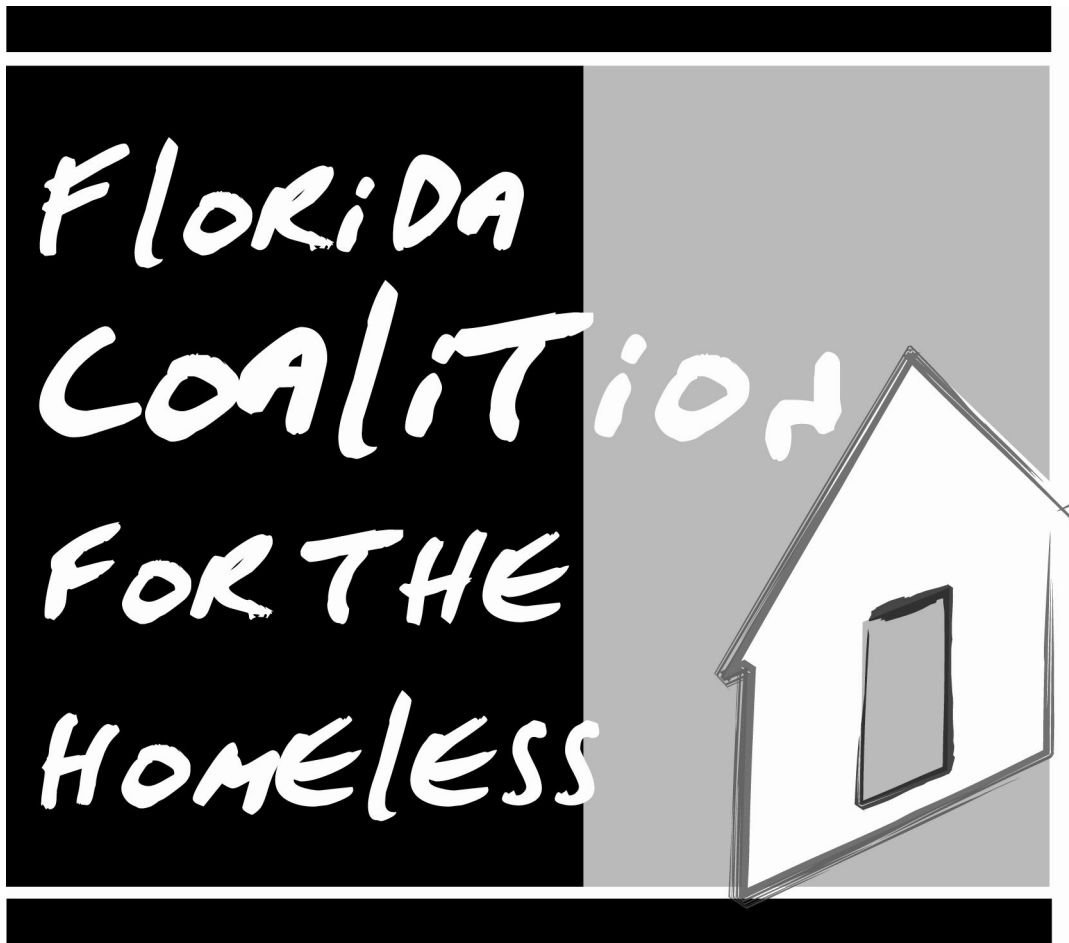


COMMON VISION 2008:
HOUSING FOR ALL FLORIDIANS



2007-2008
ANNUAL REPORT

BECAUSE NO ONE SHOULD
BE HOMELESS IN FLORIDA



FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past year, FCH has experienced sustained growth and revitalization as the board, policy council, staff and members have come together with a Common Vision.

The outcomes of these efforts include:

- ✓ Building a unified voice through the expansion and development of the FCH Board and Policy Council,
- ✓ Initiating and expanding goals of Strategic Plan for FCH,
- ✓ Strengthening relationships with state and national organizations,
- ✓ Enhancing the identity of FCH with logo branding and marketing,
- ✓ Continued success in our advocacy efforts in Tallahassee during the 2008 session, and
- ✓ Maintaining stable membership.

While these accomplishments are to be celebrated, the most satisfying part for me has been the continued spirit of partnership, collaboration and shared vision of everyone involved.

I sincerely thank everyone involved with FCH for their dedication to helping our homeless neighbors and the generosity of time and talents that made 2007-2008 so successful.

I invite everyone back for another year of more success as we continue with a Common Vision for 2009.

Sincerely,

Rayme Nuckles

Rayme L. Nuckles, President

606 W. 4th Ave, Suite 12 • Tallahassee, FL 32303

Phone 850-412-0021 • Fax 850-412-0052 • Toll Free 1-877-205-0021 • Cell 813-404-7514

Email rayme@fchonline.org • www.fchonline.org

ABOUT THE FLORIDA COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

The Florida Coalition for the Homeless is a dynamic organization whose membership and board of directors, homeless advocates, service providers, members of the faith-based community, formerly homeless persons, educators, attorneys, mental health professionals and many others statewide who are committed to putting an end to homelessness and improving the conditions of persons living without shelter. We do this by:

- Sharing information and strategies among local homeless coalitions and all interested parties,
- Standing in support of local legislative initiatives,
- Working to prevent further homelessness and alleviate suffering,
- Proactively monitoring public policies and funding shifts which effect homeless people,
- Providing information and resources to local coalitions and service providers,
- Developing and disseminating best practices, model programs and standards, and
- Promoting involvement and leadership from local service providers, homeless coalitions, units of government and homeless/formerly homeless people in the development and implementation of a statewide agenda.

ADVOCACY

FCH's annual Homeless Legislative Day brought together more than 60 homeless advocates, providers and formerly homeless persons to Tallahassee on March 19, 2008 to advocate for measures that would foster a "Common Vision" of housing for all Floridians, including extremely low income households.

FCH made great strides in pushing the issues forward and educating the public. Most importantly, we kept our members updated on legislative progress and rallied together to make our voices heard throughout the session.

There were 47 bills filed during this session related to our five priority issues or would in some way impact our homeless/near homeless neighbors

- Provide funding for state-funded homeless assistance programs
- Revising the definition of homelessness
- Preserve the Sadowski Housing Trust Act and repeal the cap

- Direct policy and funding for extremely low income housing
- Protect homeless people from violence
- Repeal the Habitual Misdemeanor Offender Law
- Improve assistance program, including supportive housing for persons with mental illness and substance abuse disorders through policy and funding changes

The following are some of the specific impacts:

Budget Impacts

All homeless funding remained intact despite the very tight budget year.

- Homeless Housing Assistance - \$5 million (last year's budget did allow for \$7 million, however only \$5 million was appropriated and utilized - thus this funding maintained)
- Challenge Grant - \$2.1 million
- Local Coalition Funding - \$360,981

Housing Preservation / ELI Housing Funding

Line 1616 of the approved budget contains a provision directing \$10 million in non-recurring funds for a "preservation rehabilitation pilot program in Pasco, Palm Beach, and Orange counties targeting rental housing that receives or has received funding from any federal or state housing funding program. To the maximum extent feasible, these moneys shall be leveraged by intermediaries at least 4:1." This \$10 million allocation was taken from the ELI housing unit dollars, leaving only \$5 million for ELI housing development in the coming fiscal year.

Homelessness Bill

The bill passed the House. The final bill included:

- Definition change remained intact
- Housing First was modified to include required background checks and substance abuse treatment
- Removal of the youth aging out of foster care pilot program due to the budgetary impact
- Added the Voluntary contributions to Relieve Homelessness bill language

The Senate companion bill passed the Senate Children, Families and Elder Affairs committee. Efforts to have the bill withdrawn from its final committees and for the Senate to take up the House bill were unsuccessful despite efforts by Rayme Nuckles, Representative Culp and Senator Crist. Rep. Faye Culp has already stated she will re-file the bill next session.

Jack Davis Restaurants Lending a Helping Hand Act

This law is important to our homeless and near homeless neighbors as it clearly allows restaurants to provide prepared food, with limited liability, to non-profit organizations and homeless shelters who will then hand out the food to our hungry neighbors.

Many restaurants and public food service establishments have expressed a desire to donate food to homeless service providers/shelters, however most have been reluctant to do so because of the liability that may result.

This legislation amended statute, which had been interpreted to only pertain to individuals or groups, not food service businesses. It also extended the current protection from criminal and civil liability to a good faith donor or gleaner of any canned or perishable food apparently fit for human consumption to a charitable or nonprofit organization for free distribution to include all foods that have been prepared at a public food service establishment licensed. Any donor operating under the provisions of this law must comply with laws regulating health or sanitation. Additionally, this immunity from criminal penalty or civil damages does not apply if an injury is caused by the gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct of the donor or gleaner.

The advocate for this legislation was Jack Davis, a middle-school student from South Florida, who contacted his local lawmakers, Representative Ari Porth and Senator Nan Rich to see what could be done to allow restaurants to donate food to nonprofit organizations to provide to hungry people in the state.

The Act passed both Chambers and was signed into law by the Governor during the 2008 legislative session.

The FCH Board and staff thank the Miami Homeless Coalition for the Homeless for funding our 2007 Florida legislative efforts and the Homeless Coalition for Hillsborough County for their assistance in coordinating these efforts.

MEMBER AND COALITION SERVICES

FCH staff and board members provided needed services to local coalitions and Continuum of Care agencies.

Technical Assistance

- Provided technical assistance to Continuum of Care Lead Agencies regarding service provision, PIT, and capacity building.
- Provided guidance and resources through the FCH website, through the following features:
 - ❖ Information and Referral – Links to National and State Organizations
 - ❖ Discussion Forums
 - ❖ Library
 - ❖ Technical Assistance – includes discharge planning, COC planning, Housing First, PIT survey tools, and service delivery.
 - ❖ Advocacy
 - ❖ Grant Resources

Networking and Collaboration

- Continued active presence on the State Office on Homelessness' Council on Homelessness.
- Worked with other state-wide organizations, strengthening relationships and collaborating efforts with:
 - ❖ Florida Homeless Education Department
 - ❖ Florida Housing Coalition
 - ❖ Florida Housing Finance Corporation
 - ❖ Florida Supportive Housing Coalition
 - ❖ FSU Institute for Family Violence Studies
 - ❖ DCF Office on Homelessness
 - ❖ Sadowski Coalition
- Worked with national organizations, strengthening relationships and collaborate efforts with:
 - ❖ National Alliance to End Homelessness
 - ❖ National Association for the Education of Homeless Children & Youth
 - ❖ National Coalition for the Homeless
 - ❖ National Health Care for the Homeless Council
 - ❖ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
 - ❖ National Low Income Housing Coalition

Education

FCH hosted its first annual joint homeless and supportive housing conference with the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition on October 24 – 26 2007 in St. Petersburg, Florida. The event was a tremendous success, with an attendance of over 300 people. It included a pre-conference for homeless education liaisons and renowned advocate for people with disabilities, Steve Gold. The following two days provided an array of quality presentations comparable to national conferences. We also were honored to have the following plenary speakers: Andrea White, Chief Program Officer for the Center for Urban Community Services' Housing Resource Center; Sam Tsemberis, founder of Pathways to Housing; Mark Johnston, HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary of Special Needs; and Shelia Crowley, National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Membership Communication

Newsletters

Newsletters were provided to the members on a quarterly basis with state/federal legislation updates, resource information, upcoming events, and immediate issues pertaining to the homeless.

Email Alerts

Emails are sent frequently to members with time-sensitive information pertaining to legislation and events.

Homeless Services Locator

The Homeless Services Locator is a listing of agencies throughout Florida that provide services to the homeless. The information originates from the Homeless Service Directory created in 2004. Over the summer of 2007, the Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, contacted the service providers to update the information for the database housed on the FCH website. The details about service providers throughout the state are available to the public 24/7.

BOARD AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT

FCH Board

The FCH Board sustained full board membership throughout the year. A representative of the Florida Homeless Education Department and the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition were added to the Board.

FCH Policy Council

The Policy Council continued its role as a committee to recommend policy and legislative issue to be addressed by the FCH Board. New coalitions became members. The following are the local coalitions currently represented:

- Alachua County Coalition for the Hungry and Homeless
- Big Bend Homeless Coalition
- Emergency Services and Homeless Coalition of St. Johns County
- EscaRosa Coalition for the Homeless
- Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County
- Homeless Coalition of Palm Beach County
- Homeless Services Network of Central Florida
- Lee County Department of Human Services
- Marion County Homeless Council
- Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition
- Okaloosa/Ft. Walton Continuum of Care
- Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless
- Southernmost Homeless Assistance League
- Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
- Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council, Inc
- United Way of Suwannee Valley
- Volusia/ Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless

Staff

Freyja Sutherland Harris, Program Director became a regular employee of FCH in January 2007

FCH Strategic Plan

The Florida Coalition for the Homeless Board and Policy Council met in June to develop a strategic plan for FCH. The plan was divided into five goals over a two year period. Each strategic goal was assigned to five small workgroups consisting of board and policy council members who are responsible for initiating objectives and reporting back to the full board. The following are the Goals:

1. Work with to strengthen FCH financially.
2. Develop and implement legislative agenda and priorities
3. Improve governance and structure
4. Provide education to stakeholders
5. Sustain & maintain professional image and ability to communicate value-added services & information

THE YEAR AHEAD

The Florida Coalition for the Homeless intends to continue advocating on behalf of those experiencing homelessness and the service providers that are dedicated to providing direct assistance. In addition, FCH will strive to provide quality technical assistance to local homeless coalitions and continuums of care around the state, and increase the Coalition's visibility, and perceived value among local homeless services providers, membership and a variety of potential supporters of our mission around the state.

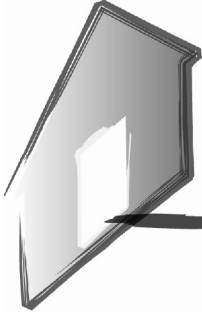
*Thank you for your support,
Freyja Sutherland Harris, Program Director*

2007–2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Florida Coalition for the Homeless Board of Directors members represent the districts established by the Department of Children and Families and are experienced advocates, knowledgeable about the issues confronting Florida's homeless population.

- Rayme L. Nuckles, *President*
Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County
- Jackie Griffin-Doherty, *Vice-President*
Operation PAR, Inc
- Louise Hubbard, *Treasurer**
Treasure Coast Homeless Services Council
- Stephanie Shepherd, *Secretary**
Big Bend Homeless Coalition
- Joe Monroe
Citrus County Division of Housing Services
- Sarah Snyder*
Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless
- Barbara Wheeler*
Mid-Florida Homeless Coalition
- B.E. Thompson*
Life Stream Behavioral Center, Inc
- Christine Long*
Metropolitan Ministries
- Anita Cocoves*
Martin County Board of County Commissioners
- Lorraine Allen
Florida Department of Education
- Robert Malone
Florida A & M
- Jon DeCarmine
Alachua County Office on Homelessness
- Suzanne Edwards
Catholic Charities Bureau
- Richard Martin*
Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness

**Also serves on the FCH Policy Council*



FLORIDA COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Contact Us

370 Office Plaza Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32301

P.O. Box 3764
Tallahassee, FL 32315

850-412-0021
850-412-0052 (fax)
1-877-205-0021 (Toll free)

frejja@fchonline.org

www.fchonline.org