

**ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE
LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location:

**County Administration South (CAS) County
Conference Center Room 104
425 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701
[Click here](#) for parking instructions.**

Virtual Meeting Option:

Zoom Meeting Link: [Click here for meeting link](#)

Join by phone: +1 669 444 9171

Webinar ID: 923 4439 7221

****Listen-in option only****

Committee Chair: Robert “Santa Bob” Morse

Committee Vice Chair: Paul Kaiser, Individual

Committee Members:

Reha Agar, Individual

Elizabeth Flores, Individual

Nichole Gideon, Individual

Deborah Kraft, Individual

Miranda Mears, Individual

Jason Mercado, Individual

Larry “Smitty” Smith, Individual

Melissa Welsh, Individual

Vinny Zarrella, Individual

AGENDA

Welcome and Meeting Overview – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair

Public Comments – Members of the public may address the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC) on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the LEAC. Public comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes. Members of the public utilizing interpreter services will be given double the amount of time to provide public comment.

To address the LEAC during the Public Comment period, members of the public are to complete a Request to Address the Committee form prior to the beginning of each agenda item and submit it to Continuum of Care (CoC) staff. Staff will call your name in the order received. Members of the public may also submit public comment by emailing CareCoordination@ceo.oc.gov. All comments submitted via email at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the LEAC members, and all comments will be added to the administrative records of the meeting. Please include "LEAC Meeting Comment" in the email subject line.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approve the LEAC Meeting Minutes from July 16, 2025.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

1. **Lived Experience Compensation Framework Recommendation** – Felicia Boehringer, Interim CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination
 - a. Approve the following recommended compensation framework for People with Lived Experience partnering with the Orange County CoC for review and approval by the CoC Board.
 - (1) \$45 per hour for the Storyteller Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
 - (2) \$50 per hour for the Advisor Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
 - (3) \$55 per hour for the Leadership Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
 - b. Approve People with Lived Experience partnering with the Orange County CoC who travel more than 30 miles to a meeting location to be eligible for an additional one (1) hour of compensation.
2. **CoC Updates** – Felicia Boehringer, Interim CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination
 - a. July 23, 2025, CoC Board Meeting Recap
 - b. Coordinated Entry System (CES) Policies and Procedures
3. **LEAC Member Comments** – Robert "Santa Bob" Morse, Chair
 - a. Members of the LEAC may provide comments on matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the LEAC.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 3, 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the CAN Multipurpose Room 400 W. Civic Center Drive, Santa Ana, CA 92701

**ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE
LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING**

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location:

**County Administration South (CAS) Building
Multipurpose Rooms 103 & 105**

601 N. Ross St., Santa Ana, CA 92701

[Click here](#) for parking instructions.

Virtual Meeting Option:

Zoom Meeting Link: [Click here for meeting link](#)

Join by phone: +1 669 444 9171

Webinar ID: 923 4439 7221

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Committee Chair: Robert “Santa Bob” Morse

Committee Vice Chair: Paul Kaiser, Individual

Committee Members:

Reha Agar, Individual

Elizabeth Flores, Individual

Nichole Gideon, Individual

Deborah Kraft, Individual

Miranda Mears, Individual

Jason Mercado, Individual

Larry “Smitty” Smith, Individual

Vinny Zarrella, Individual

MINUTES

Welcome and Meeting Overview – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair

Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Present: Reha Agar, Elizabeth Flores, Deborah Kraft, Miranda Mears, Jason Mercado, Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Larry “Smitty” Smith, and Vinny Zarrella.

Absent Excused: Nichole Gideon and Paul Kaiser

Jason Mercado arrived during Business Calendar Item 1. Reha Agar left during Business Calendar Item 3.

1. Request for Virtual Participation

The Brown Act allows exceptions for members of legislative bodies to participate remotely under two specified circumstances: (1) “Just Cause” or (2) “Emergency Circumstances”. At least a quorum of the committee must be participating in-person for the exception(s) to be voted on and enacted. Following the Call to Order, Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse referenced a request for committee member Deborah Kraft to join virtually due to “Just Cause”.

Recommended Action: Allow Deborah Kraft to participate remotely for today’s LEAC meeting.

Miranda Mears motioned to approve the Recommended Action to allow Deborah Kraft to participate remotely. Elizabeth Flores seconded the motion. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments – Members of the public may address the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC) on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the LEAC. Public comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes. Members of the public utilizing interpreter services will be given double the amount of time to provide public comment.

To address the LEAC during the Public Comment period, members of the public are to complete a Request to Address the Committee form prior to the beginning of each agenda item and submit it to Continuum of Care (CoC) staff. Staff will call your name in the order received. Members of the public may also submit public comment by emailing CareCoordination@ocgov.com. All comments submitted via email at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the LEAC members, and all comments will be added to the administrative records of the meeting. Please include “LEAC Meeting Comment” in the email subject line.

Public Comment:

- Chase Wilkerson expressed concern about the cancellation of key veteran programs in Orange County, including OC4Vets, U.S. VETS senior veteran outreach, and Strong Families Strong Children; further emphasizing these programs were critical in preventing veteran homelessness and suicide, especially among families and seniors. Chase Wilkerson noted the loss of these services, along with the sunseting of the Veterans Committee, would significantly impact outcomes for homeless veterans in the region and urged for the more mental health and support initiatives.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approve the LEAC Meeting Minutes from June 4, 2025.

Elizabeth Flores motioned to approve Consent Calendar Item 1. Miranda Mears seconded the motion. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. Motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

MINUTES

July 16, 2025

1. LEAC Member Nomination – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair and Felicia Boehringer, Interim CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination

Felicia Boehringer provided background on the new recruitment process for filling the two vacant LEAC SPA seats, then reviewed the nomination procedure and the steps taken to move forward with nominating Melissa Welsh as the Central Service Planning Area representative.

Recommended action a: Approve Melissa Welsh to serve on the LEAC in the seat representing an individual who experienced homelessness within the Central Service Planning Area

Elizabeth Flores motioned to approved Business Item 1. Miranda Mears seconded the motion. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments:

- Melissa Welsh expressed appreciation for the nomination and thanked the committee for the opportunity to join. Melissa Welsh also affirmed her commitment to attending meetings, stating that availability will not be an issue, and she is prepared to be consistently present for LEAC meetings.

Committee Discussion:

Elizabeth Flores asked if Melissa Welsh would be able to commit to the time commitment for the meetings.

2. Lived Experience Compensation Process – Felicia Boehringer, Interim CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination

Felicia Boehringer provided an overview of the updated compensation program, including the amended compensation structure, the scope of work for the Orange County United Way (OCUW) compensation process, coordination of participant involvement, financial compensation, and program administration. Felicia Boehringer also shared the research and analysis conducted to determine appropriate compensation rates and ranges for committee members and various roles, based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and external consultants. The goal is to establish an ethical and equitable approach that acknowledges the valuable expertise of individuals with lived experience and the time and effort contributed to the CoC.

Recommended action b: Approve the recommended compensation framework for People with Lived Experience partnering with the Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) for review and approval by the CoC Board.

- (1) Range of \$35 – \$45 per hour for Storyteller Role, determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Rubric and Determination Table
- (2) Range of \$40 – \$50 per hour for Advisor Role, determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Rubric and Determination Table.
- (3) Range of \$45 – \$55 per hour for Leadership Role, determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Rubric and Determination Table.

Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse directed the Office of Care Coordination to bring Item 2. back to the August 6, 2025, LEAC meeting. No action was taken.

Public Comment:

- Melissa Welsh shared from personal experience that as an employee of a homeless service provider, employer provides time off but does not pay for LEAC meeting attendance.

Committee Discussion:

- Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse inquired whether the budget presented applies only to LEAC or also includes members of the CoC Board.
- Reha Agar sought clarification on the phrase “working within the homeless service system”, specifically, whether it referred exclusively to employment with service providers or also encompassed volunteerism. Reha Agar emphasized that travel compensation is the biggest barrier for many committee members.
- Deborah Kraft raised concerns about individuals who are already employed and may receive compensation through their employers. Deborah Kraft supported inclusive language that recognizes volunteer efforts, noting that volunteering is unpaid, unlike employment within service organizations. Deborah Kraft also asked if being on different committees would determine how points are allocated, whether travel compensation should be considered in the rubric, particularly for those traveling longer distances, and if there are options for carpooling or if the County could provide transportation with a bus or van.
- Elizabeth Flores asked for clarification on mileage reimbursement and how it applies to travel times exceeding one (1) hour. Elizabeth Flores proposed adding an additional thirty (30) minutes to the allowed travel time, stressing that individuals with lived experience should not have their compensation consumed by travel expenses. Elizabeth Flores also revisited the definition of “working within the homeless service system,” pointing out that volunteering, working within the homeless service system and lived experience carry different but important values.
- Miranda Mears questioned whether travel compensation policies could be adjusted, noting that under the current system, compensation might only cover rideshare costs, especially given the limit of only two virtual meetings per year. Miranda Mears also inquired about the meaning of retroactive pay.
- Vinny Zarrella recommended offering flexible options for members with longer commutes or high rideshare costs to ensure meeting are accessible.
- Larry “Smitty” Smith suggested separating compensation for committee participation from travel reimbursement. Larry “Smitty” Smith warned that combining the two could complicate the budget, especially if increasing hourly wages. Larry “Smitty” Smith also asked whether members receive points based on the number of committees or groups they participate in and if travel time is included for every committee a member serves on.
- Jason Mercado asked whether the proposed budget includes a defined amount allocated for member compensation.

3. CoC Strategic Plan – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair

Felicia Boehringer provided background on the CoC Strategic Plan, including ongoing work related to the plan and updates from CoC Board meetings. Felicia Boehringer discussed the seven (7) priority strategies and collaboration with the AC Strategies consultant to determine the Owners of said strategies.

Committee Discussion:

- Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse emphasized that the LEAC will play a central role in supporting and shaping key strategies within the CoC Strategic Plan, specifically highlighted the LEAC’s involvement in the compensation component and affirmed that the LEAC would be consulted on most aspects of the Strategic Plan. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse stressed the importance of including perspectives from those with lived experience, especially around understanding outcomes, evaluating the Coordinated Entry System, and ensuring those voices are reflected in strategies like items #5 and #7.
- Vinny Zarrella agreed with Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse’s points. Vinny Zarrella expressed frustration with the challenges people face in maintaining housing, especially during transitions from one housing unit to another, noting the importance of being involved in what HUD states and how local efforts are ensuring compliance but considering the clients. Vinny Zarrella spoke about the need to observe and understand what people go through in real-time and actually see the person living through it, not just hear about it after the fact, and how the CoC can consider how these different housing situations connect and affect each other.
- Deborah Kraft responded to Vinny Zarrella’s point acknowledging that this is a major issue at the HUD level, indicating that systemic changes need to be necessary.
- Larry “Smitty” Smith raised questions about the origins and intended audience of certain policies or strategies and asked whether these elements would be taken on by the Training Ad Hoc highlighted in the presentation. Larry “Smitty” Smith also emphasized the need for clarity on how LEAC and others will be involved in this process.

4. CoC Updates – Felicia Boehringer, Interim CoC Manager, Office of Care Coordination

Felicia Boehringer provided updates on the June 25, 2025, CoC Board meeting; the integration of the Orange County Outreach & Engagement (O&E) team into the Office of Care Coordination; and the upcoming Same-Day Solutions Fair.

5. LEAC Member Comments – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair

Committee Discussion:

- Larry “Smitty” Smith asked whether changing O&E shirt colors would lead to other changes, expressing concern that many organizations already use different-colored shirts, which may create confusion or reinforce silos. Larry “Smitty” Smith questioned how collaboration would occur across different outreach groups and emphasized the need for Lived Experience input in these conversations. Larry “Smitty” Smith also raised concerns about the number of different policies people are expected to remember and communicate to individuals on the street.
- Vinny Zarrella mentioned past involvement with the Youth Action Board (YAB) and requested more information about it, including when updates or meetings might occur.

Meeting adjourned at 11:36 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 6, 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at the CAS County Conference Center 104/106, 425 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701.

Date: August 6, 2025

Subject: Lived Experience Compensation Framework Recommendation

Recommended Actions:

- a. Approve the following recommended compensation framework for People with Lived Experience partnering with the Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) for review and approval by the CoC Board.
 - (1) \$45 per hour for the Storyteller Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
 - (2) \$50 per hour for the Advisor Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
 - (3) \$55 per hour for the Leadership Role, as determined based on the Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table.
- b. Approve People with Lived Experience partnering with the Orange County CoC who travel more than 30 miles to a meeting location to be eligible for an additional one (1) hour of compensation.

Background and Analysis

The Orange County CoC Board established the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC), at the November 18, 2020, meeting. The LEAC is designed to intentionally solicit guidance, feedback, and review from People with Lived Experience, representing diverse subpopulations such as Veterans, Transitional-Age Youth (TAY), Survivors, and Families with current and/or past lived experience of homelessness. The purpose of the LEAC is to function in an advisory capacity to the CoC Board, ensure that the voices and perspectives of persons with current and/or past lived experience of homelessness are heard and considered in the decision-making process of the Orange County CoC, and to provide a way to share recommendations and feedback on the CoC Board and CoC programs and services.

Since September 2021, the LEAC held regular, closed monthly meetings, which transitioned to in-person public meetings in August 2024 as the committee became more established. The LEAC continues meeting monthly to review, recommend, and advocate for changes throughout the CoC, ensuring that lived experience is consistently prioritized in the development and review of CoC projects, policies, and procedures.

Recognizing that meaningful participation requires acknowledging and valuing the lived experience of individuals through fair compensation, the Office of Care Coordination (OCC) initially implemented a temporary financial assistance plan to support LEAC members' engagement and attendance at meetings. This interim approach was intended to honor the time, insight, and expertise contributed by participants. Although the assistance was designed as a short-term solution, OCC has since worked to identify a third-party provider to help establish a more permanent and sustainable compensation framework, as outlined below.

- March – July 2023: OCC issued an initial Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a third-party provider to coordinate compensation but only received one proposal, which did not advance to contract negotiations.
- August 2023: LEAC provided input emphasizing the need for a fiscal agent focused solely on compensation coordination (e.g., high hourly wage payments), rather than additional supportive services.
- September 2023: OCC gathered feedback on preferred compensation structures, such as hourly wages, flat meeting rates, or alternative methods like gift cards, and engaged County Procurement Office (CPO) to explore options.
- January – April 2024: OCC issued a Request for Information (RFI) to explore compensation and supportive service providers; received two proposals but neither resulted in contract negotiations.
- December 2024 – May 2025: OCC conducted extensive contract negotiations and identified Orange County United Way (OCUW) as the preferred provider to amend its existing CoC contract to administer the lived experience compensation program.
- June 2025: Orange County Board of Supervisors approved OCUW as the selected provider.

The [amended contract between the OCC and OCUW](#) outlines three key components that define OCUW's role in supporting compensation for individuals with lived experience. These components include the coordination of participation, financial management of compensation, and overall program administration. Together, they establish a structured and accountable approach to ensuring that individuals with lived experience are meaningfully and fairly compensated for their contributions to the CoC.

This Compensation for People with Lived Experience program focuses specifically on people with lived experience partnering with the County and/or Orange County CoC, including members of the LEAC, YAB, and other identified groups as determined by the County and CoC.

[Recommended Compensation Framework](#)

OCC conducted extensive research, including review of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidance, national best practices, regional cost-of-living data from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) living wage calculator, and consultant recommendations, to determine appropriate and equitable compensation rates for People with Lived Experience partnering with the CoC. People with Lived Experience is also inclusive of youth with lived experience, who will participate in the Youth Action Board (YAB). The OCC is seeking to have input from youth on the preferred payment rate and structure as youth determine their governance practices throughout the development of the Orange County CoC YAB. In the meantime, three primary compensation roles have been proposed for youth and adults, inclusive of a pay rate for each:

Storyteller Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience sharing personal insights and experiences to inform and support committee and project work as participating members within CoC Committees, working groups, or ad hocs (i.e. LEAC member, and YAB member).
- This is inclusive of members or individuals invited to present at or attend a meeting.
- Compensation Rate: \$45 per hour

Advisor Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience providing an advisory role through leadership of a CoC Committee, working group, or ad hoc (i.e. LEAC Chair and Vice Chair).
- Compensation Rate: \$50 per hour

Leadership Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience serving on the CoC Board.
- Compensation Rate: \$55 per hour

The Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table in **Attachment A** will support with creating an equitable process of determining the compensation rate for People with Lived Experience based on their type of involvement within the CoC. At the July 16, 2025, special meeting of the LEAC, the OCC presented a Lived Experience Compensation Rate Rubric and Determination table for feedback and discussion, which included a pay range for each role, with the specific compensation rate determined through use of a rubric that assigned points based on 1) monthly time commitment, 2) expertise or experience, and 3) CoC Board leadership role (if applicable). The LEAC members provided feedback that the framework was difficult to understand and that some criteria within the rubric could be further clarified. Specifically, committee members highlighted a need to further define “working within the homeless service system” and whether that criteria would be inclusive of individuals who are doing volunteer work. To simplify the proposed compensation framework, the OCC revised the proposed pay range to a specific pay rate for each role. The highest rate in the original proposed range for each role is included in the recommended action for consideration. The scope of compensation includes payment for participation, including but not limited to CoC Board meetings, CoC Committee meetings, Ad Hocs, Working Groups, and planning meetings.

Further, the LEAC members discussed concerns that travel reimbursement would not be provided through the proposed compensation framework. The OCC noted that the compensation will include thirty (30) minutes of meeting preparation time and one (1) hour of travel time for in-person meetings. One LEAC member recommended adding an additional 30 minutes of compensated travel time for those who travel farther to a meeting location, stressing that individuals with lived experience should not have their compensation consumed by travel expenses. The OCC reviewed the feedback received, and is proposing the recommendation that People with Lived Experience who travel more than 30 miles to a meeting location be eligible for an additional one (1) hour of compensation. This is to ensure members who are having to travel longer will be equitably compensated. However, it does not cover mileage, transportation expenses or additional supportive services, in alignment with the LEAC’s recommendation to prioritize higher hourly wage rates and ensure funding for all People with Lived Experience partnering with the CoC and County.

Notably, the updated proposed compensation rate and structure expands compensation eligibility beyond LEAC and CoC Board meetings to include broader participation in CoC-related committees and working groups that were previously uncompensated. The LEAC is being asked to review and consider the recommended compensation framework. If approved, the recommended compensation framework will be shared with the CoC Board for approval.

Attachments

Attachment A – Lived Experience Compensation Rate Overview and Determination Table

Item 1. Attachment A

Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Overview and Table

The compensation framework for People with Lived Experience is outlined below. There are three (3) primary compensation roles proposed for youth and adults, inclusive of a pay rate for each. Further detail is included in the Compensation Rate Determination Table, including additional time compensated for preparation and travel.

Roles:

Storyteller Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience sharing personal insights and experiences to inform and support committee and project work as participating members within CoC Committees, working groups, or ad hocs (i.e. LEAC member, and YAB member).
- This is inclusive of members or individuals invited to present at or attend a meeting.
- Compensation Rate: \$45 per hour

Advisor Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience providing an advisory role through leadership of a CoC Committee, working group, or ad hoc (i.e. LEAC Chair and Vice Chair).
- Compensation Rate: \$50 per hour

Leadership Role

- This includes People with Lived Experience serving on the CoC Board.
- Compensation Rate: \$55 per hour

Lived Experience Compensation Rate Determination Table:

People with Lived Experience will receive compensation for 30 minutes of meeting preparation time for all meetings and an additional one (1) hour of compensation for travel for in-person meetings.

Role	Rate
Storyteller	\$45/hour
Advisor	\$50/hour
Leadership	\$55/hour