



DOUGLAS COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

MINUTES

Thursday, September 11, 2025	9:00 AM	BOCC Hearing Room, Conference Rooms A & B
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In-Person Attendees: Commissioner Abe Laydon, Allison Cutting, Alyssa DeJesus, Andrea Barnum, Arin DeGross, Brian Griggs, Brytany Lemon, Caroline Frizell, Chris Eubanks, Dan Marlow, Darren Weekly, Elise Cordle, Greg Matthews, Jamie Fisher, Jay Carpenter, Jason Gray, Jeff Garcia, Jennifer Eby, Jill Duffy, Kirsten Swanson, Laura Ciancone, Luke Ward, Maria Ciano, Matthew DuFresne, Melody D'Haillecourt, Mike McIntosh, Mike Polhemus, Nick Adamson, Rand Clark, Ruby Richards, San Castillo, Sandy Holcomb, Sasha Easton, Scott Nelson, Stephanie Dorrell, Steven Dodrill, Tiffany Marsitto, Valerie Brewster

Online Participants: 19 (list is available upon request)

- Welcome and Introductions: Commissioner Laydon**
Tiffany Marsitto, Community Services Supervisor: Introduced new HEART Navigator, Matt DuFresne.
Stephanie Dorrell, Sergeant of CRT and HEART Deputies, Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO): Introduced new HEART Deputies Tom Brinkworth and Paul Stever.
- Mental and Behavioral Health Services:**
Brytany Lemon, Clinical Director of Supervision, AllHealth Network: The process of civil competency certifications provided for individuals who are experiencing an active mental health crisis have specific criteria to meet. The process begins with a short-term certification called an M1 hold. M1 holds are initiated by police, behavioral health professionals, or providers. After the M1 process has begun, an in-patient placement is required to complete an assessment. Hospitals who are a 2765 certified facility and preferably have a Walk In Crisis (WIC), Psychiatric Emergency and Crisis Services (PECS), or Health Care Analytics Team (HCAT) team can provide voluntary assessments in hopes of stabilizing an individual. The M1 holds usually lasts 3-5 days. If an involuntary competency commitment is required to receive treatment, the in-patient placement and the evaluation by a provider must be arranged simultaneously. This certification is only requested when all other provider options have been exhausted, and no engagement is being seen with an individual. These certifications are long-term, require court orders, and require treatment to be provided. An Emergency Commitment (EC) is like an M1 hold but for substance disorder and detox services and may last up to five days. The individual must meet the definition of incapacitation. Meaning they are unable to make rational decisions with respect to their need for treatment, their basic personal needs or safety, or other basic decisions concerning themselves. An EC leads to an Involuntary Commitment (IC) certification. IC certifications usually lead up to placement in a 30-90-day substance disorder treatment facility.

Specialty courts provide a more structured protocol to create avenues for individuals to successfully engage in and receive treatments. This collaboration between behavioral health and law enforcement has proven to have more successful outcomes for the individual and the community.

Laura Ciancone, Mental Health Division Manager, Douglas County: The four areas where Douglas County Mental Health Collaborative (DCMHC) programs intersect with civil competency certifications include co-response, enhanced care coordination, mapping the civil certification of severely mental health related individuals with attention to gaps, barriers, and implementing solutions, and developing a civil certification specialty court pilot. Over the last two years, DCMHC has worked with stakeholders to identify solution themes and develop a Direct Admission Pilot to help coordinate with partners to expedite the civil competency certification process. The pilot is meant to expedite the process from identifying a person in crisis, get them into a facility placement quickly, and avoid the emergency room. The development of a Civil Mental Health Certification Specialty Court may help expedite the civil competency certification process between treatment providers, case management agencies, and the judicial system.

Valerie Brewster, County Attorney's Office: There are two different statutory sections that address commitments in the State of Colorado. There is criminal competency commitment and civil competency commitment. Each have their own distinct legal processes that cannot intersect. If a civil commitment overlaps into the felony criminal commitment the two courts can't currently partner on cases due to privacy concerns. The County Attorney's Office is working with the Judicial Office in the creation of a competency court that includes diversion. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is being created to bridge the gap for the civil competency commitment and the criminal competency commitment courts for attorneys to partner in these cases. Criminal and civil competency evaluations have different rubric processes as well. The lack of competency evaluators available for felony criminal competency commitment is an identified gap. Another identified gap is a population of misdemeanors and petty offenses who are recurring offenders due to a lack of engagement in stabilization services. The Reintegration, CRT, and HEART teams and the courts are brainstorming ways to address this gap to continue to reduce recidivism.

3. Executive Committee Member Updates:

Sasha Easton, Workforce Director and Division Manager, Arapahoe/Douglas Works!: A Second Chance Workshop is being offered two times in the month of September for those who are justice involved at the ACC Sturm Campus in Castle Rock. September is Workforce Development month. A large career fare is scheduled for September 16th in the Centrepont Office in Aurora.

Commissioner Laydon suggested that the DCHI Committee should meet six times a year starting in November 2025. There were no objections.

4. HEART Update:

Tiffany Marsitto, Community Services Supervisor: August HEART activity summary includes 43 new clients enrolled in the HEART program, 224 total referrals, 44 clients

exited the program with 7% going to permanent housing. HEART received six panhandling calls for the month of August, one was homeless, non-Douglas County, four were not homeless, one was homeless, and Douglas County. There were zero encampments for the month of August. The HEART line received 24 total phone calls from the public, 28 incoming text messages, and 12 text conversations. HEART activities that were completed for the month of August included 14 business engagements with 12 trespass letters obtained. HEART attended the National Night Out at Ponderosa High School and Sterling Ranch, presented at the Christ Episcopal Church, and attended a poverty simulation with a local non-profit. The August By Name List (BNL) data showed a total of 87 unhoused. Of those 87 people, 43 are sheltered, 38 were sleeping in vehicles, and six single people are sleeping outside. In August of 2024, there were 23 enrollments to the HEART program; in September of 2024, there were 26 enrollments and in July of 2025, there were 36 enrollments. In August of 2025, there were 68 households that received one or more services in the HEART program.

HEART completed a total of 224 referrals for service for the month of August 2025. The services provided by location included Highlands Ranch 28%, Castle Rock 29%, Parker 24%, Lone Tree 11%, Castle Pines 4%, and Englewood 4%. Exit outcomes for the 44 clients exited included 7% exited to permanent housing, 34% exited to temporary housing, 39% exited to emergency shelter, 4% were no contact, and 14% wanted to remain homeless but out of County.

August's HEART success story comes from Navigator Donté Young. In November 2024, Donté began helping a woman with multiple disabilities who was unhoused. She received social security benefits each month but struggled to meet income requirements for permanent housing. She spent multiple nights in her car and at local hotels, which negatively impacted her mental health. She collaborated with her therapist and case managers to pursue employment, though her medical needs created barriers. She previously obtained a housing voucher from another state that she transferred to Colorado with the help of Douglas County Housing Partnership (DCHP). She toured an apartment in August 2025, signed a lease a few days later, then moved in at the end of the month. The client is doing very well in her new home and thankful for the assistance she received.

7. **Public Comment:** No comment
8. **Closing Comments:** Commissioner Laydon

The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, November 13, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.