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Executive Office of Housing, State of Rhode Island  
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It is widely recognized that the Coordinated Entry System (CES) was a failure. Last fall, it was replaced by Regional Access Points (RAP) — yet those of us in the Rhode Island Housing First Coalition, along with service providers and advocates working in the field, have found that the new system is similarly dysfunctional. In fact, we determined this firsthand by attempting to use it.

The Emergency Pop-Up Shelters (Council of Churches — 3 sites, and the West Warwick Civic Center), provided a badly needed addition of 70-75 shelter beds on the nights when they were authorized to open. When these emergency shelters were closed for one week in February, a group of advocates attempted to help members of the homeless community secure shelter through the state's system. We completed a sample survey following guidelines directly from the Executive Office of Housing (EOH) website. Please follow [this live link \(https://tinyurl.com/EOH-RAPs\)](https://tinyurl.com/EOH-RAPs) for a detailed report of our findings.

Our experience attempting to navigate the system mirrors what unhoused people report every day.

**Demand for shelter beds continues to exceed supply. Even with this constraint, a functioning system must allocate the beds that exist to those in need and provide accurate information about availability as close to real time as possible. At present, neither condition is met.**

We are therefore asking directly: **What does the Department of Housing intend to do to address homelessness and provide shelter for the unhoused in Rhode Island?**

When the commitments on the [EOH website](#) are compared with the results of our sample survey, the conclusion is obvious: the system is broken.

1. The most recent tabulated Point-in-Time Count in 2025 showed that 2,373 people were experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island. This year's count is expected to be higher. Yet, the state's Emergency Shelter Data Dashboard shows only 1,484 state-funded shelter beds. Presumably, our community would have experienced a shortfall of 889 beds at a minimum.
2. That same dashboard shows that on March 3, 2026, 107 individual shelter beds and 5 family shelter units were not utilized.

To experience the daunting process that a homeless person must navigate to secure shelter, we suggest you do the following:

1. Go to the EOH website: <https://housing.ri.gov/homelessness>.
2. Click on “Emergency Shelter Data Dashboard” to open <https://housing.ri.gov/data-reports/emergency-shelter-data-dashboard>
3. Click on <https://housing.ri.gov/resources/individuals-experiencing-homelessness>
4. Click the + sign before “Regional Access Points (RAPs)” — please review the locations and the services promised by each RAP.
5. Click on + sign before “RAP FAQs” and review the information supplied.

Imagine having to do this without the links we identified. Regarding step #2, we asked the Executive Office of Housing what these often incorrect numbers actually mean. We were told these numbers are used only for planning purposes, and do not indicate actual shelter availability. How numbers known to be incorrect can be used for planning purposes is unclear.

In addition to the question raised above — **What do you plan to do to address homelessness as part of your stated mission?**

We ask the following questions on behalf of the hundreds of unhoused people currently living on the streets in Rhode Island:

- **How are people experiencing homelessness supposed to secure a state-funded shelter bed?**
- **What state or federal funds have been given to each of the RAP centers to provide this service?**

In closing, we note that last week a RI House committee heard testimony on a bill (H8000) that would amend the Homeless Bill of Rights to ratify the forcible removal or relocation of encampments on public property. Yet there is no answer to the question asked by those evicted: **“WHERE WOULD YOU HAVE US GO?”**

Sincerely,

Sarah Bates, Bernie Beaudreau, Kathy Neill Daley, Anthony DeAngelis, Tara Girshick, Ruth Gallucci, Nancy Krahe, Mark McBride, Elise McDonald, James McGetrick, Robert Medeiros, Cynthia Mendes, Peter Nightingale, Mary Pendergast, RSM

cc: Governor Dan McKee, Rhode Island General Assembly, Mayor Smiley, Providence City Council, press, ...