#) Workshop Presentation
- WCC Lightning Research Talks

## **July 2019**

DHS attended the National Symposium on Solutions to End Youth Homelessness in New York City. This convening featured 200 speakers, panel discussions, in-depth trainings and workshops, performances, and networking opportunities.

DHS continues to manage the Oregon Programs serving Runaway and Homeless Youth electronic Listserv to advertise future trainings, funding opportunities, and other information pertinent to this population. Some training opportunities that were attended by Listserv members and shared on the Listserv.

- Monthly - A Way Home America State-by-State Peer Collective
- Bi-Monthly – Workforce Roundtable
- Bi-Monthly – Homeless Youth Oversight Committee (Multnomah County)
- Quarterly – Healthy Transitions Statewide Steering Committee

## **B. Service Updates**

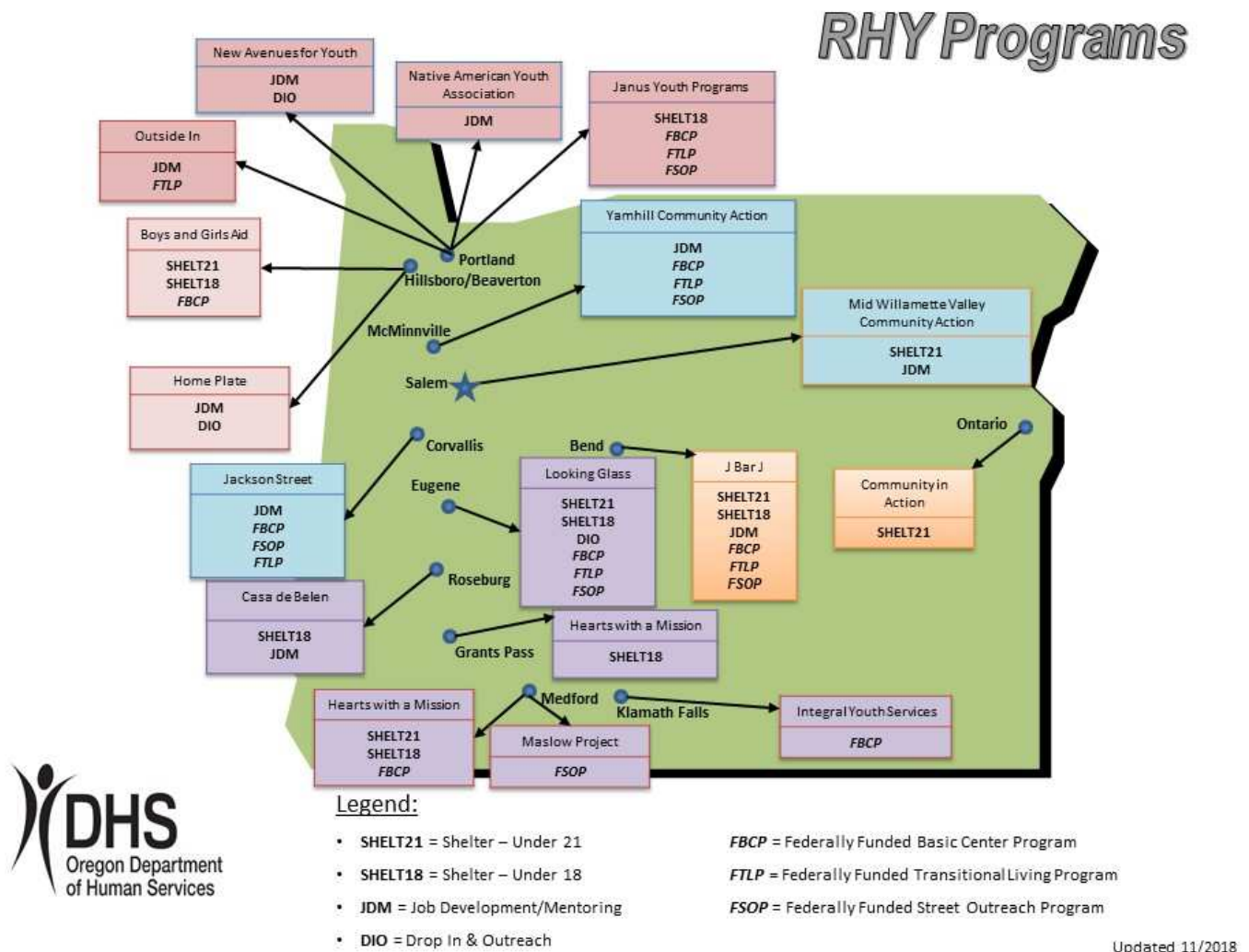
With the RHY budget remaining at its current funding level for 2019-2021, the HYAC recommended that DHS continue to contract with the providers currently serving Runaway and Homeless Youth under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

With the RHY program transition to Self Sufficiency in September 2018, an executive decision was made to amend and extend all contracts another 12 months from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The following Runaway and Homeless Services continue to be provided through 25 contracts with 14 different providers:

- Overnight Shelter Services (serving unaccompanied minors 18 years old and under)
- Overnight Shelter Services (serving youth and young adults up to age 21)

- Drop in Day Facility and Outreach Services (serving unaccompanied minors 18 years old and under)
- Job Development / Mentoring

The following map shows where State funded programs are located, as well as where Federally-funded Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Basic Center, Transitional Living, and Street Outreach Programs exist throughout the state.



DHS has continued its contract with 211Info. This partnership resulted in Professional Information and Referral Specialists from 211Info developing, launching, and maintaining a mobile app that includes resource lists and GPS-enabled maps for shelter, medical care, and food for youth who may be homeless or in need of basic services. There are now approximately 2700 contacts by app each month and a new youth dashboard was created in April 2019. Preliminary results yielded that approximately 37% of service need inquiries from April – June 2019, from parties 0-19, were for housing. This 211Info Workbook Dashboard will continue to be utilized to inform gaps.

The Dashboard can be accessed here: [211Info Workbook Dashboard](#)

To both enhance data collection, and minimize reporting duplication for providers, DHS is exploring utilizing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for data reporting. HMIS is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Any recipient of Federal HUD homeless dollars is required to report in HMIS, and over 90% of the current RHY grantees are already utilizing HMIS. In April 2019, DHS met with the Portland Housing Bureau, who administers implementation of the HMIS system for Oregon. Ongoing conversation has occurred with RHY service providers, the Homeless Youth Advisory Council, and DHS Office of Reporting, Research, Analytics, and Implementation (ORRAI). Much of the feedback has been positive, with a potential go-live date in July 2020.

In 2018, DHS led the 100-Day Challenge for Marion County, a HUD-sponsored initiative, as one of four nationwide locations to receive technical assistance designed to stimulate intense collaboration, innovation, and execution, all in pursuit of a wildly ambitious 100-day goal. Though this short-term project was completed in early 2018, there have been longer-term benefits of this initiative over the past year:

- In September 2018, as a result of funding raised from the 100-Day Challenge initiative, Marion County's first youth shelter in almost a decade was opened to serve unaccompanied minors.
- Due to the creation and strengthening of partnerships between local government, private providers, non-profits, and lived-experience youth over the 100-Day timeline, The Mid-Valley Council of Governments (COG) via the Homeless Initiative have agreed to continue with the structure of the initiative due to the successes and outcomes. The first meeting was held in April 2019 and further implementation is tentatively slated to begin in September 2019.
- In December 2018, the Oregon Department of Education received a year-long Scaling Up Second Home Initiative (SUSHI) grant to increase awareness of the need for host homes and work with local communities and schools to add host home programs in their area. A key component to receiving the grant was a commitment to utilize the structure and ideas from the successes of the 100-Day Challenge initiative.

The Homeless Youth Advisory Council's Strategic Plan recommends determining best practice to create host homes and to allow people willing to take in a homeless youth on a temporary basis while ensuring youth safety. As mentioned, in December 2018 DHS partnered with the Oregon Department of Education and was one of six states to receive a first-of-its-kind partnership grant from Education Leads Home - the only national

campaign focused exclusively on addressing the needs of the 1.3 million homeless students enrolled in America's public schools. The grant is focused on scaling up host homes for unaccompanied homeless youth by utilizing the program Second Home's experience with creating landlord agreements between host providers and youth. The goals of the project were to showcase an increase in high school graduation rates for students experiencing homelessness, engage teams in six Oregon hubs to understand unique needs, present information in community forums, create uniform data collection for McKinney-Vento liaisons, increase collaboration, and leveraging of new funding and partnerships. This project is continuing throughout the rest of 2019 and into 2020.

### **C. Homeless Youth Advisory Council (HYAC)**

The Homeless Youth Advisory Council is charged with advising DHS regarding policies and procedures that address statewide planning for delivery of services to Runaway and Homeless Youth and their families. When the program formally transitioned from Child Welfare into Self-Sufficiency, there was an opportunity to shape and focus the HYAC, including:

- Requesting a co-chair for HYAC meetings for the purpose of a true public/private partnership
- Move from quarterly meetings to bi-monthly (6x/year) to encourage forward motion and engagement
- Redefining and reframing HYAC participation expectations and definitions
- Reassessing HYAC members and fill gaps

Since the last report, the HYAC has met 4 times - January 2019, March 2019, May 2019, and August 2019.

DHS and the HYAC updated several documents to more formalize the role of the RHY program, including:

- Homeless Youth Advisory Council Charter
- HYAC Strategic Action Plan to Build Statewide Service System
- RHY Program Roles & Responsibilities
- RHY Project Plan

The HYAC also desires to hold a System Planning Initiative event in 2020 that focuses on RHY and how youth-specific services can, and should, be implemented in a local and statewide capacity. Planning began in April 2019.

HYAC Meetings are scheduled to continue throughout the remainder of 2019 and all of 2020. Current membership of the HYAC is as follows:

<b>Agency / Representation</b>	<b>Member Name</b>
Oregon Department of Education - McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program	Dona Bolt
Oregon Alliance for Children's Programs	Royce Bowlin
Oregon Department of Human Services - Commercially Sexually Exploited Children	Jamie Broadbent
Oregon Housing and Community Services	Chelsea Bunch
Oregon Department of Human Services – Self Sufficiency	Belit Burke
Home Plate Youth – Executive Director	Bridget Calfee
Portland/Multnomah County - Homeless Youth Continuum	Caitlin Campbell
Higher Education Coordinating Commission - Community Colleges and Workforce Development	Jennifer Denning
Maslow Project – Executive Director	Mary Ferrell
Hearts with a Mission - Executive Director	Kevin Lamson
Oregon Health Authority – Child & Family Behavioral Health	Jean Lasater
Beaverton School District – McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison	Lisa Mentasana
Oregon Department of Human Services – Self Sufficiency	Annette Palmer
Oregon Youth Authority	Christin Pickel
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Second Home Initiative - Director	Jennifer Pratt
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	Tricia Ratliff
Oregon Department of Human Services – Self Sufficiency	Matt Rasmussen (Co-Chair)
Oregon Department of Education – Youth Development Council	Cord Bueker
Boys and Girls Aid/Oregon Alliance for Children's Programs	Vera Stoulil (Co-Chair)

**HYAC Meeting Agenda Highlights:**

January 2019

- Kickoff and visioning with DHS Director Fariborz Pakseresht and SSP Manager Belit Burke
- Renewing the commitment to the work and determining where opportunities for action lie
- Creation and approval of HYAC Charter
- Prioritizing Strategic Plan
- Youth Board discussion

March 2019

- New HYAC member introductions
- DHS Roles and Responsibilities
- HYAC Membership Charter review
- Strategic Plan review and prioritization



- Oregon Alliance of Children’s Programs financial ask
- Programmatic Updates

May 2019

- Review of OACP Legislative Advocacy & Budget Request
- SNAP Training & Employment information session
- RHY Project Plan Overview
- Strategic Plan review & prioritization
- Statewide Event planning report out

August 2019:

- RHY Conference Event planning

## **D. Partnerships**

DHS was once again asked to partner with the Rural Oregon Continuum of Care (ROCC) to complete and support their Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP). The YHDP will award \$75 million for a two-year grant to support up to 25 communities, at least eight of which will be rural. This is the second time DHS has been a partner on ROCC’s YHDP planning and there is hope that this year Oregon see a successful application, as the state has not been awarded funding in past opportunities. Planning sessions occurred throughout 2019 until the submission in May. Announcements are expected to be made in September 2019. DHS is also aware of two other Continuums of Care (Clackamas and Central Oregon) who submitted applications.

Over the past few years, there has been an increasing emphasis on host homes becoming a more significant part of the homeless youth continuum on the national level. Numerous states - Washington, California, and Minnesota, among others - have robust host home networks. Washington and Minnesota have state investment in host homes, with the former having a [well-designed report on research and recommendations](#), and the latter recently completing a Request for Proposal to implement a school-based host home program for students experiencing homelessness or at-risk of experiencing homelessness in rural and/or tribal areas.

Though there are some unique host programming operating organically in Oregon, there are barriers in creation and expansion of traditional host homes, as well as a lack of a basic definition and minimum qualifications for serving youth and young adults in these settings. As a result, DHS began looking internally at the current barriers to traditional host homes in Oregon. DHS has been in ongoing discussion with the Office of Safety, Oversight, and Quality (SOQ), as they administer child caring licenses for Oregon programs who are engaging with youth. In June 2019, these conversations escalated to include consultation with the Department of Justice (DOJ).

In an effort for Oregon to more appropriately understand define host home base standards and ensure consistency for local programs, DHS and the SOQ engaged in interviews with national advocates, RHY offices in other states, and host home providers to receive feedback and recommendations. This began in June and will continue into September 2019.

The RHY program continues to significantly engage within two child welfare programs. Supervised Independent Living (SIL) and Quality Case Management for Transition Age Youth (TAY) pilot. These programs are designed to assist young adults who leave or age out of foster care. Without support these young adults will continue to have poor future outcomes and many will end up in the youth or adult homeless systems. [Chapin Hall's Midwest Study](#) found that 30% of youth who had aged out of foster care had experienced at least one episode of homelessness by the time they were 23. The State of Washington found that approximately 1 in 4 young people experience homelessness within 12 months of aging out of care. Collaboration between these DHS programs is imperative to achieving better outcomes. In 2018 and 2019 these Child Welfare Programs and the RHY program collaborated on:

1. Supervised Independent Living (SIL) Rule & Procedure Manual updates  
Defined and created SIL placements approved to help young adults in DHS custody become a self-sufficient adult. Each type of SIL placement is designed to work with the Independent Living Skill Building program to assist young adults in gaining and practicing self-sufficiency skills. In addition to the long-standing IL Housing Subsidy and Chafee Housing opportunities, the Transitional Living Program and Transitional Living Program – Plus opportunities were created and recently approved in the Child Welfare State Plan and will be implemented this upcoming year. Having these formally defined in the State Plan will assist by allowing Oregon to claim federal dollars to serve youth in these settings, something that was not previously available.
2. Quality case management for Transition Age Youth (TAY) pilot  
In June 2019, RHY coordinator submitted a general position paper on SSP/CW case management collaboration. This would shift towards TAY-centered case management, including increases in authentic TAY-engagement, the identification of permanent adults, and self-sufficiency preparedness, as well as a shift away from only safety/compliance-based casework. In July 2019, two counties (Lane & Washington) expressed interest in developing this further and planning sessions began in August 2019.

In July 2019, HUD announced the Foster Youth to Independence initiative, where Public

## Housing Agencies (PHA)

would partner with Child Welfare Agencies to request Housing Choice Vouchers for eligible transition age youth and former foster youth for a period of 36 months. Child Welfare and RHY program coordinator are currently completing a proposal with Clackamas County and involved in discussions three other interested counties.

In January 2019, Multnomah County's Youth & Family Services Division announced they were going to open a Request for Proposal (RFP) for their Youth Shelter in late 2019/early 2020. DHS' Runaway and Homeless Youth Program intends to align with the County's investment and connect DHS funding, as to enhance and supplements the efforts in Multnomah County to keep youth safely housed in emergencies. DHS has continuously invested with the county's youth shelter for over 5 years, so this alignment would ideally allow for greater flexible service opportunities and support for youth.

DHS has participated on scoring committees for grants that are intended to serve homeless populations. These have included:

- a. Rural Oregon Continuum of Care project scoring
- b. Youth Development Council community investment grants

Additional information may be provided upon request.

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