January 2021

Unmet Needs Reporting Process - DEMHS Region 4 (Eastern Connecticut) COVID-19 Recovery

Eastern Connecticut's two Councils of Governments, SCCOG and NECCOG, are working with the State of Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) to coordinate communications and planning related to COVID-19 response and recovery. Part of this work has involved the creation of a Region 4 (Eastern CT) Recovery Steering Committee and additional topic-specific working groups.

The State of Connecticut has recently rolled out a process to collect information and data about unmet needs being experienced at the regional and local levels and to transmit this information to State agencies. The compiling of information about the region's unmet needs will be done by SCCOG and NECCOG staff in coordination with members of the Steering Committee and working groups.

The Unmet Needs reporting process is meant to ensure that any high-level unmet need that requires Emergency Support Function (ESF), regional, or state intervention is elevated to the state level for review and action. Unmet needs reported via this process are not meant to document individual case needs, but provide information about broader issues that might need more support than can be provided at the local level. The reporting process will not collect information about needs that can be addressed with existing resources or programs.

What information is requested?

Once an unmet need has been identified by Steering Committee or working group members, SCCOG and NECCOG staff will collect additional information about the reported need and determine whether the need can be addressed with existing resources or programs. Needs that cannot be addressed at the local/regional level will be forwarded to the State agencies for review. The information to be collected includes:

- What is the need?
- What is the estimated number of people affected?
- What actions have been taken to address the need?
- What solutions are proposed to address the need?
- Was this an unmet need prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?
- If there is a funding need, approximately how much funding is required?
- Are there any supporting documents that would be helpful regarding this unmet need?

What happens after an unmet need is reported and escalated to the State level?

Unmet needs reports will be reviewed by State agency staff on at least a weekly basis and State agency staff will work to identify solutions to meet the unmet need(s). The State currently conducts interagency COVID-19 response calls with Councils of Governments staff every Monday afternoon.

Examples of the types of unmet needs to be reported:

"Many elderly residents are no longer able to access food assistance at Senior Centers and lack transportation to food distribution pick-up sites. Food providers do not know which residents need food and do not have the staff to distribute meals to households. This is a problem in towns A, B, C, and D in the region."

"Families in the region are receiving court eviction notices, despite the eviction moratorium. Records from the three courthouses indicate a large backlog of eviction filings across the region with more filings still to be submitted. These evictions will impact many families and will leave them homeless, where the spaces in shelters are already reduced and resident face increased risks of exposure to Covid-19."

Committee and Working Group Administrative Contacts:

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