

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

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location:

**Orange County United Way
18012 Mitchell S., Irvine, CA 92614**

[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: 928 9235 0614

****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

MINUTES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and County Language Access Policy, those requiring accommodation and/or interpreter services for this meeting should notify the Office of Care Coordination 72 hours prior to the meeting at (714) 834-5000 or email CareCoordination@ceo.oc.gov Requests received less than 72 hours prior to the meeting will still receive every effort to reasonably fulfill within the time provided.

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

Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

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

Miranda Mears arrived during Business Calendar Item 2.

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 Lived Experience Advisory Committee meeting.

Nichole Gideon motioned to approve the Recommended Action to allow Deborah Kraft to participate remotely. Melissa Welsh seconded the motion. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

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 February 4, 2026.

Elizabeth Flores motioned to approve the Consent Calendar. Nichole Gideon seconded the motion. Chair Robert Santa Bob Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

BUSINESS CALENDAR

1. **CoC Committee Representative Appointments** – Robert “Santa Bob” Morse, Chair and Cameron Pastrano, CoC Staff Specialist, Office of Care Coordination

Cameron Pastrano provided background on the LEAC Compensation Framework and former discussions surrounding LEAC representation within CoC Committees. Cameron Pastrano discussed the nomination and election processes for LEAC representatives to CoC Committees that do not have formal memberships, and noted that terms will be one calendar year, ending December 31, 2026.

Recommended Action a.(1): Appoint up to two (2) LEAC members to participate as representatives for the Coordinated Entry System Steering (CES) Committee

- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse motioned to nominate Paul Kaiser and Nichole Gideon as the Lived Experience Advisory Committee representatives for the CES Steering Committee. Elizabeth Flores seconded the motion. Paul Kaiser and Nichole Gideon accepted the nominations. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

Recommended Action a.(2): Appoint up to two (2) LEAC members to participate as representatives for the Transitional Aged Youth Collaborative (TAY) Committee

- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse motioned to nominate Vinny Zarella as the Lived Experience Advisory Committee representative for the TAY Collaborative Committee. Melissa Welsh seconded the motion. Vinny Zarella accepted the nomination. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

Recommended Action a.(3): Appoint up to two (2) LEAC members to participate as representatives for the Housing Opportunities Committee

- Paul Kaiser motioned to nominate Jason Mercado and Melissa Welsh as the Lived Experience Advisory Committee representatives for the Housing Opportunities Committee. Robert “Santa Bob” Morse seconded the motion. Jason Mercado and Melissa Welsh accepted the nominations. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

Recommended Action a.(4): Appoint up to two (2) LEAC members to participate as representatives for the Service Provider Forum

- Robert “Santa Bob” Morse motioned to nominate Elizabeth Flores and Reha Agar as the Lived Experience Advisory Committee representatives for the Service Provider Forum. Paul Kaiser seconded the motion. Elizabeth Flores and Reha Agar accepted the nominations. Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse issued a voice vote. No nays, no abstentions. The motion passed.

Committee Discussion:

- Vice Chair Paul Kaiser highlighted that there is a limited number of representatives who can be appointed to each committee and discussed how to best approach the situation if multiple people are nominated for the same committee.

2. 2-for-1 Match Policy Pilot Update – Daniel Garcia, CES Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

Daniel Garcia provided background for 2-for-1 match policy, approval, and updates. Daniel Garcia discussed inquiries from property managers for multiple matches, but no requests were made through CES.

Committee Discussion:

- Nichole Gideon asked if the occupancy concerns that originated the policy had been addressed and if there was a way to address long vacancies proactively. Nichole Gideon asked if the policy

would be discussed further in the Housing Opportunities Committee to promote the usage of the policy.

- Vice Chair Paul Kaiser asked why units had been vacant for so long.
- Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse asked when the next update would be provided.
- Vinny Zarrella discussed personal experiences of witnessing vacancies in buildings.

3. Orange County CES Evaluation Partnership Opportunity – Tanesha Travis, Community Engagement Co-Lead, TSTJ Consulting, LLC, Element Consulting Group, LLC

Tanesha Travis introduced roles available to those with lived experience in the Orange County Coordinated Entry System evaluation. Tanesha Travis highlighted the importance of involving those with lived experience to understand how people experience navigating Coordinated Entry in Orange County and ensure communities are represented accurately. Tanesha Travis discussed roles, time commitments, and compensation rates.

Committee Discussion:

- Reha Agar asked for more information on the advisory role.
- Elizabeth Flores asked how long the commitment would be for and where the meetings would take place.
- Deborah Kraft asked how many people Element Consulting Group were looking for.

4. CoC and General Updates – Nichole Gideon, CoC Board Member, and Jasmin Miranda, Interim CoC Administrator, Office of Care Coordination

Nichole Gideon provided a recap of the February 25, 2026, CoC Board meeting, including CoC committee appointments, new Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data requests, CoC program funding updates, the HMIS data policy recommendations, and the CES evaluation presentation. Jasmin Miranda provided CoC updates, including thanking those who participated in the 2026 Point In Time (PIT) Count, litigation updates for the CoC Program NOFO Competition, recent and future Same Day Solutions Fair events, the opening of the public comment period for the Orange County 3-Year Behavioral Health Integrated Plan, and upcoming meetings.

Committee Discussion:

- Deborah Kraft asked for an update on the appointment of a new Chair for the Domestic Violence Committee.
- Nichole Gideon asked what will happen to the expiring CoC Program projects if the 2025 CoC Program NOFO remains in litigation. Nichole Gideon asked for the dates for the 2026 CES Steering Committee meetings.
- Vice Chair Paul Kaiser asked for the times for the upcoming CES Steering Committee meeting.
- Elizabeth Flores asked for the date for the next Service Provider Forum meeting.

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

Committee Discussion:

- Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse shared wanting a local attorney with Elder Law and Disability Rights Center (ELDR Center) to present for LEAC due to involvement with the lawsuit against the County of Orange regarding riverbed encampments.

- Reha Agar shared concerns that the current focus of the ELDR Center is Estate Planning consultation, and that a presentation would not be beneficial as it does not align with the committee focus.
- Deborah Kraft said she did not feel it would be productive for them to present, offered alternative options, including advocates working with unhoused individuals, and noted being unable to hear when more than one person spoke at once.
- Larry “Smitty” Smith asked if the attorney with the ELDR Center had volunteered to present or if the request was coming from elsewhere and discussed concerns regarding intent. Larry “Smitty” Smith suggested finding a different presenter to discuss advocacy efforts. Larry “Smitty” Smith discussed a recent Santa Ana Police Department sweep, which resulted in 91 people being arrested.
- Nichole Gideon asked if the interest is in homelessness advocacy or attorneys representing unhoused populations, to find alternative presenters.
- Vice Chair Paul Kaiser noted that unless there is a new legal case, the presentation as discussed would not be helpful or productive.
- Elizabeth Flores asked if people are being arrested by police for being unhoused during enforcement efforts and shared open positions for the National Alliance to End Homelessness 2026 Leadership Summit.

Chair Robert “Santa Bob” Morse adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 1, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Orange County United Way, located at 18012 Mitchell S., Irvine, CA 92614