Board of County Commissioners
Leon County, Florida

Workshop Addressing Homelessness

Tuesday,
May 23, 2023
1:00 p.m.

Leon County Courthouse
County Commission Chambers, 5th Floor
301 S. Monroe St.   Tallahassee, FL 32301

The media and the public can access the meeting in real time on Comcast channel 16, the Leon County Florida channel on Roku, the County's Facebook page, YouTube channel, Twitter and County web site.

Leon County
Board of County Commissioners

Notes for Workshop

Leon County Board of County Commissioners
Workshop Item
May 23, 2023

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Vincent S. Long, County Administrator

Title: Report on Homelessness in Leon County

Review and Approval:	Vincent S. Long, County Administrator
Department/ Division Review:	Alan Rosenzweig, Deputy County Administrator Wanda Hunter, Assistant County Administrator
Lead Staff/ Project Team:	Shington Lamy, Director, Human Services and Community Partnerships Abigail Sanders, Human Services Analyst

Statement of Issue:

As requested at the February 21st Board meeting and in partnership with the Big Bend Continuum of Care, this item provides a comprehensive report on homelessness in Leon County including the CoC 2023 Point-In-Time Count on the homeless population. The item also presents the Big Bend Continuum of Care's five-year 2021-2025 Strategic Plan to address homelessness; details the County's roles, partnerships, and investments; and provides recommendations that will build on efforts to reduce homelessness and its impact on the community. The Big Bend Continuum of Care, Leon County Sherriff's Office, and local homeless service providers including CESC-Kearney Center, Family Promise (formerly Big Bend Homeless Coalition), Capital City Youth Services, Refuge House, Brehon Family Services, and Ability 1st will participate in the Workshop.

Fiscal Impact:

This item has a fiscal impact. The item makes recommendations for the allocation of an additional $500,021 in Federal Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funding to expand emergency homeless shelter to unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community. The item also recommends the extension of the joint agreement between Leon County, City of Tallahassee and Big Bend Continuum of Care for one year (FY 2024) to utilize $625,000 in previously allocated joint American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding ($345,000 County and $280,000 City) to continue programs such as street outreach and Permanent Supportive Housing.

Staff Recommendation:

Provided on the following page.

Staff Recommendation:

Option #1:   Accept the report on homelessness in Leon County.

Option #2:   In partnership with the City of Tallahassee, amend the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding Agreement with Big Bend Continuum of Care to extend the term and amend the exhibits in the amount of $345,000 in previously allocated County ARPA funding to the organization, and authorize the County Administrator to execute the amended agreement, subject to legal review by the County Attorney, for the following:

- The establishment of the Big Bend Continuum of Care Community Engagement Liaison position to regularly engage and educate the community and key stakeholders such as faith-based organizations on homelessness.
- Continue funding of the Street Outreach Program to engage unsheltered homeless individuals and families.
- Continue funding of Permanent Supportive Housing to place homeless individuals and families in housing.
- Continue funding to provide training and technical support to nonprofit and faith-based organizations to expand the local homeless services through the Neighborhood Based Partner Capacity Building.

Option #3:   Continue to support the Sheriff's HOST Deputies with County ARPA funding previously allocated to the Sheriff's Office for the positions.

Option #4:   Direct staff to develop a countywide ordinance to make it unlawful to hold a sign or display advertisement in the median of a road for any reason.

Option #5:   Adopt a community campaign to reduce panhandling that includes the establishment of signs developed in partnership with the City of Tallahassee and Big Bend Continuum of Care, to be placed at medians on select County roads.

Option #6:   Allocate an additional $500,021 in Federal Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funding to providers of emergency homeless shelter services that reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community, and authorize the County Administrator to execute the agreements, subject to legal review by the County Attorney.

Option #7:   Direct staff to bring back an agenda item to explore options for long-term and dedicated line-item funding for emergency homeless shelters for FY 2025.

Option #8:   Direct staff to develop a draft policy to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding or bond authorization to set aside a portion of the units for individuals or families exiting homelessness.

Executive Summary

Homelessness is not unique to Leon County. In 2022, more than 500,000 individuals experienced homelessness across the United States. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), 2022 saw the highest number of homeless in recorded history of data collection. Nationally, the rate of unsheltered homeless (individuals and families in encampments or vehicles) has increased significantly over the past year. As a result, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness states that communities across the nation are experiencing a crisis in the number of unsheltered individuals and families. NAEH and the National Low Income Housing Coalition have attributed the increase in homelessness to the federal government's ending its housing assistance and the eviction moratorium that was put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal authority on homelessness services, programming, funding, and regulation.   HUD generally defines homelessness as individuals and families that lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. In 1995, HUD began requiring communities to submit a single application for grant funding to streamline the funding process, encourage coordination of housing and service providers on a local level, and promote the development of Continuum of Care agencies.

Locally, the Big Bend Continuum of Care (CoC) is recognized by HUD and the State of Florida as the regional planning and oversight organization for homelessness in Leon and seven (7) neighboring counties. The CoC governing board includes a County Commissioner, City Commissioner, representatives from the institutions of higher education (i.e., Florida A&M University, Florida State University, and Tallahassee Community College) and homeless service providers.   The CoC is responsible for coordinating homeless service providers, partners, programs, and services as well as the distribution of state and federal funding. This process allows the community to maximize resources to address the highest needs of the homeless population.

The CoC is required to conduct the Point-In-Time (PIT) count each year during the last week of January for the eight-county region. The PIT count assists the CoC to coordinate community priorities on state and federal homeless funding and develop policy recommendations that address the highest needs of the homeless in the community. The CoC leads volunteers to physically engage and count every person experiencing homelessness. The 2023 PIT count was conducted from January 23 through 27. The results of which reflect that the community experienced a 22% increase (801 vs. 659 in 2022) in the overall homeless population after three consecutive years of reductions.   The most significant increase was in the unsheltered population (60% increase). As mentioned earlier, the increase is consistent with national and state trends on homelessness and is a result of the end of federal housing assistance and the eviction moratorium that was put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data collected through the PIT count is an essential component to the CoC's Strategic Plan which is also required by HUD. In 2021, the CoC adopted its five-year (2021-2025) Strategic Plan which outlines the community's goals, priorities, objections, actions, and performance metrics to reduce homelessness (Attachment #1). The CoC meets regularly on the Strategic Plan with homeless services providers, human service providers, the County, City, and other key stakeholders to

identify programs and resources that can better address the needs of the homeless population. State and federal funding distributed through the CoC must align with its Strategic Plan.

County investments, policies, and initiatives have been consistent with the goals and priorities of the CoC's Strategic Plan to coordinate resources and collectively address the highest needs of the homeless. Over the past three years, the County has invested more than $32.5 million to prevent and reduce homelessness. For example, in response to the global pandemic, in 2021 the County and City dedicated $6.272 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and jointly contracted with the CoC to plan and coordinate the distribution of the funds to address homelessness. The funding included $1.410 million allocated directly to the CoC for street outreach, Permanent Supportive Housing, and other programs, and $3.075 million to the CHSP to establish the Homeless Services Category.   To date, the distribution of these funds has resulted in the following:

- Engagement and referral of more than 489 unsheltered homeless individuals to services

- Prevention of more than 115 individuals and families from falling into homelessness

- Permanent housing for 51 formerly chronically homeless families

- Facilitated the return of 116 homeless individuals and families to their home community by paying for transportation costs (e.g., bus tickets, car repair, etc.)

Building upon the County's investment, at the April 25, 2023 Budget Workshop, the Board directed that an additional $500,021 awarded from Federal Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funding (Consistency Fund) be included for consideration as part of the Workshop. In addition to the financial investment, the County has adopted Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goals that align with the CoC's Strategic Plan, which include the following:

- Work with the City, CoC, Kearney Center, and other local stakeholders to enhance engagement and awareness of resources available for individuals and families experiencing homelessness to support safe, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods. (2023-11)

- Work with the City, CoC, and street outreach teams to develop corridor plans for North Monroe, Downtown Tallahassee, and Pensacola Street for outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals and to engage residents and businesses to address community aesthetics and neighborhood safety along the corridors. (2023-17)

- Leverage federal funding and relationships with local service providers to increase the number of temporary/transitional housing beds available to those experiencing homelessness. (2023-19)

- Support community partners to place 100 residents experiencing chronic homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing. (BG3)

To implement the Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goals, the County participates in ongoing meetings conducted by the CoC. Meeting participants include local homeless service providers, the City, faith-based organizations, and other human service providers to identify challenges and discuss innovative solutions and best practices to reduce homelessness. The following challenges have been identified by utilizing the PIT count, the CoC's Strategic Plan and by evaluating the

effectiveness of current programs and services: 1) an increase in the number of unsheltered homeless; 2) insufficient funding to support emergency shelters and, 3) the lack of affordable housing. These challenges are consistent with those identified in the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness as developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness in December 2022 (Attachment #2). According to the Federal Strategic Plan, the fundamental solution to end homelessness is housing. Strategies to increase housing and reduce homelessness as highlighted in the Federal Strategic Plan include the following:

(1) Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness.

(2) Strengthen the capacity of homeless service providers to reduce homelessness and connect clients to housing.

(3) Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Accordingly, the following 10 recommendations were developed in partnership with the CoC and local homeless service providers and align with the Federal Strategic Plan, as well as the Board's Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goals, and the CoC's Strategic Plan. In addition, the County met with other stakeholders and gathered their feedback to ensure their issues and concerns were addressed (Attachments #3 and #4).

Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness:

1. **Establish the CoC Community Engagement Liaison position at the CoC.** Recognizing the need to increase engagement with the community beyond homeless service providers and homeless clients, the CoC would establish the Community Engagement Liaison (Liaison) position utilizing approximately $55,200 in previously allocated ARPA funds. The Liaison would meet regularly with local stakeholders such as businesses, neighborhoods, and faith-based organizations, to be proactive and responsive to problems at the street level to coordinate effort that interrupt potential impacts of homelessness in the community. In addition, the Liaison would gather community input to identify and bring resources in coordination with local homeless providers that could reverse the trend of panhandling, loitering, and encampments in areas with high concentrations of homelessness to improve safe, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods.

2. **Continue to fund the Street Outreach Teams to engage unsheltered homeless**. Street Outreach teams are employed by homeless service providers to engage unsheltered homeless living outdoors in encampments and vehicles to connect them to housing. In the past two years, the Street Outreach teams have engaged 489 individuals and families providing them with housing resources, including shelters, hotels, or permanent housing; and assisted approximately 116 individuals and families with transportation costs such as bus tickets and car repairs to return to their home community.   The joint County and City agreement with the CoC for allocated ARPA funding is scheduled to expire September 30, 2023. The Agreement would be extended to continue the Street Outreach program utilizing approximately $151,800 in previously allocated ARPA funds.

3. **Continue to support the Sheriff's HOST Deputy Unit**. On December 14, 2021, at the request of the Sheriff, the Board established the Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) deputy unit to assist with the engagement of the unsheltered homeless and connect them to available resources including social services, meals, and housing. The HOST unit which is comprised of two deputies was officially deployed in June 2022. The HOST deputies have been an essential component to engaging the unsheltered homeless population in coordination with the CoC and Street Outreach teams. As law enforcement officers, HOST deputies have the authority to make arrests when required. The presence of the HOST deputies is often key to persuading individuals to accept services such as emergency homeless shelters and vacate prohibited areas (i.e. trespassing). Frequently, the HOST deputies coordinate with the Apalachee Center and the City of Tallahassee Police Department to provide services to a homeless individual actively experiencing a mental health crisis. Since June 2022, the HOST deputies have engaged and assisted nearly 300 homeless individuals.

    The HOST deputies also engage residents and businesses providing assistance to homeless individuals and to remove individuals when requested by property owners. In partnership with the CoC, the HOST deputies have participated to date in more than 50 meetings with local neighborhood and business organizations to provide information on resources available to the homeless population as well as proper protocol for engaging homeless individuals and families. As part of its approval of the HOST deputies unit, the Board allocated $491,000 for personnel and equipment and requested that the Sheriff provide an update six-months following the deployment of the HOST deputies. As mentioned earlier, the HOST deputies were deployed in June 2022. On February 21, 2023, the Sheriff provided an update on the HOST deputies at which time he requested that the Board continue to support the HOST deputies. It is recommended that the Board continue to support the Sheriff's HOST deputies with County ARPA funding previously allocated for the position which has been contemplated in the FY 2024 budget.

4. **Consider a countywide ordinance to prohibit solicitation on medians.** On January 25, 2022, the Board considered a countywide ordinance that would have prohibited soliciting on the median for any reason; sleeping or camping in certain public areas, and public urination and defecation to improve public health and safety for individuals and families experiencing homelessness as well as the community at large. Violations ranged from fines for solicitation or public urination/defecation to imprisonment for sleeping or camping in certain public areas. The proposed ordinance was consistent with Federal law governing First Amendment protection of speech as well as the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishments. However, the Board did not move forward with adoption of the ordinance primarily due to opposition from the Sheriff and concerns raised by local homeless service providers, as well as the CoC on its potential impact on homelessness. On February 8, 2022, the Board repealed the Solicitation on Public Streets Ordinance that prohibited soliciting in or on the median of any street within the County because the Ordinance carved out certain activities and was not content-neutral. As a result, currently the County does not have an ordinance to regulate solicitation in or on the median of any street in the unincorporated areas. It is important to note that the City currently has an ordinance prohibiting solicitation on the medians within City limits. As presented during

his presentation to the Board on February 21, 2023, the Sheriff continues to oppose the initial ordinance that specifically prohibits sleeping or camping in certain public areas considered by the Board in January 2022. The CoC and homeless service providers have also continued to express their concerns regarding any ordinance that would prohibit sleeping or camping in certain public areas. However, the CoC has expressed support for evaluating an ordinance focused on prohibiting solicitation on medians.

According to the CoC, most individuals that panhandle or solicit at medians are not homeless; rather they are transient or housed. There has been an increase in the visibility of panhandling on several medians in the community and a public perception that panhandlers are homeless. Individuals that solicit on medians often block or obstruct traffic to collect money from motorists that assume they are assisting the homeless, which can cause public safety issues. As supported by the CoC and homeless service providers, an ordinance consistent with State law and recent Federal rulings would be brought back to the Board for its consideration to make it unlawful to hold a sign or display an advertisement in a median of a road for any reason and would apply countywide in order to promote safety. Although the City currently has a similar ordinance governing this behavior within the City limits, which would prevail over a proposed ordinance to the extent of any conflict, the countywide ordinance would continue to protect against such activity within medians in the event the City were to amend or repeal its Ordinance. The proposed ordinance would not prohibit solicitation on sidewalks as this is considered protected speech. The CoC and homeless service providers have expressed support for an ordinance that would make it unlawful to hold a sign or display an advertisement in the median of a road for any reason.

5. **Adopt a community campaign to reduce panhandling that includes the establishment of signs at medians on County roads.** To further reduce panhandling and support homeless service providers, a community campaign would be developed in partnership with the City and CoC to encourage donations to the CoC rather than to individuals that panhandle on the streets. The campaign would include signage at medians on County roads with high frequency of panhandling (Attachment #5). The City intends to install signage at medians on City roads and as a result signs would be placed at most of the roadways with the highest frequency of panhandling. The funds collected by the CoC would be utilized to support Street Outreach services such as food, hotels, and bus tickets. Signs would be installed in June following Board ratification of the actions taken at the Workshop.

6. **Allocate $500,021 in one-time Consistency Funding to providers of emergency homeless shelter services that reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community.** The County, City and CoC have held several meetings with key stakeholders including residents, businesses, and faith-based organizations on the impact of homelessness with specific concerns on loitering, littering, and overall public safety. Emergency shelters such as The Kearney Center and HOPE Community, provide 24-hour services including sleeping quarters, meals, showers, and case management that can reduce the length of time an individual or family remains homeless. However, the emergency shelters provide very limited day service in their facilities such as classes and counseling due to a lack of funding. As a result, clients that are not employed or enrolled in an

educational program often congregate and loiter along the Pensacola Street corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and the Capital City Youth Services shelters are within at least one mile of Pensacola Street.

To strengthen the providers' capacity to address the impact of homelessness with specific emphasis on unsheltered homeless and loitering, the County would establish a one-time grant process, utilizing the Consistency Funding, to expand daily services at the emergency homeless shelters. Daily services would provide meals, showers, storage and programs such as job training courses, financial literacy, and mental health and substance abuse services. Daily services must be offered consistently Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Emergency shelters are anticipated to coordinate, collaborate, and potentially contract with local human services providers to offer programming for daily services. The North Monroe Street and Downtown Tallahassee areas have also been identified as areas with high concentration of unsheltered homelessness based on calls and responses by HOST deputies and street outreach teams. Emergency shelters would coordinate with the CoC, HOST deputies, and street outreach teams to transport homeless individuals loitering in Downtown Tallahassee and North Monroe Street to shelters where daily and other life skills services are offered. Additional locations such as the Senior Center or the VA Office also offer important life skills training. The emergency shelters would also be required to actively patrol and engage the homeless population along the Pensacola Street Corridor to reduce loitering, littering, and panhandling.

The County worked closely with the CoC and local homeless service providers to develop preliminary services that would maximize the County's one-time Consistency Funding to most effectively connect homeless individuals and families to resources while reducing loitering, littering, and panhandling in the community. Emergency shelters have the capacity to provide expanded services, but lack the funding. Following Board ratification of actions taken at the Workshop, applications with detailed proposals would be accepted for approximately 2-3 weeks. The applications would be reviewed and awarded by the County in partnership with the CoC. Subsequently, the County would enter into a contract with the awarded emergency homeless shelter to deliver the services that have been described. Services are expected begin later this summer upon contract execution. To expedite the implementation of expanded services to reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering, it is also recommended that the Board authorize the County Administrator to execute the agreements, subject to legal review of the County Attorney.

An Oversight Committee comprised of County, CoC, and City staff would ensure daily services are implemented as contracted, and monitor the progress on the reduction of unsheltered homeless, solicitation, and loitering on the North Monroe Street, and Pensacola Street Corridors and Downtown Tallahassee.

7. **Evaluate options for dedicated line-item funding for emergency homeless shelters**. Recognizing that emergency shelters serve a critical role in meeting the consistent and increasing challenges of homelessness, it is recommended that the County evaluate dedicated, line-item funding for such services. As detailed later in the item, the federal and state governments provide very limited funding for emergency shelter operations. At the

local level, the County and City have historically funded emergency homeless shelters through Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP), which serves as the grant process for human services and funded as a two-year funding cycle. For the current two-year cycle (FY 2023 and FY 2024) the County and City are investing $2 million collectively in emergency homeless shelters for The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and Capital City Youth Services shelters. However, the emergency shelters often share that the current level of funding is not sufficient to address significant budget deficits at the shelters for staffing, case management, and other operations necessary to assist homeless individuals and families secure permanent housing. Therefore, the emergency shelter providers have requested that the County and City consider dedicated line-item funding for such programs consistent with the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

Options would be brought to the Board that evaluate the establishment of dedicated line-item as well as appropriate funding level for emergency homeless shelters for the Board's consideration. Options for line-item funding would be examined in partnership with the City, CoC and other community partners such as the Children Services Council of Leon County (CSC). Funding of emergency shelters in other like-size communities would be evaluated. As mentioned earlier, emergency homeless shelters are funded through the CHSP two-year competitive grant cycle for the funding of existing services and programs proposed by the agencies. Rather than providing grant funding, contracts for dedicated line-item funding with the emergency homeless shelters would establish overall objectives, programmatic criteria and performance measures set by the County and other funding partners.   The options brought to the Board would also include proposals for greater oversight of the shelters by the County, City, and CoC to improve operations, financial conditions, and efficiencies to better serve the homeless population and meet community expectations. Options would be brought back to the Board in fall 2023 for line-item funding in coordination with partners such as the City for the FY 2025 budget process which would align with the next two-year funding cycle for CHSP.

8. **Continue to fund capacity building for nonprofits and faith-based organizations to expand homeless services through the Neighborhood Capacity Building Program**. For the past two years, the CoC has utilized County and City ARPA funding to provide training and technical support to build the capacity of the homeless services system. Training and technical support provided by the CoC has assisted nonprofit and faith-based organizations with establishing and implementing rent and utility assistance programs, and to secure supplies such as cots and blankets for cold night shelter services during the winter season. Utilizing approximately $27,600 of previously allocated ARPA funds, the CoC would work in concert with United Partners for Human Services (UPHS) to continue to provide 10-15 nonprofits and faith-based organizations the support to expand services that will reduce homelessness.

Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness:

9. **Continue to fund Permanent Supportive Housing to connect homeless individuals and families to housing.** Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides affordable housing assistance typically in the form of housing vouchers to individuals that have been

chronically homeless (homeless for one year or more and has a disability). Consistent with the County's Bold Goal to "support community partners to place 100 residents experiencing chronic homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing", the CoC would utilize approximately $110,400 in previously allocated ARPA funds to house chronically homeless residents. Thus far, approximately 51 formerly homeless individuals have been housed and it is anticipated an additional 15-20 chronically homeless individuals could be assisted within the next fiscal year. As a result, the County is on track to meet its five-year Bold Goal in 2024.

10. **Consider a Policy to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding or bond authorization to set aside units for households exiting homelessness.** As described later in the item, over the past two years, the County has provided $4.3 million in direct funding to increase the number of affordable housing rental units and authorized approximately $148 million in bond financing for the development and redevelopment of affordable multifamily housing projects. As a result, more than 1,000 affordable rental units will be developed over the next 12-18 months due to actions and investments made by the County. The units will be reserved for low-income households that earn 60% or below the Area Median Income (AMI) (for example, $42,000 for a family of four). However, individuals and families experiencing homelessness often earn income at 30% or below the AMI ($27,750 for a family of four). The State currently requires affordable housing development seeking tax credit funding to set aside a portion of units for special populations such as farmworkers, youth exiting foster care, or the homeless. A similar policy would be brought back to the Board for its consideration to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding and bond authorization to set aside a portion of their units for the individuals and families exiting homelessness.

As mentioned earlier, homelessness is not unique to Leon County. In 2022, more than 500,000 individuals experienced homelessness across the United States. Recent PIT count data have indicated that similar to other communities, the Leon County has experienced an increase in homelessness. However, led by the CoC, and in partnership with the City and local homeless service providers, the County is well position to continue to adopt policies and initiatives and make investments based on nationally recognized strategies to end homelessness.

According to the Federal Strategic Plan developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the fundamental solution to end homelessness is housing. This aligns with the CoC's Strategic Plan which the County has utilized to make investment that programs and services offered by local providers that will reduce homelessness in the community. The recommendations presented are consistent with strategies to increase housing and reduce homelessness overtime that include the following:

(1) Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness.

(2) Strengthen the capacity of homeless service providers to reduce homelessness and connect clients to housing.

(3) Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Over the past three years, the County has invested more than $32.5 million to prevent and reduce homelessness. Collectively, the proposed 10 recommendations represent more than $1 million in funding that would be allocated over the next year; including $585,000 in remaining ARPA funding previously allocated to the CoC and Sheriff's Office as well as $500,021 in new funding to reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community through expanded daily service to the homeless population.

With the CoC as the lead coordinating entity, the County, the City, HOST deputies, local homeless service providers, and local non-profit agencies will continue to work on the implementation of the recommendations. Should the Board approve the proposed recommendations, semi-annual status reports would be provided over the next 24 months with updates on the implementation of the recommendations. Additionally, updates would be incorporated into future items on the adoption of proposed ordinances and policies, CHSP, affordable housing, and the County's Strategic Plan.

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Report and Discussion

<u>Background:</u>

Leon County is committed to addressing homelessness in partnership with the CoC, City, and local human services providers. The COVID-19 global pandemic significantly impacted vulnerable populations such as individuals and families experiencing homelessness. In response, the County adopted policies, established programs, and enhanced partnerships to ensure resources were available to address the highest needs of the homeless in the community. Since 2020, the County has taken the following actions:

- Convened the COVID-19 Local Homeless Task Force to coordinate emergency response and mitigation.

- Partnered with the City and Salvation Army to open an emergency Community Relief Center for unsheltered individuals.

- Established and funded non-congregate sheltering for homeless individuals and families experiencing homelessness who were diagnosed with COVID-19 or awaiting testing.

- Created the Tallahassee-Leon County Homeless Dashboard through Geographic Information System (GIS) that provides a real-time snapshot of the homeless system and performance data across dozens of agencies supporting homeless clients.

- Established Street Outreach Teams to fill service gaps and increase access to housing resources.

- Provided $2.1 million in CARES Act funding to homeless shelter service providers.

- Provided $26.4 million in housing and utilities assistance through the Leon CARES Individual Assistance and Emergency Rental Assistance Programs to prevent evictions and utility interruptions for more than 5,000 County residents.

- Established the Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund to increase access to affordable housing for vulnerable tenants.

- Continued the five-year commitment to fund the capital construction debt of The Kearney Center in the amount of $100,000 annually. Currently in the fourth year of funding.

- Created and funded the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) deputies to provide law enforcement support in the engagement of unsheltered individuals and families.

- Provided $1.78 million in partnership with the City to homeless shelter providers in ARPA funding to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and ensure that shelter facilities met CDC guidelines with the shelter facilities.

- Conducted a joint workshop on homelessness with the City in 2021 which led to:

  o The establishment of the Homeless Services Category within CHSP to provide $3.9 million in County and City General Revenue and ARPA funding.

o The enhancement of the County and City partnership with the CoC through the funding of street outreach, neighborhood-based agency capacity building, and Permanent Supportive Housing in the amount of $1.410 million.

As a result, over the past three years, the County has invested more than $32.5 million in programs and initiatives to reduce homelessness in the community. These efforts are further detailed in the Analysis section of this item. In addition to financial investments, the County has considered or adopted several policies to address homelessness. Specifically, on November 9, 2021, the Board adopted County Ordinance No. 21-16, amending the Land Development Code, requiring a recommendation by the CoC and a series of community neighborhood meetings prior to the permitting or consideration of homeless shelters in unincorporated Leon County. Currently, there are no homeless shelters in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Also, on December 14, 2021, the Board considered policy options to address public health and safety issues related to homelessness. At that time, to ensure the welfare of the County's residents and visitors and enhance sanitation in public areas, the Board directed staff to develop a draft ordinance to address camping or sleeping in certain public areas; solicitation of any kind in medians or otherwise with anyone in a vehicle on a vehicular travel lane; and urinating or defecating in certain public areas. The Board also directed for its consideration the repeal of the Solicitation on Public Streets Ordinance adopted in 1997 that was outdated and inconsistent with case law applying the First Amendment to the United States Constitution because the Solicitation Ordinance carved out exceptions to certain activities and was not content-neutral cases. The Board directed an item be brought back for its consideration to repeal the Solicitation Ordinance and draft a new ordinance that would regulate soliciting, camping, or sleeping and other activities in certain public areas consistent with federal and state law.

On January 25, 2022, the Board considered an ordinance to improve public health and safety through better regulation of soliciting, camping or sleeping in certain public areas consistent with case laws. However, due to the Sheriff's opposition and concerns raised by the CoC and local homeless service providers the Board did not move forward with adopting the ordinance, and subsequently repealed the Solicitation on Public Streets Ordinance during the scheduled February 8, 2022 public hearing. Currently the County does not have an ordinance to regulate solicitation in or on the median of any street in the unincorporated areas (the City currently has an ordinance prohibiting solicitation on the medians within the City limits).

Also during the January 25th regular meeting, the Board requested a status report on the effectiveness of the Sheriff's HOST deputies unit six months following the implementation and deployment of the new unit. The Sheriff provided the status report on the HOST deputies unit at the Board's February 21, 2023 regular meeting. The report provided data on the HOST deputies' engagement with unsheltered homeless individuals and families and recommended the continuation of the unit, and further engagement with community stakeholders including faith-based organizations to address homelessness. Additionally, the Board requested staff to schedule a workshop addressing homelessness which was subsequently scheduled for May 23, 2023, at 1 p.m.

As requested at the February 21st Board meeting and in partnership with the CoC, this item provides a comprehensive report on homelessness in Leon County including the CoC 2023 Point-In-Time Count on the homeless population. The item also presents the Big Bend Continuum of Care's five-year 2021-2025 Strategic Plan to address homelessness; details the County's roles, partnerships, and investments; and provides recommendations that will build on efforts to reduce homelessness and its impact on the community.

The Big Bend Continuum of Care, Leon County Sherriff's Office, and local homeless service providers including The Kearney Center Family Promise (formerly Big Bend Homeless Coalition), Capital City Youth Services, Refuge House, Brehon Family Services, and Ability 1st will participate in the Workshop.

This workshop item advances the following FY2022-FY2026 Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goal:

- *Work with the City of Tallahassee, Big Bend Continuum of Care, Kearney Center, and other local stakeholders to enhance engagement and awareness of resources available for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in order to support safe, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods. (2023-11)*

- *Work with the City of Tallahassee, Big Bend Continuum of Care, and street outreach teams to develop corridor plans for North Monroe, Downtown, and Pensacola Street for outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals and to engage residents and businesses to address community aesthetics and neighborhood safety along the corridors (2023-17)*

- *Leverage federal funding and relationships with local service providers to increase the number of temporary/transitional housing beds available to those experiencing homelessness. (2023-19)*

- *Support community partners to place 100 residents experiencing chronic homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing (BG3)*

These particular Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goal aligns with the Board's Quality of Life Strategic Priority:

- *(Q4) Support and promote access to basic healthcare, mental health, affordable housing, and homeless prevention services to our community members most in need.*

Analysis:

The Analysis section commences with national data on homelessness which indicated that the U.S. experienced the highest number of homelessness in recorded history of data collection in 2022. The national data is followed by the HUD-recognized definition of homelessness and overview of the CoC. Subsequently, local data on individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Leon County as collected, prepared and analyzed by the CoC are presented. The Analysis also describes the homeless response system of organizations, programs, services, and initiatives that serve as the collaborative network to engage, assist and address homelessness in the community with further detail on the County's role and investments.

Finally, the Analysis identifies the current challenges which are consistent with national trends as identified in the Federal Strategic Plan to addressing homelessness, and provides recommendations developed in coordination with the CoC, City and local homeless service partners that align with the CoC's Strategic Plan, Federal Strategic Plan, as well as the County's Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goals to build on efforts to reduce homelessness in the community.

National Homeless Statistics

Homelessness is not unique to Leon County. In 2022, more than 500,000 individuals experienced homelessness across the United States. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), 2022 saw the highest number of homeless in recorded history of data collection. Nationally, the rate of unsheltered homeless (individuals and families in encampments or vehicles) has increased significantly over the past year. As a result, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness states that communities across the nation are experiencing a crisis in the number of unsheltered individuals and families. NAEH and the National Low Income Housing Coalition has attributed the increase in homelessness as a result of the end of federal housing assistance and the eviction moratorium.

Homelessness and the Big Bend Continuum of Care

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is the federal authority on homeless services programming, funding, and regulation. HUD defines four categories of homelessness:

- Individuals and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a subset for an individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

- Individuals and families who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence;

- Unaccompanied youth and families with children who are defined as homeless under other federal statutes who do not otherwise qualify as homeless; or

- Individuals and families who are fleeing, or are attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member.

The Big Bend Continuum of Care (CoC) is recognized by HUD as the regional planning and oversight organization for homelessness for Leon, Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla counties. As required by HUD, the CoC governing board includes a County Commissioner, City Commissioner, representatives from the institutions of higher education (i.e., Florida A&M University, Florida State University, and Tallahassee Community College), homeless service providers, and representatives from municipalities in the eight counties within its coverage area. Section 420.6225 of Florida Statutes also recognizes the CoC as the organization responsible for the coordination of community efforts to prevent and end homelessness in the region. The region is established by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) which oversees homelessness statewide. The CoC's primary functions include:

- Planning and Coordination of homeless services in the region – the CoC actively engages stakeholders in the planning and coordination of homeless services in the community. The CoC holds monthly meetings with homeless service providers to discuss opportunities and challenges to maximize resources in order to reduce homelessness. The CoC also utilizes a Coordinated Entry System (CES) to triage the most vulnerable individuals and families experiencing homelessness and prioritize homeless resources such as Permanent Supportive Housing and rapid rehousing to end their episode of homelessness. Through the CES, homeless individuals and families are quickly identified, assessed, referred, and connected to appropriate housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs. Additionally, in partnership with the County Emergency Management Division, the CoC assists in the coordination activation of temporary cold night shelter services in the community during the winter season.

- Coordination of the distribution of federal and state funding for homelessness – HUD and DCF streamline the award of federal and state funding for homelessness through CoCs. Homeless service providers cannot apply for annual recurring funding directly to the federal or state government. Annually, the CoC coordinates and submits applications to HUD for programs such as rapid rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing on behalf of homeless service providers. As described further in the item, limited federal and state funding is provided for the emergency homeless shelter operations.

- Operation and management of the Homeless Management Information System – The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a regional database utilized to coordinate and manage client-level data and service provision to homeless individuals and persons at risk of homelessness. Federal law requires CoCs to operate and manage an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards.

- Collection and analysis of Point In Time data on homelessness in the region – the CoC conducts the annual PIT count for the region as required by federal law to inform decisions about homelessness funding and policy recommendations. Each year, the CoC is required to conduct a count of people experiencing homelessness in emergency shelters and unsheltered during the last week of January.

Local Data on Homelessness and Trends
The CoC conducted the 2023 PIT count January 23rd – 27th for the eight-county region. As shown in Table 1, after three consecutive years of reduction in the overall number of homeless individuals, the region experienced a 22% increase compared to 2022. However, as mentioned earlier, the increase in the overall population of homelessness and unsheltered homelessness is not unique to this community and is consistent with state trends as reported by other continuum of care agencies around Florida. Also, the total number of homeless is nearly identical to the number of homeless individuals in 2020.

Table 1. Point-In-Time (PIT) Count

Population	2023	2022	2021	2020	% Change (2023 vs. 2022)
All	801	659	621	805	22%
Youth	160	167	91	209	-4%
Veterans	92	86	95	83	7%
Chronic	178	153	197	192	16%
Unsheltered	269	168	91	109	60%

The most significant increase in the 2023 PIT count was the number of unsheltered (60% increase) which consists of individuals sleeping in homeless encampments or in their vehicles. Like other communities, the CoC attributes the increase is consistent with national and state trends on homelessness and is a result of the end of federal housing assistance and the eviction moratorium that was put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CoC Strategic Plan
To address the challenges and reduce homelessness in the Big Bend Region, in 2021, the CoC adopted a five-year 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. The plan consists of seven (7) priorities, four objectives, 16 strategic actions, and seven (7) performance metrics approved by HUD. The priority areas are:

1. Reaching functional zero for veterans experiencing homelessness
2. Reaching functional zero for those experiencing chronic homelessness
3. Ensure no families with minor children experience unsheltered homelessness
4. Develop a Coordinated Community Plan to prevent and end youth homelessness
5. Increase permanent housing options for people with zero to extremely low income
6. Increase permanent housing options for those with criminal and poor or no credit histories
7. Increase and diversify funding dedicated to Permanent Supportive Housing

The four objectives and 16 strategic actions associated with the priorities identify the components of the homeless response system comprised of providers, programs, services, and initiatives that serve as the collaborative network to engage, assist, and address homelessness in the community. The components include outreach and coordinated entry, prevention and diversion, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, and permanent housing.

The County, in partnership with the CoC and the City, have invested in various programs and services which align with the CoC's Strategic Plan as well as the Federal Strategic Plan to efforts to reduce homeless. The following presents programs and services that are currently available in Tallahassee-Leon County.

Programs and Services for Homelessness
The goal of the homeless programs and services is to prevent or limit the period in which individuals and families experience homelessness. In coordination with the CoC, homeless service providers offer a variety of programs and services including homeless prevention,

diversion, street outreach, emergency shelter operations, rapid rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and transitional housing.

Although state and federal funding are the primary source of funding for the programs and services of the homeless response system, the County's annual investment in programs and initiatives such as the Direct Emergency Assistance Program, Veteran Emergency Assistance Program, and CHSP have been essential to addressing service gaps and the highest needs for homeless in the community.   The following details the homeless programs and services, the partners that implement the programs and services, and County investment.

Homeless Prevention
Homelessness prevention assists individuals and families at imminent risk of becoming homeless and includes financial assistance for rent and utilities to keep families in their homes. The financial assistance is provided directly to the landlord, mortgage company, and/or utility company. The goal of homeless prevention programs is to provide financial assistance prior to eviction and/or disruption in utility services. Several community partners including Family Promise of the Big Bend (formerly Big Bend Homeless Coalition), Capital Area Community Action, Catholic Charities, ECHO, and Salvation Army provide financial and in-kind services to qualifying individuals and households. Federal funding provided through the City and the CoC is the primary source of funding for homeless prevention programs.

The County also funds and provides direct homeless prevention services through its Direct Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) and Veteran Emergency Assistance Program (VEAP). DEAP and VEAP provide temporary emergency assistance to Leon County residents for basic necessities such as rent, and utilities/fuel to prevent homelessness for citizens meeting the eligibility requirements. Residents can receive assistance once every 12 months for a maximum of three times. VEAP is similar to DEAP but is only available to eligible Leon County residents who are Veterans of the United States military.   In FY 2023, DEAP provided direct emergency assistance to 84 individuals and families, and VEAP has assisted 10 Veterans to date.

Diversion Programs
The primary goal of diversion programs is to prevent individuals and families from entering emergency shelters when an alternative is available including housing with family and other support systems. Diversion Programs help manage capacity and resources at the shelters and are also essential to assisting non-Leon County residents return to their county of last residence. These programs offer counseling as well as nominal one-time financial assistance for activities that will connect individuals and families to housing including bus tickets, car repair, and hotel vouchers. The Kearney Center has operated a diversion program for the last three years funded through non-recurring funds secured through the Florida legislative sessions. The Kearney Center anticipates receiving another $1.5 million from the 2023 Florida Legislative Session for FY 2024. Additionally, Family Promise of the Big Bend was allocated $850,000 for two years (FY 2023 and FY 2024) in APRA funds through CHSP for its diversion program that primarily prevents families from being evicted and assists non-Leon County families return to their community of origin. The diversion programs at The Kearney Center and Family Promise have been critical in assisting the street outreach teams with connecting unsheltered homeless individuals and families to housing.

Homeless Encampments and Street Outreach
Based on the 2023 PIT count, there were 269 unsheltered homeless individuals counted in late January at approximately 40 encampment locations throughout Leon County. As previously mentioned, the numbers represent a significant increase in the unsheltered population (60%) since 2022. These encampments are outdoor areas that are regularly inhabited by three or more homeless individuals. Encampments may have tents, lean-tos, or other makeshift structures built by the inhabitants, but do not necessarily provide shelter from the elements. Encampments are generally located in various rights-of-way around the County, including easements, wooded areas behind neighborhoods and shopping centers, parks, and libraries, as well as undeveloped private properties.

Street outreach workers employed by local homeless service providers engage unsheltered people experiencing homelessness to connect them with resources such as access to shelter, supplies, housing assistance programs and case management services. The goal of the outreach teams is to offer services that will get the individuals housed within Leon County or divert them to their community of origin. Prior to the pandemic, outreach services were provided exclusively to homeless youth by Capital City Youth Services and to Veterans by Family Promise through federal funding. Shortly following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CoC saw a significant increase in the number of unsheltered individuals as the emergency homeless shelters were forced to limit space to meet Center for Disease and Control Prevention guidelines. In response to the growth of unsheltered individuals, the County in partnership with the City contracted with the CoC to utilize ARPA funds to establish outreach teams for adults and families through The Kearney Center and Ability 1st.

Presently, twice a week the CoC coordinates outreach teams to engage unsheltered individuals at known encampments by offering services such as hygiene kits, snacks, and water and information on available housing resources.   In further support of these efforts, in 2021, the Board approved the Sheriff's request to initiate the HOST unit, which is comprised of two deputies who work closely with the CoC and other agencies involved in street outreach to provide a law enforcement presence at camp sites and other areas and discourage unlawful activities.   The officers also coordinate with businesses and community members throughout the County to provide resources as well as address concerns about individuals sleeping at parks and buildings or loitering.

The HOST deputies have been an essential component to engaging the unsheltered homeless population in coordination with the CoC and Street Outreach teams. As law enforcement officers, HOST deputies have the authority to make arrests when required. The presence of the HOST deputies is often key to persuading individuals to accept services such as emergency homeless shelters and vacate prohibited areas (i.e. trespassing). Frequently, the HOST deputies coordinate with the Apalachee Center and the City of Tallahassee Police Department to provide services to a homeless individual actively experiencing a mental health crisis. Since June 2022, the HOST deputies have engaged and assisted nearly 300 homeless individuals.

The HOST deputies also engage residents and businesses providing assistance to homeless individuals and to remove individuals when requested by property owners. In partnership with the CoC, the HOST deputies have participated to date in more than 50 meetings with local neighborhood and business organizations to provide information on resources available to the homeless population as well as proper protocol for engaging homeless individuals and families.

Corridor Plans and Street Outreach
The County has worked closely with the CoC, City, HOST deputies, and street outreach teams to develop corridor plans to better address encampments, loitering, littering, panhandling, and other activities in areas with a high concentration of unsheltered homeless. The areas include North Monroe Street, Downtown Tallahassee, and Pensacola Street. At its Annual Retreat in January 2023, the Board adopted a strategic initiative to work with the City, CoC, and street outreach teams to develop corridor plans for North Monroe, Downtown Tallahassee, and Pensacola Street for outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals and to engage residents and businesses to address community aesthetics and neighborhood safety along the corridors.

Working with residents, businesses, and key stakeholders in the respective areas, the corridor plans will establish boundaries for a higher frequency of engagement with the homeless by street outreach teams, HOST deputies, the City's Crisis Unit, which provides law enforcement and mental health professional support for individuals actively experiencing a mental health crisis. The corridor plans will identify neighborhood, business, and faith-based representatives to meet regularly to provide awareness and gather feedback on policies, programs, and resources deployed to reduce unsheltered homelessness and improve public safety. The corridor plans are expected to be completed by the CoC in late 2023.

In the interim, the street outreach teams and HOST deputies, led by the CoC have conducted two-week long intense engagement of homeless persons camping or loitering in hot spots within the corridors. For two weeks a hot spot (for example the Chain of Parks in Downtown Tallahassee) is targeted daily with resources such as snacks and water to build relationships with the unsheltered homeless and connect them to shelter or housing. The teams identified 33 individuals who were experiencing unsheltered homelessness, with most of those individuals having experienced homelessness for more than one year and having at least one type of disability. Of the 33 unsheltered individuals identified, seven reported having an income. Based on the coordinated outreach efforts, the greatest needs of the unsheltered in these areas include access to emergency supplies (food, water, clothing, etc.), emergency shelter, permanent housing, transportation assistance, physical and mental health services, and Narcan supplies. Some of the needs such as food, water, and Narcan supplies, can be provided more quickly and easily through current outreach efforts, while others require more collaboration with and support from current human service providers.

The two-week exercise is also being utilized to develop the corridor plan. The process has allowed the street outreach teams to gain knowledge of the behavior and activities of the unsheltered as well as the areas (parks, businesses, abandoned building, etc.) they frequent. Such information will be essential to the corridor plans.

Emergency Shelter Operations

Emergency shelter operations provide immediate, short-term shelter (less than three months) for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Currently, there are four emergency homeless shelters in the County: The Kearney Center, which serves single men and women; HOPE Community operated by Family Promise, which serves families; Capital City Youth Services, which serves youth ages 10-17 years old; and Refuge House which services survivors of domestic and sexual violence. In addition to housing, the shelters provide meals, showers, and case management to its clients.

Emergency shelters are an essential component of the County's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). In the event of natural disasters or sustained cold temperatures, the emergency shelters can temporarily expand operations to meet an increased demand for services. In 2010, the CEMP established the temporary cold night shelter process. Community partners activate the cold night sheltering plan when an apparent temperature of 35 degrees or colder is anticipated for three consecutive hours prior to sunrise. The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and CCYS respectively, serve as the primary shelter for homeless individuals, families, and youth during cold night activations. When it is determined that the shelters are at capacity, other community partners such as churches serve as temporary cold night shelters.

As reflected in Table 3, the designated emergency shelters' bed capacity totals 590. Emergency homeless shelters play a critical role in the length of time an individual or family remains homeless and their chances of returning to homelessness. Once in a shelter, resources such as case management, rapid rehousing, and pathways to permanent housing improve outcomes for individuals and families.

Table 3. Emergency Shelter Capacity

Shelter Name	Current Bed Capacity
The Kearney Center	375
HOPE Community	160
CCYS Someplace Else	18
Refuge House	37
TOTAL CAPACITY	**590**

The County, in partnership with the City provides annual funding to The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and CCYS for ongoing shelter operations through CHSP. The County and City are providing $1 million annually for the two-year CHSP funding cycle to emergency shelters (FY 2023 and FY 2024). In addition to funding provided through CHSP, the County has provided The Kearney Center $100,000 annually since 2015 towards debt service for the construction of the facility. Thus far, the County has provided The Kearney Center $900,000 for debt service (not including CHSP funding). The County is scheduled to make a final payment for debt service on behalf of The Kearney Center in FY 2024.

Federal and state funding for emergency shelter is significantly limited. According to the CoC, local emergency shelters do not receive funding for ongoing operations such as case management, meals, and maintenance through the federal government. In a recent meeting with HUD

representatives, the federal agency shared that its priority is to invest in permanent housing programs not emergency shelter operations. At the state level, in FY 2023, $38,853 was allocated for ongoing emergency shelter operations in Leon County. Therefore, local funding is critical to the ongoing operation of emergency homeless shelters. However, the emergency shelters have shared that the current level of funding is not sufficient to address significant budget deficits in staffing, case management, and other operations necessary to assist homeless individuals and families to secure permanent housing.

Rapid Rehousing

Rapid rehousing provides short-term rental assistance and services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness for at least one night. The goals are to help people move immediately out of homelessness, increase self-sufficiency, and to stabilize in permanent housing. Services include rent and utility payments (typically for six months or less but can be up to 24 months), security deposits, move-in costs (application fee, furniture, etc.) and case management. Rapid rehousing programs are provided by Family Promise, Catholic Charities, and Ability 1st through federal funds provided by the CoC. In FY 2023, the CoC received $75,000 for Rapid Rehousing programs from DCF. This year the Florida Legislature appropriated $1.8 million for statewide rapid rehousing in FY 2024 (compared to $500,000 for FY 2023). As a result, the CoC is anticipated to receive a significant increase in rapid rehousing funding to distribute to local providers. Additionally, Family Promise received over $500,000 from the County and City through CHSP to operate a housing program to stabilize families via rapid rehousing.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing serves as a bridge to permanent housing that generally provides up to 24 months in housing accommodation as well as support for individuals experiencing a disabling condition including physical disability, serious mental illness and/or substance use disorder. Transitional housing provides structure, supervision, support, life skills, and in some cases, education and training. Some of these programs are funded through a combination of local and private funding. There are others that require and receive nominal rent from clients. The federal government and CoC do not currently fund transitional housing.

In Leon County, the Good Samaritan Network/Chelsea House offers transitional and temporary housing for families and men at risk of homelessness; Good News Outreach/Maryland Oaks Crossing provides transitional housing for families with at least one child; Good News Outreach/Mercy House provides transitional housing for men and women reentering society from prison; Joseph House provides transitional housing for men reentering society from prison; and Tallahassee Veterans Village provides transitional housing and supportive services to homeless Veterans to stabilize and prepare them for a life of independence, and veterans can stay in the program for up to two years; Twin Oaks Transitional Home offers emergency shelter and transitional housing to homeless women and children; Brehon House serves homeless, pregnant women ages 18 and older; Refuge House serves victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, prostitution and sex trafficking, and their children; and Capital City Youth Services' Tree House program offers transitional housing for youth in crisis. According to the CoC there are 109 beds for transitional housing provided by Brehon House, CCYS, Refuge House, and the Veterans Village. However, as previously mentioned there are other smaller providers in the homeless

service sector that offer transitional housing as well as entities like Big Bend After Action Reentry Coalition that are looking to strengthen the capacity of transitional housing services for men and women reentering society from prison. These entities play a vital role to the sector and could benefit from the capacity building efforts of UPHS and the CoC as previously mentioned.

Permanent Supportive Housing
Permanent supportive housing (PSH) combines affordable housing assistance and subsidies with voluntary support services to address the needs of the chronically homeless with at least one member (adult or child) with a disability. The services are designed to build independent living skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment, and employment services. Permanent supportive housing is provided locally by Family Promise and Ability 1st and is funded through federal funds provided by the CoC and ARPA funds through CHSP. Since 2021, County and City ARPA funds have been used to permanently house 51 individuals. Family Promise operates several apartment complexes and utilizes scattered site apartments to operate PSH programs for Veterans and families, whereas the Ability 1st PSH programs utilize master leasing which enables the agency to be the primary tenant on the lease and sublease to the rental unit to the client. The flexibility of master leasing allows Ability 1st to ensure the agency can place someone else in the unit if the initial client moves out as well as minimizes the risk to the landlord.

Housing Choice Vouchers
Another significant provider of permanent housing in the community is the Tallahassee Housing Authority which provides housing choice vouchers to many individuals and families the community. The federal Housing Choice Vouchers program subsidizes the entire or a significant portion of rent costs for low-income households and people experiencing homelessness. The Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). The VA provides these services to participating Veterans at VA medical clinics, community-based outreach clinics, through VA contractors, or through other VA designated entities. Additionally, the Tallahassee Housing Authority partners with the Big Bend Continuum of Care to provide 30 housing choice vouchers to households exiting homelessness. In July 2021, HUD initiated the Emergency Housing Voucher Program established in the ARPA through select Public Housing Authorities. Tallahassee Housing Authority was awarded and utilized 66 vouchers to be administered in partnership with the CoC to house homeless households for up to 18 months, some of which are still being utilized to provide housing. At this time, there is no indication that the Tallahassee Housing Authority will receive any additional housing vouchers.

State and Federal Funding for Homelessness
The state and federal government are the primary source of funding for homelessness. Through DCF, the State funds programs such as street outreach, homeless prevention, diversion, rapid rehousing, and emergency shelter operations. For FY 2023, the State allocated $1.8 million for homeless programs in the community. This includes $1.5 million to The Kearney Center for a diversion program and approximately $375,000 through the CoC for street outreach, homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, and emergency shelter operations. Approximately $38,852 of the CoC

funding provided by the State is for shelter operations. Through the FY 2024 State Budget approved by the Legislature, approximately $4.7 million is anticipated to be provided to local homeless service providers and the CoC, subject to the Governor's approval. This would include $1.5 million for a diversion program to the The Kearney Center and $2.9 million in one-time funding for renovations at HOPE Community. The CoC anticipates it will receive increase funding in the FY 2024 budget but has not been notified on the amount. However, the CoC anticipates that the State will continue to provide approximately $38,852 for ongoing emergency shelter operations in FY 2024.

Through the CoC, the federal government provides funding for a variety of homeless programs such as permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and street outreach for youth.   In partnership with the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, HUD funds street outreach for Veterans. For FY 2023, through HUD, the community was allocated $1.9 million in funding for permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and street outreach for youth.   However, according to the CoC, the federal government does not provide funding for the operation of local emergency homeless shelters. During a recent meeting, HUD shared with County staff that the agency's primary focus is permanent housing and not emergency shelter operations.

Local Funding for Homelessness
Local investment has been essential to the operation of emergency homeless shelters as well as the overall provision of homeless services. The County, in partnership with the City, fund homelessness services as part of the CHSP. As described in the following sections, in 2021, the County and City jointly contracted with the CoC to plan and coordinate the award and distribution of ARPA funding in the amount of $6.272 million through the CoC and CHSP Homeless Service Category. The following provides details of the use of the ARPA funding as well as ongoing investments through CHSP.

American Rescue Plan Act
The County and City invested $6.272 million in homelessness through ARPA as reflected in Table 4. The County and City contracted with the homeless shelter providers directly in the total amount of $1,787,000 to address outstanding COVID-19 expenses and infrastructure improvements for four homeless shelters; $1,410,000 to the CoC to expand local street outreach, build service provider and neighborhood-based agency capacity, and expedite the number of providers and inventory of permanent supportive housing for the most vulnerable and chronically homeless population; and allocated $3.075 million in one-time funding through the Homeless Services Category under the CHSP for the FY23 and FY24 funding cycle to fund emergency shelters, diversion, prevention, and permanent supportive housing programs.

Table 4. ARPA Funding for Homeless Services

Funding Entity	Amount
CHSP	$3,075,000
Homeless Shelter Providers*	$1,787,000
CoC	$1,410,000
Total	**$6,272,000**

CESC-Kearney Center, Big Bend Homeless Coalition, Capital City Youth Services, and the Refuge House

To date, the County and City ARPA investment has led to the engagement of more than 489 unsheltered homeless individuals and families, prevented homelessness for over 115 individuals and families; and permanently housed 51 households that were formerly homeless. In addition, the street outreach teams have provided at least 116 bus passes to assist homeless individuals and families in leaving Leon County.

Community Human Services Partnership (CHSP)
For more than 20 years, the County and City have worked collaboratively through CHSP to provide a "one stop" shop for human services grant funding to our community human service agencies. Agencies and programs receive funding through 11 funding categories recommended by citizen review teams and approved by the County and City Commissions, respectively. Programs such as emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, homeless prevention, permanent supportive housing, and street outreach are funded through the Homeless Services Category. In FY 23 and FY 24 homeless programs will receive a total of $2,334,693 each year in the current CHSP funding cycle, as reflected in Table 5.

Table 5. Annual CHSP Homeless Program Funding

Agency/Program	Amount
Ability 1st N.E.S.T. Program	$111,744
Ability 1st Permanent Supportive Housing	$81,767
Family Promise of the Big Bend HOPE Community	$419,588
Family Promise of the Big Bend Diversion	$425,000
Family Promise of the Big Bend Permanent Supportive Housing	$518,989
Brehon Institute – Brehon House	$116,855
Capital City Youth Services Youth Shelter	$260,000
Capital City Youth Services Street Outreach	$80,750
CESC-Kearney Center Emergency Shelter/Case Management	$320,000
CESC-Kearney Center Health Services*	$50,000
Total	**$2,384,693**

*CESC-Kearney Center Health Services are funded through the Health Services CHSP category, but the services are provided to homeless individuals at The Kearney Center

Funding is categorized into subcategories to align with HUD funding categories which are: street outreach, homeless prevention, shelter operation and essential services, permanent supportive housing, and rapid rehousing. Through the implementation of the Homeless Services Category, staff worked with the CoC to align CHSP metrics with federal system performance measurements to enhance efficiency in program reporting and evaluation. In the fall, the Board will be presented with the CHSP performance metrics for the Homeless Services Category as well as the other ten categories.

As presented, the programs and services provided through local, state, and federal investments are essential to reducing homelessness in Leon County. However, as the recent PIT count and feedback from the community indicates there are challenges that must be addressed with

innovative solutions to build upon the coordination efforts to leverage and maximize resources. The efforts are led by the CoC in collaboration with homeless service providers, the County, and City. As detailed in the next section, according to the CoC greater coordinated participation and engagement with the broader community including key sectors such as faith-based organizations and the business community to reduce homelessness in Leon County are needed.

Current Challenges and Recommendations

The County participates in ongoing meetings conducted by the CoC that include local homeless service providers, the City, faith-based organizations, and other human service providers to identify challenges and discuss innovative solutions and best practices to reduce homelessness. As reflected in the Federal Strategic Plan, the challenges that Leon County and the Big Bend region is experiencing is common nationwide. The following challenges have been identified by utilizing the PIT count, the CoC's Strategic Plan and by evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and services: 1) an increase in the number of unsheltered homeless; 2) insufficient funding to support emergency shelters and, 3) the lack of affordable housing.

According to the Federal Strategic Plan, the fundamental solution to end homelessness is housing. Strategies to increase housing and reduce homelessness as highlighted in the Federal Strategic Plan include the following:

(1) Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness.

(2) Strengthen the capacity of homeless service providers to reduce homelessness and connect clients to housing.

(3) Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Accordingly, the following 10 recommendations were developed in partnership with the CoC and local homeless service providers and align with the Federal Strategic Plan as well as the Board's Strategic Initiatives and Bold Goals and the CoC's Strategic Plan. In addition, the County met with other stakeholders and gathered their feedback to ensure their issues and concerns were addressed. *Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness:*

1. **Establish the CoC Community Engagement Liaison position at the CoC.** Recognizing the need to increase engagement with the community beyond homeless service providers and homeless clients, the CoC would establish the Community Engagement Liaison (Liaison) position utilizing approximately $55,200 in previously allocated ARPA funds. The Liaison would meet regularly with local stakeholders such as businesses, neighborhoods, and faith-based organizations to be proactive and responsive to problems at the street level to coordinate effort that interrupt potential impacts of homelessness in the community. In addition, the Liaison would gather community input to identify and bring resources in coordination with local homeless providers that could reverse the trend of panhandling, loitering, and encampments in areas with high concentrations of homelessness to improve safe, stable, and inclusive neighborhoods.

2. **Continue to fund the Street Outreach Teams to engage unsheltered homeless**. Street Outreach teams are employed by homeless service providers engage unsheltered homeless living outdoors in encampments and vehicles to connect them to housing. In the past two years, the Street Outreach teams have engaged 489 individuals and families providing them with housing resources, including shelters, hotels, or permanent housing; and assisted approximately 116 individuals and families with transportation costs such as bus tickets and car repairs to return to their home community. The County and City joint agreement for allocated ARPA funding with the CoC is scheduled to expire September 30, 2023. The Agreement would be extended to continue the Street Outreach program utilizing approximately $151,800 in previously allocated ARPA funds.

3. **Continue to support the Sheriff's HOST Deputy Unit**. On December 14, 2021, at the request of the Sheriff, the Board established the Homeless Outreach Street Team (HOST) deputy unit to assist with the engagement of the unsheltered homeless and connect them to available resources including social services, meals, and housing. The HOST unit which is comprised of two deputies was officially deployed in June 2022. The HOST deputies have been an essential component to engaging the unsheltered homeless population in coordination with the CoC and Street Outreach teams. As law enforcement officers, HOST deputies have the authority to make arrests when required. The presence of the HOST deputies is often key to persuading individuals to accept services such as emergency homeless shelters and vacate prohibited areas (i.e. trespassing). Frequently, the HOST deputies coordinate with the Apalachee Center and the City of Tallahassee Police Department to provide services to a homeless individual actively experiencing a mental health crisis. Since June 2022, the HOST deputies have engaged and assisted nearly 300 homeless individuals.

    The HOST deputies also engage residents and businesses providing assistance to homeless individuals and to remove individuals when requested by property owners. In partnership with the CoC, the HOST deputies have participated to date in more than 50 meetings with local neighborhood and business organizations to provide information on resources available to the homeless population as well as proper protocol for engaging homeless individuals and families. As part of its approval of the HOST deputies unit, the Board allocated $491,000 for personnel and equipment and requested that the Sheriff provide an update six-months following the deployment of the HOST deputies. As mentioned earlier, the HOST deputies were deployed in June 2022. On February 21, 2023, the Sheriff provided an update on the HOST deputies at which time he requested that the Board continue to support the HOST deputies. It is recommended that the Board continue to support the Sheriff's HOST deputies with County ARPA funding previously allocated for the position which has been contemplated in the FY 2024 budget.

4. **Consider a countywide ordinance to prohibit solicitation on medians.** On January 25, 2022, the Board considered a countywide ordinance that would have prohibited soliciting on the median for any reason; sleeping or camping in certain public areas, and public urination and defecation to improve public health and safety for individuals and families experiencing homelessness as well as the community at large. Violations ranged from fines for solicitation or public urination/defecation to imprisonment for sleeping or camping in

certain public areas. The proposed ordinance was consistent with Federal law governing First Amendment protection of speech as well as the Eighth Amendment prohibition against cruel and unusual punishments. However, the Board did not move forward with adoption of the ordinance primarily due to opposition from the Sheriff and concerns raised by local homeless service providers, as well as the CoC on its potential impact on homelessness. On February 8, 2022, the Board repealed the Solicitation on Public Streets Ordinance that prohibited soliciting in or on the median of any street within the County because the Ordinance carved out certain activities and was not content-neutral. As a result, currently the County does not have an ordinance to regulate solicitation in or on the median of any street in the unincorporated areas. It is important to note that the City currently has an ordinance prohibiting solicitation on the medians within City limits. As presented during his presentation to the Board on February 21, 2023, the Sheriff continues to oppose the initial ordinance that specifically prohibits sleeping or camping in certain public areas considered by the Board in January 2022. The CoC and homeless service providers have also continued to express their concerns regarding any ordinance that would prohibit sleeping or camping in certain public areas. However, the CoC has expressed support for evaluating an ordinance focused on prohibiting solicitation on medians.

According to the CoC, most individuals that panhandle or solicit at medians are not homeless; rather they are transient or housed. There has been an increase in the visibility of panhandling on several medians in the community and a public perception that panhandlers are homeless. Individuals that solicit on medians often block or obstruct traffic to collect money from motorists that assume they are assisting the homeless, which can cause public safety issues. As supported by the CoC and homeless service providers, an ordinance consistent with State law and recent Federal rulings would be brought back to the Board for its consideration to make it unlawful to hold a sign or display an advertisement in a median of a road for any reason and would apply countywide in order to promote safety. Although the City currently has a similar ordinance governing this behavior within the City limits, which would prevail over a proposed ordinance to the extent of any conflict, the countywide ordinance would continue to protect against such activity within medians in the event the City were to amend or repeal its Ordinance. The proposed ordinance would not prohibit solicitation on sidewalks as this is considered protected speech. The CoC and homeless service providers have expressed support for an ordinance that would make it unlawful to hold a sign or display an advertisement in the median of a road for any reason.

5. **Adopt a community campaign to reduce panhandling that includes the establishment of signs at medians on County roads.** To further reduce panhandling and support homeless service providers, a community campaign would be developed in partnership with the City and CoC to encourage donations to the CoC rather than to individuals that panhandle on the streets. The campaign would include signage at medians on County roads with high frequency of panhandling. The City intends to install signage at medians on City roads and as a result signs would be placed at most of the roadways with the highest frequency of panhandling. The funds collected by the CoC would be utilized to support Street Outreach services such as food, hotels, and bus tickets. Signs would be installed in June following Board ratification of the Workshop item.

6. **Allocate $500,021 in one-time Consistency Funding to providers of emergency homeless shelter services that reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community.** The County, CoC, and City have held several meetings with key stakeholders including residents, businesses, and faith-based organizations on the impact of homelessness with specific concerns on loitering, littering, and overall public safety. Emergency shelters such as The Kearney Center and HOPE Community, provide 24-hour services including sleeping quarters, meals, showers, and case management that can reduce the length of time an individual or family remains homeless. However, the emergency shelters provide very limited day service in their facilities such as classes and counseling due to a lack of funding. As a result, clients that are not employed or enrolled in an educational program often congregate and loiter along the Pensacola Street corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and the Capital City Youth Services shelters are within at least one mile of Pensacola Street.

To strengthen the providers' capacity to address the impact of homelessness with specific emphasis on unsheltered homeless and loitering, the County would establish a one-time grant process, utilizing the Consistency Funding, to expand daily services at the emergency homeless shelters. Daily services would provide meals, showers, storage and programs such as job training courses, financial literacy, and mental health and substance abuse services. Daily services must be offered consistently Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Emergency shelters are anticipated to coordinate, collaborate, and potentially contract with local human services providers to offer programming for daily services. The North Monroe Street and Downtown Tallahassee areas have also been identified as areas with high concentration of unsheltered homelessness based on calls and responses by HOST deputies and street outreach teams. Emergency shelters would coordinate with the CoC, HOST deputies, and street outreach teams to transport homeless individuals loitering in Downtown Tallahassee and North Monroe Street to shelters where daily and other life skills services are offered. Additional locations such as the Senior Center or the VA Office also offer important life skills training. The emergency shelters would also be required to actively patrol and engage the homeless population along the Pensacola Street Corridor to reduce loitering, littering, and panhandling.

The County worked closely with the CoC and local homeless service providers to develop preliminary services that would maximize the County's one-time Consistency Funding to most effectively connect homeless individuals and families to resources while reducing loitering, littering, and panhandling in the community. Emergency shelters have the capacity to provide expanded services, but lack the funding. Following Board ratification of actions taken at the Workshop, applications with detailed proposals would be accepted for approximately 2-3 weeks. The applications would be reviewed and awarded by the County in partnership with the CoC. Subsequently, the County would enter into a contract with the awarded emergency homeless shelter to deliver the services that have been described. Services are expected begin later this summer upon contract execution. To expedite the implementation of expanded services to reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering, it is also recommended that the Board authorize the County Administrator to execute agreements, subject to legal review of the County Attorney.

An Oversight Committee comprised of County, CoC, and City staff would ensure daily services are implemented as contracted, and monitor the progress on the reduction of unsheltered homeless, solicitation, and loitering on the North Monroe Street, Downtown, and Pensacola Street Corridors.

7. **Evaluate options for dedicated line-item funding for emergency homeless shelters**. Recognizing that emergency shelters serve a critical role in meeting the consistent and increasing challenges of homelessness, it is recommended that the County evaluate dedicated, line-item funding for such services. As detailed later in the item, the federal and state governments provide very limited funding for emergency shelter operations. At the local level, the County and City have historically funded emergency homeless shelters through Community Human Service Partnership (CHSP), which serves as the grant process for human services and funded as a two-year funding cycle. For the current two-year cycle (FY 2023 and FY 2024) the County and City is investing $2 million collectively in emergency homeless shelters for The Kearney Center, HOPE Community, and Capital City Youth Services shelters. However, the emergency shelters often share that the current level of funding is not sufficient to address significant budget deficits at the shelters for staffing, case management, and other operations necessary to assist homeless individuals and families secure permanent housing. Therefore, the emergency shelter providers have requested that the County and City consider dedicated line-item funding for such programs consistent with the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

Options would be brought to the Board that evaluate the establishment of dedicated line-item as well as appropriate funding level for emergency homeless shelters for the Board's consideration. Options for line-item funding would be examined in partnership with the City, CoC and other community partners such as the Children Services Council (CSC) of Leon County. Funding of emergency shelters in other like-size communities would be evaluated. As mentioned earlier, emergency homeless shelters are funded through the CHSP two-year competitive grant cycle for the funding of existing services and programs proposed by the agencies. Rather than providing grant funding, contracts for dedicated line-item funding with the emergency homeless shelters would establish overall objectives, programmatic criteria and performance measures set by the County and other funding partners. The options brought to the Board would also include proposals for greater oversight of the shelters by the County, City, and CoC to improve operations, financial conditions, and efficiencies to better serve the homeless population and meet community expectations. Options would be brought back to the Board in fall 2023 for line-item funding in coordination with partners such as the City for the FY 2025 budget process which would align with the next two-year funding cycle for CHSP.

8. **Continue to fund capacity building for nonprofits and faith-based organizations to expand homeless services through the Neighborhood Capacity Building Program**. For the past two years, the CoC has utilized County and City ARPA funding to provide training and technical support to build the capacity of the homeless service system. Training and technical support provided by the CoC has assisted nonprofit and faith-based organizations with establishing and implementing rent and utility assistance programs, and to secure supplies such as cots and blankets for cold night shelter services during the winter

season. Utilizing approximately $27,600 of previously allocated ARPA funds, the CoC would work in concert with United Partners for Human Services (UPHS) to continue to provide 10-15 nonprofits and faith-based organizations the support to expand services that will reduce homelessness.

Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness:

9. **Continue to fund Permanent Supportive Housing to connect homeless individuals and families to housing.** Permanent supportive housing (PSH) provides affordable housing assistance typically in the form of housing vouchers to individuals that have been chronically homeless (homeless for one year or more and has a disability). Consistent with the County's Bold Goal to "support community partners to place 100 residents experiencing chronic homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing", the CoC would utilize approximately $110,400 in previously allocated ARPA funds to house chronically homeless residents. Thus far, approximately 51 formerly homeless individuals have been housed and it is anticipated an additional 15-20 chronically homeless individuals could be assisted within the next fiscal year. As a result, the County is on track to meet its five-year Bold Goal in 2024.

10. **Consider a Policy to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding or bond authorization to set aside units for households exiting homelessness.** As described later in the item, over the past two years, the County has provided $4.3 million in direct funding to increase the number of affordable housing rental units and authorized approximately $148 million in bond financing for the development and redevelopment of affordable multifamily housing projects. As a result, more than 1,000 affordable rental units will be developed over the next 12-18 months due to actions and investments made by the County. The units will be reserved for low-income households that earn 60% or below the Area Median Income (AMI) (for example, $42,000 for a family of four). However, individuals and families experiencing homelessness often earn income at 30% or below the AMI ($27,750 for a family of four). The State currently requires affordable housing development seeking tax credit funding to set aside a portion of units for special populations such as farmworkers, youth exiting foster care, or the homelessness. A similar policy would be brought back to the Board for its consideration to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding and bond authorization to set aside a portion of their units for the individuals and families exiting homelessness.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, homelessness is not unique to Leon County. In 2022, more than 500,000 individuals experienced homelessness across the United States. Recent PIT count data have indicated that similar to other communities, the Leon County has experienced an increase in homelessness. However, led by the CoC, and in partnership with the City and local homeless service providers, the County is well position to continue to adopt policies and initiatives and make investments based on nationally recognized strategies to end homelessness.

According to the Federal Strategic Plan developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the fundamental solution to end homelessness is housing. This aligns with the CoC's Strategic Plan which the County has utilized to make investment that programs and services offered by local providers that will reduce homelessness in the community. The recommendations presented are consistent with strategies to increase housing and reduce homelessness overtime that include the following:

(1) Enhance public engagement, awareness, and safety to better address homelessness.

(2) Strengthen the capacity of homeless service providers to reduce homelessness and connect clients to housing.

(3) Increase the stock of affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Over the past three years, the County has invested more than $32.5 million to prevent and reduce homelessness. Collectively, the proposed 10 recommendations represent more than $1 million in funding that would be allocated over the next year; including $585,000 in remaining ARPA funding previously allocated to the CoC and Sheriff's Office as well as $500,021 in new funding to reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community through expanded daily service to the homeless population.

With the CoC as the lead coordinating entity, the County, the City, HOST deputies, local homeless service providers, and local non-profit agencies will continue to work on the implementation of the recommendations. Should the Board approve the proposed recommendations, semi-annual status reports would be provided over the next 24 months with updates on the implementation of the recommendations. Additionally, updates would be incorporated into future items on the adoption of proposed ordinances and policies, CHSP, affordable housing, and the County's Strategic Plan.

Options:

1. Accept the report on homelessness in Leon County.

2. In partnership with the City of Tallahassee, amend the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding Agreement with Big Bend Continuum of Care to extend the term and amend the exhibits in the amount of $345,000 in previously allocated County ARPA funding to the organization, and authorize the County Administrator to execute the Agreement, subject to legal review of the County Attorney for the following:

   - The establishment of the Big Bend Continuum of Care Community Engagement Liaison position to regularly engage and educate the community and key stakeholders such as faith-based organizations on homelessness.
   - Continue funding of the Street Outreach Program to engage unsheltered homeless individuals and families.
   - Continue funding of Permanent Supportive Housing to place homeless individuals and families in housing.
   - Continue funding to provide training and technical support to nonprofit and faith-based organizations to expand the local homeless services through of the Neighborhood Based Partner Capacity Building.

3. Continue to support the Sheriff's HOST Deputies with County ARPA funding previously allocated to the Sheriff's Office for the positions.

4. Direct staff to develop a countywide ordinance to promote safety, making it unlawful to hold a sign or display advertisement in a median of a road for any reason.

5. Adopt a community campaign to reduce panhandling that includes the establishment of signs developed in partnership with the City of Tallahassee and Big Bend Continuum of Care, to be placed at medians on select County roads.

6. Allocate $500,021 in Federal Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Funding to providers of emergency homeless shelter services that reduce unsheltered homelessness and loitering in the community, and authorize the County Administrator to execute the agreements, subject to legal review by the County Attorney.

7. Direct staff to bring back an agenda item to explore options for long-term and dedicated line-item funding for emergency homeless shelters for FY 2025.

8. Direct staff to develop a draft policy to require affordable rental developments seeking County funding or bond authorization to set aside a portion of their units for individuals or families exiting homelessness.

9. Board direction.

Recommendation:
Options #1 through #8

Attachments:

1. 2021-2025 CoC Homelessness Assistance Strategic Plan
2. ALL IN: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness
3. Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce Statement and Research Results
4. Downtown Improvement Authority Survey Results
5. Panhandling Traffic Safety Sign

2021-2025 BBCOC STRATEGIC PLAN

This plan covers the time between 1.1.21 through 12.31.25 and identifies objectives, goals and actions to be taken to create a more efficient and responsive Homelessness System of Care.

BBCoC conducts regular assessment of needs and gaps in the homeless service system utilizing data collected through the HMIS, 211, County School Systems, System Performance Data, Coordinated Assessment Data, Bult for Zero Individuals, Families and Youth Score Cards, consumer surveys, agency surveys and staff interviews as well as proposals for funding.

Through 2020 we were able to conduct more frequent meetings among service providers and members discussing gaps in services, needs and resources to address the gaps as it relates to system capacity and responding to Covid-19. Over 2020 the CoC prioritized data quality to ensure system performance and coordinated entry data were as accurate and as comprehensive as possible.

Culminating all the feedback, dialog and data over the past 3 years that was brought for review under the BBCoC Needs Assessment and Planning Committee has lead to the updating of the 2021-2025 Homelessness Assistance Plan (HAP), which is available for review and feedback through July 15, 2021.

GOAL HIGHLIGHTS

BBCoC is now presenting the HAP to each community within its coverage area to seek feedback and commitment to the creation of annual action plans to achieve all goals identified in the HAP by the end of 2025. Some of the Major Goals to be accomplished by the end of 2025 include;
- Reaching functional zero for veterans experiencing homelessness
- Reaching functional zero for those experiencing chronic homelessness
- Ensure no families with minor children experience unsheltered homelessness
- Develop a Coordinated Community Plan to prevent and end youth homelessness
- Increase permanent housing options for people with zero to extremely low income
- Increase permanent housing options for those with criminal and poor or no credit histories
- Increase and diversify funding dedicated to Permanent Supportive Housing

SERVICE GAPS

Major service gaps have been identified as follows;
1. No resources for homeless minors who are pregnant and/or parenting.
2. Very limited resources for individuals experiencing homelessness with sexual offences.
3. No emergency shelter resources for individuals with pets.
4. Inadequate federal, state and local recuring funding for homeless service programs
5. Inadequate Medium Term Supportive Housing and Transitional Housing for youth, families and those with substance use disorders.
6. Inadequate access to transportation, especially in rural counties and unincorporated Leon County.
7. Inadequate recuring coverage and resources dedicated to conducting and managing the Coordinated Assessment Process and helping households navigate swiftly through the homeless system of care to permanent housing.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Collaboratively Build a Homelessness System of Care that fully serves the BBCoC 8 county region including Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Liberty, Franklin, Madison and Taylor Counties

a. Increase capacity and strengthen use of Coordinated Assessments and Coordinated Entry and Referral System.
b. Expand the use of the Homeless Management Information System to more adequately collect all service data and generate data trends that inform allocation of resources.
c. Provide an annual homelessness status update report to each county commission in the CoC coverage area
d. Align Federal, State and Local funding of homelessness services to ensure the metrics and measurements used to evaluate project success are in line with BBCoC established metrics allowing us to measure progress and impact of investments towards reducing homelessness.

Objective 2: Ensure there is a menu of Homelessness Prevention, Diversion and Homelessness Interventions and Housing Programs available to promote client choice.

a. Increase Capacity and Strengthen Homelessness Prevention and Diversion Practices
b. Expand Street Outreach Programs
c. Identify funding sources for Emergency Shelter Operations with Housing Focused Case Management
d. Expand Rapid Rehousing Programs and Providers
e. Expand Permanent Supportive Housing Programs and Providers
f. Expand use of Public Housing Authority vouchers with a homelessness preference

Objective 3: Sustain an End to Homelessness

a. Facilitate an Action Plan to end Veteran Homelessness by 12/31/2024 as defined by the Functional Zero definition through the national Built for Zero Initiative
b. Facilitate an Action Plan to end Chronic Homelessness by 12/31/2025 as defined by the Functional Zero definition through the national Built for Zero Initiative
c. Create a Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness by 12/31/23
d. Create a Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Unsheltered Homelessness by 12/31/25

Objective 4: Create and Promote Pathways to Permanent Subsidized Housing

a. Increase units of permanent housing by 300 units for individuals and couples with no minor children who receive $750 per month in income or less and have chronic homelessness histories.
b. Promote use of local ordinance and inclusionary housing regulations mandating new residential developments dedicate a minimum of 10% of newly developed unites be dedicated to those exiting homelessness for which they would pay no more than 30% of their monthly income to maintain a permanent lease.
c. Increase funding dedicated to operations of permanent supportive housing programs to ensure participants do not reenter homelessness.
d. Increase permanent housing appropriate for families with minor children with extremely low income and histories of homelessness by 500 units.
e. Increase access to section 8 housing vouchers for families with minor children and encourage use of homeless priority among PHAs.
f. Expand function of Landlord Liaison Initiatives to include engaging landlords and incentivizing those willing to housing Sexual Offenders and those with Felonies in background as well as those with no or low credit.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

As identified in the 2021-2025 Homelessness Assistance Plan, as a system we want to improve upon and maintain the following outcomes related to system performance;

Sys PM 1 - DECREASE the overall average and median length of time a person remains homeless
Target 2021: Average less than 144 nights, Median less than 65 nights
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Average is 30 nights or less

SysPM2 - DECREASE returns to homelessness
Target 2021: Returns to homelessness with in …..6 months less that 21%
                                                                            .….2 years, less than 33%
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Returns in 2 years, less than 20%

Sys PM 3 - DECREASE number of homeless persons in annual and PIT count
Target: PIT Count is less than 900, Annual Count is less than 2900

Sys PM 4 - INCREASE or maintain income for persons in housing programs
Target: Increase income for more than 60% system stayers
Increase income for more than 30% system leavers

Sys PM 5 - DECREASE instances of 1st time homelessness
Target: first time homeless count is less than 1500

Sys PM 7 - INCREASE permanent housing placements from Outreach, ES, TH, PH-RRH programs and retention of permanent housing
Target: Increase placements to permanent housing from outreach to be greater than 65% of outreach exits
Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-   RRH to be greater than 30%
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH to be greater than 60%
Increase rate of retention of permanent housing to be greater than 95%

ADDITIONAL MEASURABLE OUTCOMES TO BE CONSIDERED

- At least 90% of veterans with homelessness prevention financial assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.

- At least 85% of the veterans receiving rapid re-housing assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.

- At least 85% of the families receiving rapid re-housing assistance remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following receipt of last rental payment or case management assistance.

ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN TO BE DEVELOPED

- 2021 Action Plan
- 2022 Action Plan
- 2023 Action Plan
- 2024 Action Plan
- 2025 Action Plan
- Action Plan to End Veteran Homelessness by 12/31/2024
- Action Plan to End Chronic Homelessness by 12/31/2025
- Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness
- Coordinated community Plan to End Unsheltered Homelessness

Big Bend Continuum of Care

Homelessness Assistance Plan (HAP) 2021-2025 (v.20210601)

Homeless Definition: HUD defines homelessness as being in one of four categories: 1) Literally Homeless, 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness, 3) Homeless under other Federal Statutes, and 4) Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence. These categories are more fully defined at the end of this document.

Data Driven Plan: The Homeless Assistance Plan is updated and refined annually through ongoing community and agency feedback as well as a data driven approach using client data collected through the Homeless Management Information System, Coordinated Assessment Tool, System Performance Measures and other needs assessment engagement survey tools. There are three major System Performance Measures that should be improved upon as the goal of this version of the HHAP; **Decrease average length of time homeless, decrease returns to homelessness and increase placement and retention of permanent housing.**

Improving System Performance	**Across all areas of homelessness we need to focus efforts to improve system performance by;**
	Measuring all System Performance Measures frequently to improve specific outcomes tied to each measure
	<u>**Sys PM 1**</u> **- DECREASE** the overall average and median **length of time a person remains homeless ………….** Target 2021: Average less than 144 nights, Median less than 65 nights
	Ultimate Goal by 2025: Average is 30 nights or less
	<u>**SysPM2**</u> **- DECREASE returns to homelessness** …………………………………………………………………….Target 2021: Returns to homelessness with in
	…..6 months less that 21%
	……2 years, less than 33%
	Ultimate Goal by 2025: Returns in 2 years, less than 20%
	<u>**Sys PM 3**</u> **- DECREASE number of homeless** persons in **annual and PIT** count …………………………………….Target: PIT Count is less than 900
	Annual Count is less than 2900
	<u>**Sys PM 4**</u> **- INCREASE or maintain incom**e for persons in housing programs**……………………………………..**Target: Increase income for more than 60% system stayers
	Increase income for more than 30% system leavers
	<u>**Sys PM 5**</u> - **DECREASE** instances of **1st time homelessness**…………………………………………………………….Target: first time homeless count is less than 1500
	<u>**Sys PM 7**</u> **- INCREASE permanent housing placements** from Outreach, ES, TH, PH-RRH programs and **retention of permanent housing**
	…………………………………………………………………………………………………Target: Increase placements to permanent housing from outreach
	to be greater than 65% of outreach exits
	Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH to be greater than 30%
	Ultimate Goal by 2025: Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH to be greater than 60%
	Increase rate of retention of permanent housing to be greater than 95%

1

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Overarching Objectives	**Obj. 1 – Prioritize housing for homeless veterans, reaching Functional Zero for Veterans by 2024 as defined by the Built for Zero national effort.** **Obj. 2 – At least 90% of veterans with homelessness prevention financial assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.** **Obj. 3 – At least 85% of the veterans receiving rapid re-housing assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.** **Obj. 4 – Ensure the Inflow of new veterans experiencing homelessness each month is less than the Outflow of veterans exiting to permanent housing each month.** **Obj. 5 – Ensure no service eligible Veteran experiences homelessness for more than 30 consecutive days.**	**Obj. 1 – Increase units of permanent housing by 300 units for individuals and couples with no minor children who receive $750 per month in income or less and have chronic homelessness histories.** **Obj. 2 – Promote use of local ordinance and inclusionary housing regulations mandating new residential developments dedicate a minimum of 5% of newly developed unites be dedicated to those exiting chronic homelessness for which they would pay no more than 30% of their monthly income to maintain a permanent lease.** **Obj. 3 – Prioritize housing for chronically homeless individuals, and adult couples, reaching Functional Zero for Chronically Homeless Adults by 2025 as defined by the Built for Zero national effort.** **Obj. 4 - Increase funding dedicated to operations of permanent supportive housing programs to ensure participants do not reenter homelessness.**	**Obj. 1 – Ensure no families with minor children experiences unsheltered homelessness.** **Obj. 2 – Increase permanent housing appropriate for families with minor children with extremely low income and histories of homelessness by 500 units.** **Obj. 3 – Ensure at least 85% of the families receiving rapid re-housing assistance remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following receipt of last rental payment or case management assistance.** **Obj. 4 – Increase access to section 8 housing vouchers for families with minor children and encourage use of homeless priority among PHAs.** **Obj. 5 – Reduce the average length of time that a family is literally homeless to no more than 30 days.**	**Obj. 1 – Implement the use of Host Homes for runaway, LGBTQ+ and at-risk youth as a emergency shelter diversion practice for youth.** **Obj. 2 – Identify resources and implement programing for parenting youth and pregnant youth experiencing homelessness.** **Obj. 3- Ensure no minor youth, up to age 18, experiences unsheltered homelessness.** **Obj. 4- Increase permanent housing units for youth including support services by 30 units.** **Obj. 5 – Increase funding dedicated to operating Transitional/Medium-Term/Bridge housing and support services for youth.** **Obj. 6 – Utilize the Youth Action Board committee of the BBCoC to vet and prioritize youth specific service and intervention approaches.**	**Obj. 1 – Promote use of local ordinance and inclusionary housing regulations mandating new residential developments dedicate a minimum of 10% of newly developed unites to those exiting homelessness for which they would pay no more than 30% of their monthly income to maintain a permanent lease.** **Obj. 2 - Increase permanent housing by 30 units for those with Sexual Offender and Predator status.** **Obj. 3 – Establish prevention assistance programs targeted to serve the elderly or medically needy designed to keep these individuals in permanent housing.** **Obj. 4 – Expand function of Landlord Liaison Initiatives to include identifying and engaging landlords willing to housing Sexual Offenders and those with Felonies in background as well as those with no or low credit.**

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Coordinated Entry *(Intake, Assessment & Referrals)*	a. Ensure Emergency Shelters and SSVF and VA Outreach Teams are the primary Access Points for Veterans through Coordinated Entry.	a. Collaborate with agencies serving individuals experiencing chronic homelessness to ensure that agencies are fully utilizing the Coordinated Entry System in HMIS, which will connect clients with appropriate services. b. Increase functionality of Coordinated Entry service referral system by to allow for all HMIS participating agencies to send and receive support services and housing referrals within HMIS.	a. Collaborate with agencies serving families and children who are experiencing homelessness to ensure households are assessed and entered in the Coordinated Entry System in HMIS, within the first 14 days of becoming homeless. b. Expand use of the Coordinated Entry System to other emergency assistance providers for the purposes of case coordination and ensuring duplicative services are avoided. c. Utilize Homeless School Liaisons as an Access Partner for Coordinated Entry in rural communities	a. Collaborate with agencies serving youth who are experiencing homelessness to ensure that agencies are fully utilizing the Coordinated Entry System in HMIS, which will connect clients with appropriate services and housing opportunities. b. Partner with the child welfare, juvenile justice and at-risk youth programs to ensure they can assess youth experiencing homelessness through the Coordinated Entry System.	a. Collaborate with agencies serving individuals experiencing homelessness to ensure that agencies are fully utilizing the Coordinated Entry System in HMIS, which will connect clients with appropriate services and housing opportunities. b. Increase functionality of Coordinated Entry System to incorporate Landlords who have vacant permanent units prioritized for those exiting homelessness.

3

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Prevention & Diversion	a. Connect clients to legal aid when necessary to avoid entering homelessness. Specifically adding resources for Veteran's Tax Court and Veteran Justice Outreach. b. Increase financial resources available for homeless prevention and diversion efforts for veterans who do not qualify for VA and SSVF assistance.	a. Connect clients to legal aid when necessary to avoid entering homelessness. b. Prioritize individuals with chronic homeless histories for Diversion and Prevention resources in order to keep them from returning to homelessness. c. Create a formal partnership providing mediation and legal expertise for chronically homeless cases that have been permanently housed and face eviction again.	a. Dedicate funding for Diversion activities through Family Emergency Shelters and Prevention Providers. b. Create a formal partnership providing mediation and legal expertise for families facing eviction. c. Expand Prevention activities serving our 7 rural counties targeted at families at imminent risk of homelessness.	a. Seek funding through the HUD YHDP to implement Host Homes to divert youth from entering homelessness and emergency shelter. b. Increase resources available for homeless prevention and diversion for youth ages 16-24. c. Create a formal partnership with local CBC, Department of Children and Families and Department of Justice to prevent and divert youth 16-24 from entering homelessness.	a. Connect clients to legal aid when necessary to avoid entering homelessness. b. Increase resources available for homeless prevention and diversion efforts system wide c. Dedicate funding to Reentry and Discharge planning from county jails and hospitals to avoid discharges directly to the streets or emergency shelters.

4

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Unsheltered Homelessness/ Outreach	a. Utilize SSVF funded Outreach workers as a component of the CoC Coordinated Outreach efforts. b. Assess all unsheltered Veterans through SSVF and VA Outreach for completion of Coordinated Entry Assessment and Referral. c. SSVF and VA Outreach teams to provide support for clients needing access to basic needs items such as hygiene, tarps, survival aid and access to emergency shelter.	a. Dedicate case management and outreach services to chronic subpopulation that will follow clients through to support them after the first few months of permanent housing. b. Identify Individuals who are currently residing in primitive camps and prioritize permanent housing options to meet the needs of chronic and unsheltered population with limited income. c. Offer permanent housing to ALL Chronic clients every 14 days. d. Expand outreach coordination to include law enforcement, institutions and hospitals to ensure proper discharge planning to avoid unsheltered homelessness.	a. Collaborate with Homeless School Liaisons to identify families needing prevention, diversion, shelter and permanent housing resources. b. Collaborate with local CBC, Department of Children and Families and Department of Justice to identify families with children who are literally homeless needing resources. c. Ensure there is adequate funding to cover hotel/motel vouchers for families needing short term stays to avoid unsheltered homelessness among families with minor children in all 8 counties.	a. Utilize youth specific outreach teams to identify and assess unsheltered youth through age 24. b. Provide services and goods to meet basic needs for run away, homeless, and street youth and connect to service providers for youth to exit the streets into stable housing. c. Provide basic needs and assistance to homeless youth to increase youth's personal safety, well-being, and self-sufficiency; and provide positive adult connections.	a. Expand outreach coordination to include outreach to local county jails and hospitals for those that are likely to be discharged to homelessness. b. Continue to conduct bi-weekly outreach coordination calls facilitated by the CoC ensuring all "hot spots" for unsheltered homelessness are visited regularly by outreach workers. c. Evaluate the advantages of conducting an unsheltered Point In Time Count simi-annually, once in January and once during June, July, or August to better understand influx of unsheltered homelessness, specifically within Leon County.

5

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Emergency Shelter	a. Increase resources dedicated to emergency shelter operations. b. Increase resources for emergency shelter case management in order to enforce a 30:1 Client : Case Manager ratio. c. Increase use of hotel/motels as emergency shelter when congregate shelters are at capacity d. Create shelter programing for clients with pets.	a. Increase resources available for emergency shelter operations. b. Ensure clients nearing chronic homelessness are prioritized for permanent housing opportunities. c. Ensure no client remains homeless and in emergency shelter for more than 12 months. d. Reduce the rate of returns to chronic homelessness by prioritizing use of diversion and prevention for the formerly chronic population. e. Increase resources for emergency shelter case management in order to enforce a 30:1 Client : Case Manager ratio. f. Increase use of hotel/motels as emergency shelter when congregate shelters are at capacity g. Create shelter programing for clients with pets.	a. Assess the need for additional shelter capacity in neighboring counties. b. Increase resources for emergency shelter case management in order to enforce a 30:1 Client : Case Manager ratio. c. Ensure no household remains homeless and in emergency shelter for more than 12 months.	a. Identify need and potential funding for emergency shelter beds targeting youth ages 18-24, including LGBTQ+ youth. b. Designate a "Safe Place" within the current Emergency Shelter system for LGBTQ+ youth. c. Increase resources for emergency shelter case management in order to enforce a 14:1 Client : Case Manager ratio. d. Evaluate the need for emergency shelter options for minors with children and/or pregnant minors.	a. Increase resources for emergency shelter case management in order to enforce a 30:1 Client : Case Manager ratio. b. Identify funding required to implement a small 12-18 bed a Safe Haven Shelter option.

6

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Medium Term Supportive Housing/Bridge Housing/Transitional Housing	a. Strategize with GPD Transitional Housing Provider to turnover units to Bridge Housing and permanent housing units in order to achieve Functional Zero. b. Create Bridge Housing option with 15 units. c. Identify need and scope of services and support for Respite Living Program.	a. Create Bridge Housing option up to 20 units for chronic population waiting for PSH and working to identify housing. b. Identify need and scope of services and support for Respite Living Program.	a. Identify funding to increase transitional housing options for families with children by 94 beds. a. Increase funding options covering support staff costs for transitional and medium term supportive housing. b. Identify need and scope of services and support for Respite Living Program.	a. Apply for HUD YHDP Grant to implement a 18-24 bed Bridge/Medium Term Supportive Living program for youth ages 16-24. b. Increase funding available for providing life skills training and transitional supports to better prepare them for housing stability in the future.	a. Identify funding and Implement housing options for sexual offenders/predators and those exiting institutions by 18 units. a. Increase funding options covering discharge planning from jails and prisons so that those re-entering can go directly into medium term supportive options rather than shelter or the streets.

7

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Permanent Rental Housing *(Rapid Rehousing, Rental, Permanent Supportive Housing, Vouchers)*	a. Increase the number of VASH Vouchers available to CoC Coverage area. b. Identify funding for 10 additional units of PSH for veterans not eligible for VASH Vouchers. c. Utilize Emergency Housing Vouchers designated through PHAs to serve veterans not qualifying for other assistance. d. Identify housing options with higher levels of care including Assisted Living Facilities and Nursing Homes targeted towards serving veterans that are service eligible and ineligible.	a. Ensure PSH clients are assessed annually and supported to move on to other permanent housing as intensive support services are no longer needed. b. Expand local funding of Permanent Supportive Housing program operations. c. Identify funding of pilot project utilizing 3-4 small quad apartments to house those with SPMI who lack family support. d. Work with local governments to incentivize development/rehab housing stock making a portion of the units available to extremely low income clients exiting chronic homeless. e. Continue the work of the Landlord Liaisons focusing on education, recruitment and support of landlords willing to house those with unstable housing backgrounds. f. Expand access to the landlord mitigation fund as a security measure for landlords housing chronic clients. g. Expand the work of the Landlord Liaison focusing on education, recruitment and support of landlords willing to house those with barriers to housing.	a. Increase funding dedicated to PSH units for families with minor children by 30 units. b. Work with PHAs to identify 300 set aside voucher for homeless families with children and or prioritize section 8 vouchers to homeless families first. c. Utilize Emergency Housing Vouchers designated through PHAs. d. Increase RRH funds available for families with children and couples with no children. e. Increase funding and partnerships to provide component of wrap around services and continued case management to help sustain housing. f. Work with local governments to incentivize development/rehab housing stock making a portion of the units available to extremely low income families exiting homelessness.	a. Apply for the HUD YHDP to fund a pilot Youth PSH program for 18-24 year olds with chronic homelessness, family violence, child welfare involvement, juvenile justice involvement, developmental disabilities or generational homelessness histories. b. Identify or create appropriate housing with supports for pregnant youth and youth with children. c. Implement use of roommate matching criteria to decrease financial burden on youth. d. Expand the work of the Landlord Liaison focusing on education, recruitment and support of landlords willing to house youth needing stable housing. e. Expand financial assistance services to include Direct Cash Transfers (DCT) to youth to cover basic needs, including permanent housing costs.	a. Increase local funding of PSH operations. b. Identify and partner with Senior Citizen Housing communities and senior service organizations to refer elderly homeless individuals to the most appropriate housing and care options. c. Expand MoUs with Florida Housing Finance Corporation funded tax credit properties setting aside units for seniors, those with disabilities and extremely low incomes. d. Explore use of Sponsor Housing agreements and Master Leasing entities to help permanently house those with backgrounds that prohibit them from attaining a lease on their own. e. Identify or create dedicated housing for sexual offenders/predators in compliance with residence requirements. f. Implement roommate matching criteria to lower cost burden of housing.

8

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Home Ownership	a. Provide education on Veteran's Home Loan assistance programs.	a. Assess if there is any participant in the THA voucher program or PSH programs that could transition to home ownership. b. Educate those identified to move towards home ownership on mortgages, subsidies, and other home ownership opportunities through relationships with community partner organizations.	a. Provide opportunities for education on federal, state and local incentive programs to qualify low-income households for home purchases. b. Encourage local incentives for developers creating low-cost, smaller sized housing to be created for home ownership.	a. Offer connections to budgeting, saving and future planning education to youth, sparking interest in homeownership goals.	b. Create formal partnerships with local organizations specializing in home ownership preparation and first-time home buyer education.

9

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Employment & Income Support Services	a. Identify programs focused on vocational training and certification programs at free or substantially reduced cost. b. Expand veteran involvement in employment and income support services. c. Ensure that SSVF programing offers the services of a SOAR processor to improve system access for veterans trying to secure/restore SSI/SSDI benefits. d. Partner with CareerSource Capital Region and the VET program to assist all veterans seeking employment.	a. Expand participant involvement with employment and income support services. b. Increase number of SOAR processors dedicated to chronic clients, to improve system access for individuals trying to secure/restore SSI/SSDI benefits. c. Increase referrals to WIPA programs to ensure access to work incentive programs. d. Increase referrals to programs offering job readiness and employability training support services (including financial literacy supports) to help individuals access employment programs/efforts. e. Increase number of representative payees available for chronic clients. f. Create training on gaining part time employment and maintaining disability benefits for PSH participants.	a. Expand participant involvement with employment and income support services. b. Ensure case managers serving families are SOAR certified to improve system access for families trying to secure/restore SSI/SSDI benefits. c. Create training on gaining part time employment and maintaining disability benefits for PSH participants.	a. Explore the development of a vocational training program for youth experiencing homelessness. b. Increase number of SOAR processors dedicated to youth, to improve system access for individuals trying to secure/restore SSI/SSDI benefits. c. Build partnerships with local businesses to pair youth with internships and apprenticeships.	a. Increase access to SOAR processors to improve system access for individuals trying to secure/restore SSI/SSDI benefits. b. Expand participant involvement with employment and income support services. c. Create training on gaining part time employment and maintaining disability benefits for PSH participants.

10

	Veteran Homelessness	**Chronic Homelessness**	**Family & Child Homelessness**	**Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness**	**All Other Types of Homelessness**
Transportation Assistance	a. Increase transportation options for cross county travel (outer counties to Leon for services) when services cannot be delivered in rural counties. b. Encourage public transportation services to allow homeless veterans to receive free or reduced fare bus passes.	a. Continue to collaborate with public transportation services through the partnership with StarMetro to ensure organizations serving the chronically homeless can purchase reduced fare bus passes for clients. b. Provide education on reduced fare bus transportation services options for individuals in PSH programs.	a. Increase transportation options for cross county travel (outer counties to Leon for services) when services cannot be delivered in rural counties. b. Continue to collaborate with public transportation services to ensure homeless services programs can receive vouchers/discounted rates for clients who are homeless. c. Continue partnership with County Schools to provide transportation to and from school through the McKinney Vento Act.	a. Continue to collaborate with public transportation services to ensure homeless services programs can receive vouchers/discounted rates for clients who are homeless. b. Continue partnership with County Schools to provide transportation to and from school through the McKinney Vento Act. c. Increase transportation options for cross county travel (outer counties to Leon for services) when services cannot be delivered in rural counties.	a. Continue to collaborate with public transportation services to ensure homeless services programs can receive vouchers/discounted rates for clients who are homeless. b. Increase free and reduced transportation services options for individuals accessing homeless services and exiting the homeless system of care to permanent housing. c. Increase transportation options cross county travel (outer counties to Leon for services) when services cannot be delivered in rural counties. d. Provide homeless families with education about the McKinney Vento act and accommodations for bus travel to maintain school placements.

11

	Veteran Homelessness	**Chronic Homelessness**	**Family & Child Homelessness**	**Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness**	**All Other Types of Homelessness**
Childcare	a. If needed, connect veteran families to various childcare opportunities through set-aside vouchers available through ELC.	a. Ensure chronically homeless families are prioritized for ELC vouchers if requested.	a. Refer homeless households needing childcare to the Early Learning Coalition for vouchers.	a. Connect pregnant youth with childcare options upon birth of child through ELC.	a. Ensure families with minor children have access to childcare vouchers in all 8 counties if they are experiencing homelessness.
Healthcare/Benefits	a. Initiate partnership with health care providers and hospitals and increase collaboration on discharge policy and procedures. b. Identify health care and benefit resources for veterans who do not qualify for veteran's assistance due to dishonorable discharge, etc. c. Connect Veterans with a dishonorable discharge with VA access to Mental Health Services now available. d. Identify need and funding for service ineligible veterans needing temporary respite housing	a. Access Medicaid benefits for those who qualify to cover cost of case management and peer support services among individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. b. Initiate partnership with health care providers and hospitals and increase collaboration on discharge policy and procedures. c. Ensure healthcare supports and services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness are accessible. d. Ensure behavioral healthcare supports and substance abuse treatment services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness are available through partnership with providers and the area Managing Entity.	a. Assess how access to Medicaid benefits can be used for case management services among families experiencing homelessness. b. Initiate partnership with health care providers and hospitals and increase collaboration on discharge policy and procedures. c. Ensure healthcare supports and services for families experiencing homelessness are available through partnership with mainstream providers and providers operating in the Kearney Center. d. Work to improve access of families and children without insurance to ongoing behavioral health services.	a. Connect youth experiencing homelessness with managed care plans for education on accessing benefits of health insurance and acquiring health insurance. b. Initiate partnership with health care providers and hospitals and increase collaboration on discharge policy and procedure.	a. Initiate partnership with health care providers and hospitals and increase collaboration on discharge policy and procedure. b. Complete data analysis on need for temporary respite housing to decrease use of emergency departments as primary health care.

12

	Veteran Homelessness	Chronic Homelessness	Family & Child Homelessness	Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness	All Other Types of Homelessness
Education/Advocacy	a. Implement PR campaign and Action Plan promoting reaching Functional Zero for Veteran Homelessness by 2024. b. Implement standardized education to clients on budgeting, how to be a good roommate/tenant and life skills needed to retain housing. c. Provide seminars for case managers and clients on fair housing laws through local partner organizations. d. Collaborate with local substance abuse providers to offer education on Harm Reduction for clients with SA issues and housing stability issues.	a. Implement PR campaign and Action Plan promoting reaching Functional Zero for Chronic Homelessness by 2025. b. Conduct Landlord education and engagement to reduce common barriers to housing for individuals with criminal backgrounds, eviction and damage histories c. Implement standardized education to clients on budgeting, how to be a good roommate/tenant and life skills needed to retain housing. d. Collaborate with local substance abuse providers to offer education on Harm Reduction for clients with SA issues and housing stability issues. e. Provide seminars for case managers and clients on fair housing laws through local partner organizations.	a. Provide educational seminar to Homeless School Liaisons on existing prevention and homelessness resources in September each year. b. Implement standardized education to clients on budgeting, how to be a good roommate/tenant and life skills needed to retain housing. c. Provide seminars for case managers and clients on fair housing laws through local partner organizations. d. Collaborate with local substance abuse providers to offer education on Harm Reduction for clients with SA issues and housing stability issues. e. Partner with DCF and the CBC to offer training on family safety practices.	a. Implement standardized education to clients on budgeting, how to be a good roommate/tenant and life skills needed to retain housing. b. Provide seminars for case managers and clients on fair housing laws through local partner organizations. c. Collaborate with local substance abuse providers to offer education on Harm Reduction for clients with SA issues and housing stability issues. d. Continue outreach efforts to hotels, restaurants, and businesses to educate on how to identify and help trafficked/exploited youth and individuals. e. Provide education to local entities interesting in serving as a Sponsor or Master Lease Holder for youth who do not have access to cosigners and are experiencing homelessness.	a. Partner with Florida Coalition to End Homelessness to advocate for increased DCF Challenge and Staffing Grant funds dedicated to BBCoC b. Advocate at the federal and state level to increase funding allocations and further explain the complexity of being an 8 county CoC, with one city that is an ESG entitlement jurisdiction. c. Provide an Annual Homelessness Update report to each county commission within the CoC coverage are with recommendations about allocation of resources to prevent and end homelessness. d. Encourage local funders to measure performance of homelessness specific projects through the 6 identified HUD System Performance Measures and partner with the CoC to administer and allocate funding of homeless prevention and homelessness services.

13

Big Bend Continuum of Care

FL-506 Tallahassee/Leon

and Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla
Counties of North Florida

2022-2025 Action Plan

Supporting the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan & Homelessness Assistance Plan

Overview

The housing crisis response system covering Leon, Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla Counties of North Florida is coordinated by the Big Bend Continuum of Care. Utilizing gaps and needs assessment data from 2019 through 2022, the CoC has established a strategic plan to improve coordination and delivery of homeless and housing services for those households and individuals faced with homelessness in the Big Bend of Florida.

Four Main Objectives identified in the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan include;

Objective 1: Collaboratively Build a Homelessness System of Care that fully serves the BBCoC 8 county region including Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Liberty, Franklin, Madison and Taylor Counties

Objective 2: Ensure there is a menu of Homelessness Prevention, Diversion, and Homelessness Interventions and Housing Programs available to promote client choice.

Objective 3: Sustain an End to Homelessness

Objective 4: Create and Promote Pathways to Permanent Subsidized Housing

Gaps Analysis

Prior to the completion of this Strategic Plan, a Gaps Analysis was completed to help inform the Plan. Below are some key insights from the Gaps Analysis.

1 **LACK OF RESOURCES DEDICATED TO HOMELESS MINORS WHO ARE PREGNANT AND/OR PARENTING** – There are no programs or financial resources dedicated to this population. This has been a long standing need that has been unaddressed for a number of years while there has been a proven need for support to pregnant and/or parenting youth.

2 **LACK OF RESOURCES AND HOUSING OPTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WITH SEXUAL OFFENCES** – Individuals with sexual offences face many barriers to accessing emergency shelter, permanent housing, and acquiring employment as well as sustaining income. Ensuring service and housing options are available for this population assists with reintegration in the community after they exit institutional settings and enhances safety of our neighborhoods locally.

3 **NO IDENTIFIED RESOURCES OR EMERGENCY SHELTERS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH PETS** – Through surveys of individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness and daily interactions with outreach workers, there are many individuals that never seek shelter due to having pets with them. No established shelter for individuals or families allows pets. Often pets provide security and a sense of safety as people are moving through their experience of homelessness and are a key component of their existing support network. Providing accommodations for people and their pets is essential when offering shelter services specifically.

4 **INADEQUATE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL RECURING FUNDING FOR HOMELESS SERVICE AND HOUSING PROGRAMS –** There never seem to be adequate resources for serving households experiencing homelessness and exiting them to permanent housing meeting their financial and living needs. Housing Crisis Response Systems are consistently forced to triage access to services and housing through a complex assessment and referral process that doesn't allow for assistance to all that need it. Enhanced funding at all levels is critical to addressing everyone's needs facing homelessness.

5 **INADEQUATE PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES FOR MEDIUM TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FOR YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND THOSE WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS (SUDs) –** There are very minimal programs dedicated to these activities and populations. In order to address returns to homelessness for families, youth and those with SUDs, there needs to be increased access to transitional and medium-term supportive housing, allowing these individuals and households the time needed to stabilize and build their own natural support networks that will help them sustain long term permanent housing.

6 **LACK OF ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL COUNTIES AND UNINCORPORATED LEON COUNTY –** BBCoC is the largest CoC, geographically speaking, in all of Florida. All of the counties surrounding Leon are rural and most often transportation into the city of Tallahassee is essential to access medical, behavioral health, education, and mainstream services and supports. Those struggling with housing stability often to do not have transportation of their own and a well-defined an accessible public transportation option available as needed is not available across the entire geographic area. This means often people go without the care and support they need to acquire housing and sustain housing as well as overall health.

7 **INADEQUATE RECURING COVERAGE AND RESOURCES DEDICATED TO CONDUCT AND MANAGE THE COORDINATED –** Coordinated Entry to homeless services and housing opportunities is a great tool to triage who needs assistance the most based on vulnerability. This system requires coordination, training, oversight, analysis and adequate staff coverage to assess and referral anyone faced with homelessness. Coordinated Access Points need additional resources to continue conducting assessments and follow-up and provide housing search and assistance where needed. There are few dedicated funding sources for this purpose at this time and additional funding is needed to expand and continue this vital work. The data collected through these assessments is critical to understanding needs and gaps and appropriate housing interventions that will alleviate homelessness.

Our Priorities

With the close of 2025, BBCoC envisions the following goals being accomplished:

1. Reaching functional zero for veterans experiencing homelessness

2. Reaching functional zero for those experiencing chronic homelessness

3. Ensure no families with minor children experience unsheltered homelessness

4. Develop a Coordinated Community Plan to prevent and end youth homelessness

5. Increase permanent housing options for people with zero to extremely low income

6. Increase permanent housing options for those with criminal and poor or no credit histories

7. Increase and diversify funding dedicated to Permanent Supportive Housing

Improving System Performance and Outcomes

As identified in the 2021-2025 Homelessness Assistance Plan, as a system we want to improve upon and maintain the following outcomes related to system performance;

Sys PM 1 - DECREASE the overall average and median length of time a person remains homeless
Target 2021: Average less than 144 nights, Median less than 65 nights
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Average is 30 nights or less

SysPM2 - DECREASE returns to homelessness
Target 2021: Returns to homelessness with in   …..6 months less that 21%
                                                 ..…2 years, less than 33%
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Returns in 2 years, less than 20%

Sys PM 3 - DECREASE number of homeless persons in annual and PIT count
Target: PIT Count is less than 900, Annual Count is less than 2900

Sys PM 4 - INCREASE or maintain income for persons in housing programs
Target: Increase income for more than 60% system stayers   Increase income for more than 30% system leavers

Sys PM 5 - DECREASE instances of 1st time homelessness
Target: first time homeless count is less than 1500

Sys PM 7 - INCREASE permanent housing placements from Outreach, ES, TH, PH-RRH programs and retention of permanent housing
Target: Increase placements to permanent housing from outreach to be greater than 65% of outreach exits
Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH to be greater than 30%
Ultimate Goal by 2025: Increase placements to permanent housing from ES, SH, TH and PH-RRH to be greater than 60%
Increase rate of retention of permanent housing to be greater than 95%

Additional Measurable Outcomes

• At least 90% of veterans with homelessness prevention financial assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.

• At least 85% of the veterans receiving rapid re-housing assistance will remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following assistance.

• At least 85% of the families receiving rapid re-housing assistance remain in permanent housing for at least 6 months following receipt of last rental payment or case management assistance.

Action Plan 2022-2025

Objective 1: Collaboratively Build a Homelessness System of Care that fully serves the BBCoC 8 county region including Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Liberty, Franklin, Madison and Taylor Counties.
Success looks like: • Increased consistent engagement from representatives of each county   • Improved and increased assessment data on households in each county   • Production of 8 individual reports on homelessness, one for each county   • Regular communication and coordination of allocation of resources for homeless services in each county among local, state and federal funders

Objective 1: Strategy 1.1 Increase capacity and strengthen use of Coordinated Assessments and Coordinated Entry and Referral System.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Conduct Coordinated Entry System Evaluation	CES Committee	Annually
Provide CES Training to existing and new Access Points serving all 8 counties	CoC Staff	Quarterly
Incorporate referrals and assessment and prioritization of Homeless Prevention and Diversion Services through CES	CES Committee/CoC Staff/HMIS lead	Summer 2023
Implement referral system to Emergency Shelter through CES	CES Committee/CoC Staff/HMIS lead	Fall 2023
Implement referral system to support services to improve housing retention among RRH and PSH participants	CES Committee/CoC Staff/HMIS lead	Summer 2025

Objective 1: Strategy 1.2 Expand the use of the Homeless Management Information System to more adequately collect all service data and generate data trends that inform allocation of resources.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Develop a regular report showing utilization of services and average cost per person/household	HMIS Lead	Summer 2024/run 2x per year
Develop and disseminate monthly report on inflow	CES Committee/CoC Staff/HMIS lead	Monthly

and outflow paired with CES Assessment Scores to help pinpoint most needed type of intervention		
Explore integration of 211 caller needs data into HMIS	Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/CoC Staff	End of 2024

Objective 1: Strategy 1.3 Provide an annual homelessness status update report to each county commission in the CoC coverage area.		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Compile annual SPM Data	HMIS Lead	February Annually
Compile PIT Data by County	CoC Staff/HMIS lead	April Annually
Compile CES data by County	CoC Staff/HMIS lead	Summer Annually
Conduct Community Needs Surveys in each County in partnership with local Health Departments	Needs Assessment Committee	Summer Annually
Compile county specific reports including county specific resources, gaps, needs and demographic information	CoC Staff/HMIS Lead	September Annually
Present to each county commission on report and findings	CoC Board/Needs Assessment Committee/CoC Staff	October and November Annually

Objective 1: Strategy 1.4 Align Federal, State and Local funding of homelessness services to ensure the metrics and measurements used to evaluate project success are in line with BBCoC established metrics allowing us to measure progress and impact of investments towards reducing homelessness.		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Convene regular meetings of local homeless service funders including United Way, Local Governments to discuss needs and gaps updates and consistent ways to measure	CoC Executive Committee	Bi-annually
Review outcomes of locally funded homeless and housing projects to determine impact for each county	CoC Staff and local funders	Annually
Present results of impact to the communities and faith community to help guide evidence-based service provision.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Annually

Objective 2: Ensure there is a menu of Homelessness Prevention, Diversion and Homelessness Interventions and Housing Programs available to promote client choice.

Success looks like:

- All Coordinated Entry Access Points serve as homeless prevention and diversion service providers
- Increased number of full-time positions and service providers dedicated to street outreach
- Able to access recurring funding to fully support existing emergency shelter and housing focused case management needs
- Increased number of Permanent Supportive Housing units and Rapid Rehousing slots
- In addition to Tallahassee Housing Authority, enter into MOU for homeless dedicated vouchers with at least one other housing authority.

Objective 2: Strategy 2.1 Increase Capacity and Strengthen Homelessness Prevention and Diversion Practices

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Review and modify CoC Diversion and Homeless Prevention Assessments	CoC Staff/Diversion and Prevention Service Providers/CE Committee	Summer 2023/annually
Incorporate Homeless Prevention and Diversion Assessment and referral into CES	CE Committee/HMIS Lead	Summer 2023
Train all Access Points on prevention and diversion assessment and use of CE for referral	CoC Staff/HMIS Lead	Summer 2023
Convene agencies conducting prevention and diversion assessments and services with the CE committee to discuss improvements	CE Committee/CoC staff/HMIS Lead	Fall 2023
Conduct focus group or interviews/surveys with participants of prevention and diversion for feedback	CE Committee/CoC Staff	Fall 2023
Refine diversion and prevention process	CE Committee/CoC Staff	Summer 2023

Objective 2: Strategy 2.2 Expand Street Outreach Programs

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Provide capacity building and training to existing and potential outreach service providers to prepare them for new funding and programs	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Starting in 2022/ongoing
Complete proposals and applications for funding currently available	CoC Executive Committee/CoC Staff	2022/ongoing

Apply to the HUD supplemental NOFO for unsheltered and rural homelessness	CoC Executive Committee/CoC Staff	Fall 2022
Determine number of FTE needed to conduct Outreach across all 8 counties using the outreach workgroup regular meeting	CoC Staff/Outreach Workgroup	March 2024
Determine average cost per client for outreach services based on previous outreach project data	CoC Staff	April 2024
Determine allocation of funding needed to fully fund outreach across all 8 counties and determine funding gap	CoC Staff/Needs Assessment and Planning Committee	May 2024
Establish a time limited workgroup to identify federal, state and local outreach funding	CoC Board/CoC Staff	June-December 2024

Objective 2: Strategy 2.3 Identify funding sources for Emergency Shelter Operations with Housing Focused Case Management		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Determine size and scope of needs for existing ES operations and identify gaps	Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/CoC Staff	Summer 2023
Establish a cost per person for ES services	CoC Staff/Executive Committee	Summer 2023
Determine allocation of funding needed to fully fund ES operations including Housing Focused Case Management and determine funding gap	Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/CoC Staff	Summer 2023
Determine if allocation of existing resource needs to be shifted to support ES	CoC Staff/Executive Committee	Fall 2023
Establish a Work Group to identify additional funding for ES operations and housing focused case management that are recurring	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Fall 2023
Work group to identify funding	ES Work group	June 2023-April 2024
Create plan to leverage and apply for additional ES funding through this work group	ES Funding Workgroup/CoC Staff	February 2024

Objective 2: Strategy 2.4 Expand subsidies and resources for permanent housing dedicated to homeless households including Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and housing vouchers.		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Engage all Public Housing Authorities and convene	CoC Executive Committee/CoC Staff	Spring 2023

meeting explaining need for each of their coverage areas for homeless households.		
Facilitate meetings with each housing authority to establish homeless set aside preference and maximizing use of EHV and FUP programs where awarded	CoC staff	Ongoing/ minimum quarterly
Engage locally funded Tenant Based Rental Assistance Programs to better understand eligibility and referral process to better connect clients to resources	CoC Staff	Ongoing
Expand slots and funding dedicated to RRH and PSH through HUD NOFO, SSVF, YHDP, ESG and other funders by submitting additional project proposals and through reallocation if warranted	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Ongoing
Identify flexible funding to explore master leasing to hold units for RRH and PSH units between tenants and sublease to clients in homeless services system	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Ongoing

Objective 3: Sustain an End to Homelessness.

Success looks like:
- Reach functional zero for Veteran Homelessness by 12/31/2024
- Reach functional zero for Chronic Homelessness by 12/31/2025
- Established, operational Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness by 12/31/2023
- Submit HUD YHDP Application by 2023
- Establish Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Unsheltered Homelessness by 12/31/25

Objective 3: Strategy 3.1 Facilitate an Action Plan to end Veteran Homelessness by 12/31/2024 as defined by the Functional Zero definition through the national Built for Zero Initiative

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Utilize the existing Veteran Staffing Work Group to draft the Action Plan to End Veteran Homelessness by the close of 2024.	Veteran Staffing Work Group/CoC Staff	Winter 2022/bi-weekly
Develop monthly targets for permanent housing of veterans and share progress monthly with full CoC membership, board and community.	Veteran Staffing Work Group/CoC Staff	Monthly
Work in partnership with local veterans assistance programs to help veterans sustain housing and have basic ongoing needs met	Veteran Staffing Work Group/CoC Staff	ongoing
Partner with City of Tallahassee, Leon County as well as other local governments to coordinate what shared success and responsibilities would look like in reaching functional zero for veterans.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Spring 2023/ongoing

Objective 3: Strategy 3.2 Facilitate an Action Plan to end Chronic Homelessness by 12/31/2025 as defined by the Functional Zero definition through the national Built for Zero Initiative

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Utilize the existing Permanent Supportive Housing Staffing Workgroup to draft the Action Plan to End Chronic Homelessness by 12/31/2025	Chronic/PSH Work Group/CoC Staff	May 2023/bi-weekly
Develop Monthly targets for permanent housing of chronically homeless and share progress monthly with full CoC membership, board and community.	Chronic/PSH Work Group/CoC Staff	Starting May 2023/ongoing monthly
Work with the City of Tallahassee on the House America project to incorporate housing opportunities for chronically homeless.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Start 2022
Partner with city of Tallahassee and Leon County government to establish at least 200 new PSH units	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Start 2022

by the close of 2025.		
Identify and establish formal partnerships with mainstream supports that will help formerly chronic clients maintain natural supports and housing stability.	Chronic/PSH Work Group/CoC Staff/CoC Board	Start May 2023/ongoing
Partner with City of Tallahassee and Leon County as well as other local governments to coordinate what shared success and responsibilities would look like in reaching functional zero for chronically homeless households.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Summer 2023

Objective 3: Strategy 3.3 Create a Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness by 12/31/23		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Institute a formal committee of the CoC Governance Board call the Youth Action Board (YAB)	CoC Board/CoC Staff	2022
Organize regular meetings among youth stakeholders to prepare for release of HUD Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding opportunity. Utilize this group to establish the Ending Youth Homelessness work group.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Spring 2023
Conduct youth specific needs assessment in partnership with stakeholders and YAB	Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/Ending Youth Homelessness WG/CoC Staff	Fall 2023
Develop MoUs and data sharing agreements with stakeholders, including child welfare organization, DJJ, service non-profits, RHY providers, etc.	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Spring 2023
Apply to the HUD YHDP funding opportunity	CoC Board/CoC Staff/Youth Action Board	2023
Utilize the Ending Youth Homelessness Work Group to draft an outline for the Comprehensive Community Plan to End Homelessness	Ending Youth Homelessness WG/CoC Staff	Spring 2023
Work with the YAB, youth work group and Needs Assessment and Planning Committee to fully draft a detailed community plan to end youth homelessness to present to the full CoC Board and membership.	YAB/Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/Ending Youth Homelessness WB/CoC staff	Spring 2023

Objective 3: Strategy 3.4 Create a Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Unsheltered Homelessness by 12/31/25		
ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	**RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY**	**FREQUENCY/Target Completion**
Utilize the existing Street Outreach Workgroup to draft the Action Plan to Prevent and End Unsheltered homelessness	Street Outreach Workgroup/CoC Staff/Needs Assessment and Planning Committee	Summer 2024
Determine if a specific workgroup needs to be established to oversee the action plan after adopted by the CoC Board/Membership	CoC Board/CoC Staff	Fall 2024
Present draft Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Unsheltered Homelessness to CoC Board and Membership for adoption	Established Workgroup/CoC Staff	Spring 2025

Objective 4: Create and Promote Pathways to Permanent Subsidized Housing

Success looks like:

- 300 new units of permanent housing dedicated to individuals or couples with no minor children and a history of chronic homelessness by close of 2025
- 20 units of housing dedicated to those with homelessness and prior sexual offense
- 60 units of housing dedicated to those with homelessness and felony history
- 90 units of housing dedicated to those with homeless history and no to low credit
- At least one local government will have adopted inclusionary housing regulation dedicating 10% of all new developments to those exiting homelessness.
- Established priority for homeless prevention program for those who are previously homeless but permanently housed within the last 2 years

Objective 4: Strategy 4.1 Increase units of permanent housing by 300 units for individuals and couples with no minor children who receive $750 per month in income or less and have chronic homelessness histories by 12/31/2025

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Establish a workgroup dedicated to increasing opportunities for permanent subsidized housing	CoC Board	Fall 2022
Have this workgroup outline a plan and funding for creating the number of units needed for each sub population	Permanent Subsidized Housing WG	March 2023
Adopt the plan, with yearly targets for new housing units	CoC Board	April 2023
Work to develop partnerships and acquire funding to ensure the creation of needed units	CoC Board/WG/CoC Staff/Local Governments	Starting May 2023/ongoing

Objective 4: Strategy 4.2 Expand function of Landlord Liaison Initiatives to include engaging landlords and incentivizing those willing to housing Sexual Offenders and those with Felonies in background as well as those with no or low credit.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Identify funding for Landlord Liaison at CoC level to benefit all organizations with in the CoC	CoC Board/CoC Staff	2021
Start landlord engagement program to build relationships with new and existing landlords	CoC staff	2021
Establish a landlord mitigation fund as an incentive for landlords	City of Tallahassee/Leon County/CoC Board/CoC Staff	2021
Develop success stories told by landlords to help recruit other landlords to want to provide housing to those with sexual offender, felony and low credit histories	CoC Staff	2022

Conduct an inventory of all units acquired through Landlord Liaison expansion initiatives	CoC Staff	2023
Conduct a needs assessment among landlords to understand what is needed for them to agree to house this population.	CoC Staff/ Needs Assessment and Planning Committee	Spring 2023
Through landlord feedback and needs assessment identify necessary incentives and funding for incentives for landlords to house this population	CoC Staff/Needs Assessment and Planning Committee/CoC Board	Summer 2023/ongoing

Objective 4: Strategy 4.3 Promote use of local ordinance and inclusionary housing regulations mandating new residential developments dedicate a minimum of 10% of newly developed unites be dedicated to those exiting homelessness for which they would pay no more than 30% of their monthly income to maintain a permanent lease.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Meet with local governments to understand their existing inclusionary housing regulations.	CoC Staff/Executive Committee	Starting February 2023/ongoing
Develop informational handouts on additional inclusionary housing regulations that would create more affordable housing units for those faced with homelessness	CoC Staff/ Florida Housing Coalition	Fall 2023
Prepare presentations to local governments on recommendations of regulations to consider to increase the housing stock for this population	CoC Staff/Florida Housing Coalition	Winter 2023
Conduct presentations to commissions, planning and development councils and housing/permitting departments describing needed regulation changes and specific need and outcomes	CoC Staff/CoC Board	2024

Objective 4: Strategy 4.4 Dedicate homeless prevention resources to PSH and RRH graduates to ensure fewer returns to homelessness and higher housing retention

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRATEGY	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE/ENTITY	FREQUENCY/Target Completion
Evaluation allocation of existing prevention resources	CoC staff/Needs Assessment and Planning Committee	Summer 2023
Establish allocation needed to fully support PSH and RRH participants from returning to homelessness	CoC Staff/ CoC Board	Fall 2023
Identify new funding streams to support this effort	CoC Staff/CoC Board	Start October 2023/ongoing
Incorporate funds and services into existing coordinated entry process	CoC Staff/HMIS Lead	2024

UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

ALL IN:
The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

DECEMBER 2022

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 19, 2022

Every American deserves a safe and reliable place to call home. It's a matter of security, stability, and well-being. It is also a matter of basic dignity and who we are as a Nation.

Yet many Americans live each day without safe or stable housing. Some are in emergency shelters. Others live on our streets, exposed to the threats of violence, adverse weather, disease, and so many other dangers exacerbated by homelessness. Both the COVID-19 pandemic and the reckoning our Nation has faced on issues of racial justice have also exposed inequities that have been allowed to fester for far too long.

At the same time, we know we can do something about it. That is why I'm proud to present the Biden-Harris Administration's Federal Strategic Plan to reduce homelessness by 25 percent by January 2025—an ambitious plan that will put us on the path to meeting my long-term vision of preventing and ending homelessness in America. We need partners at the State and local levels, in the private sector, and from philanthropies to all play a part in meeting this goal.

My plan offers a roadmap for not only getting people into housing but also ensuring that they have access to the support, services, and income that allow them to thrive. It is a plan that is grounded in the best evidence and aims to improve equity and strengthen collaboration at all levels.

My plan builds on the foundation my Administration has laid since I came to office. When I signed the American Rescue Plan in March 2021, we provided tens of billions of dollars in rental assistance to people who were struggling during the pandemic through no fault of their own— reducing eviction filings and keeping millions of Americans from being thrown out of their homes. Communities across the country are using American Rescue Plan funds to create more permanent affordable housing and support State and local initiatives to address homelessness.

But, there's much more to do. Americans of all backgrounds all across the country are struggling with housing costs that have far outpaced wage growth. At the same time, often due to historical inequities, veterans, low-income workers, people of color, LGBTQI+ Americans, people with disabilities, older adults, and people with arrest or conviction records are at greater risk of homelessness. They have fewer opportunities to access safe, affordable housing and health care and face more barriers to fulfilling these basic needs once they lose them.

This plan meets the urgency of the moment. It recognizes that it's not enough to go back to the way things were before the pandemic. We must build a better future for all Americans. This plan also recognizes that homelessness should not be a partisan issue. A great nation has a moral obligation to ensure housing, but it's also the smart thing to do.

When we provide access to housing to people experiencing homelessness, they are able to take steps to improve their health and well-being, further their education, seek steady employment, and bring greater stability to their lives and to the community that surrounds them. That not only saves individual lives, it also pays ongoing dividends for neighborhoods, cities, states, and our entire country. By ensuring more Americans have safe, stable, and affordable homes, we can build a stronger foundation for our entire Nation.

Joseph Biden

Message From USICH Chairs

It has been our shared honor to lead the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) through the development of this new Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, which will put our country back on track toward the goal of ending homelessness. Homelessness should not exist in the richest country in the world. As the former chair (Marcia Fudge, 2021-2022) and current chair (Denis McDonough, 2022-) of USICH, **we are working not just to reduce but to ultimately end homelessness**, period.

Homelessness is solvable. We know this because we have seen it done. When the Obama-Biden administration released the nation's first comprehensive strategy to prevent and end homelessness in 2010—titled *Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*—it launched a period of focus, resolve, and targeted investment that drove year-on-year reductions in homelessness, especially for veterans. Since 2010, veteran homelessness has decreased by [more than half](#),[1] with over 960,000 veterans and their family members becoming permanently housed or prevented from becoming homeless. The lessons learned and the innovative practices that emerged from our work with veteran homelessness serve as a roadmap for solving homelessness among all Americans. And though in recent years that progress has slowed, we have seen those efforts renewed with the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* (ARP) and other federal efforts to address the current crisis.

The Biden-Harris Administration has made ending homelessness a top priority. The ARP provided a historic opportunity to invest in short- and long-term solutions to homelessness, with an unprecedented level of funding going directly to local governments. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supported new collaborations between health departments and local homeless Continuums of Care with funding and public health guidance. The Department of the Treasury distributed emergency rental assistance to millions of low-income renters and gave state and local governments flexibility to use ARP funds for affordable housing. Under ARP, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursed the cost of non-congregate shelter to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in congregate settings. The Department of Education granted states and school districts funds to better identify students experiencing homelessness and to connect those children and youth to school and community-based interventions and wraparound services. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) distributed [ARP funds](#)[2] to nearly 1,400 health centers across the country, which provide health care and support services to nearly 1.5 million people experiencing homelessness. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) distributed emergency housing vouchers and HOME-ARP funding, focused on strengthening fair housing and tenants' protections, and doubled its homeless services budget since President Biden took office. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) used the additional resources and flexibilities provided under the ARP to prevent and end homelessness

---

*[The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2)](#) was signed into law by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021.

for 69,946 veterans and their family members during fiscal year 2021 and, between January and September 2022, VA worked with veterans to achieve more than 30,000 permanent housing placements from homelessness.

In 2021, HUD and USICH launched *House America: An All-Hands-on-Deck Effort to Address the Nation's Homelessness Crisis* to invite mayors, city and county leaders, tribal nation leaders, and governors into a national partnership to rehouse people and expand affordable housing using ARP funding and the Housing First approach. Leaders of more than 100 communities joined this nationwide initiative and committed to setting goals for rehousing and housing production through the end of 2022. We thank them for their leadership, and we are eager to share the lessons of their success with even more communities across the country.

Along with these activities across the federal government, USICH engaged in extensive listening sessions with thousands of leaders, providers, and advocates, and hundreds of people with lived experience to inform the new Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. We are proud and pleased to present this new plan, which restores the importance of Housing First; is grounded in the voices of people who have experienced the trauma of homelessness; and **does more than any previous plan to set a strategic and equitable path toward the systematic prevention of homelessness**.

Solving homelessness means recognizing and confronting the factors that may have led to the tragic circumstance of homelessness. It means being guided by the data and evidence that some Americans who face ongoing discrimination are disproportionately overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness—especially people of color, LGBTQI+ people, and people with disabilities. It means recognizing that experiencing the crisis of homelessness is a form of significant trauma that can impact individuals and families for decades and generations. Solving homelessness means delivering help to the people who need it most and who are having the hardest time. It means putting housing first, along with the person-centered supports needed to succeed and thrive.

With this plan, **we recommit the federal government to person-centered, trauma-informed, and evidence-based solutions** to homelessness. We are confident in the knowledge that recovery is possible, that voluntary supportive services are the most effective way to reach people in need, and that communities across this nation can welcome and treat their unhoused neighbors with justice, respect, and dignity.

While we acknowledge there is much work ahead, we are proud of the work this administration has done to address homelessness. Together and with our fellow members of USICH, we look forward to partnering with and learning from you as we continue our work to end homelessness in America.

VA Secretary Denis R. McDonough
USICH Council Chair, 2022-2023

HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge
USICH Council Chair, 2021-2022

Message From the Executive Director

Homelessness in the United States is an urgent life-and-death public health issue and humanitarian crisis. Far too many Americans live—and die—without a roof over their heads. This is disproportionately true for people of color— Black, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Latino[3] people in particular— reflecting the compounding effects of racial discrimination in housing, employment, health care, and education that persist to this day. It does not have to be this way. **Homelessness is not inevitable, and it is not unsolvable.** At USICH, we envision a future in which no one experiences homelessness—not even for one night.

USICH believes that housing should be treated as a human right, and that housing is health care. We prioritize the use of data and evidence for effective policymaking and know that an evidence-informed approach to ending homelessness will require us to address the barriers and disparities that people of color and other marginalized groups too often face. Advancing the most effective policy solutions will require that people who have experienced homelessness firsthand should be in positions of power to shape federal, state, and local policy. We can prevent homelessness before it starts by scaling up housing and supports, —both of which are critical to ending homelessness. The federal government must listen to local needs, support local innovation, and foster collaboration and partnerships. **The United States of America can end homelessness by fixing public services and systems—not by blaming the individuals and families who have been left behind by failed policies and economic exclusion.**

Many Americans, especially those whose neighborhoods and communities have been most directly impacted by the homelessness crisis, ask, "How do we end homelessness in the United States?" This plan outlines a set of strategies and actions for achieving such a vision. The plan is built upon the foundations of equity, data, and collaboration, and designed around the solutions of housing and supports, homelessness response, and prevention. It points to a single goal—a 25% reduction in homelessness by 2025. Achieving this ambitious goal is a critical first step on our national journey to end homelessness.

This work will require a deep commitment on the part of the federal government as well as state and local leaders, nonprofits, the faith community, and the business and philanthropic sectors; and it must be shaped by those closest to the crisis—people who have experienced homelessness.

Homelessness is not a partisan issue. Division and finger-pointing will not solve the crisis. We as a nation have come together before to tackle difficult challenges, and we can do the same with homelessness. **We must find common ground, scale what works, and develop new and creative solutions** until homelessness is a relic of the past and every American has a safe, stable, accessible, and affordable home.

Jeff Olivet
USICH Executive Director

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

This plan builds upon the successes and strengths of previous USICH plans as well as the work of our partners at the federal, state, and local levels.

USICH would like to thank the **thousands of people across the country**—including staff from local, state, and national agencies and organizations; community volunteers; advocates; and the more than 500 people with past and current experiences of homelessness—who provided their time and expertise to ensure this plan reflects a diversity of perspectives. Their continued counsel and partnership will be necessary for action and implementation.

USICH would also like to thank the **19 federal agencies*** that make up the council as well as the White House Domestic Policy Council, each bringing its own perspectives and priorities to the plan:

1. AmeriCorps
2. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
3. U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)
4. U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)
5. U.S. Department of Education (Education)
6. U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
7. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
8. U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
9. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
10. U.S. Department of Interior (Interior)
11. U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
12. U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
13. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
14. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
15. General Services Administration (GSA)
16. Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
17. Social Security Administration (SSA)
18. U.S. Postal Office (USPS)
19. White House Office on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (FBNP)

Special thanks to consultants **Colleen Echohawk, Norweeta Milburn, Rhie Azzam Morris, and Jama Shelton,** who partnered with USICH by sharing their expertise and unique lenses to the development of this plan—and to designers **David Dupree and Malcolm Jones** of Abt Associates for designing the plan.

For more information on how this plan was created, see Appendix A on Page 72.

---

*USICH's federal collaboration is not limited to the 19 agencies that make up the council. USICH also engages with other agencies and offices, including the U.S. Department of the Treasury, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, White House Council on Native American Affairs, and White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Executive Summary

After steady declines from 2010 to 2016, **homelessness in America has been rising**, and more individuals are experiencing it in unsheltered settings, such as encampments. This increase stems from decades of growing economic inequality exacerbated by a global pandemic, soaring housing costs, and housing supply shortfalls. It is further exacerbated by inequitable access to health care, including mental health and/or substance use disorder treatment; discrimination and exclusion of people of color, LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities and older adults; as well as the consequences of mass incarceration. As our nation faces the growing threats of climate change, more Americans are being displaced from their homes and people experiencing unsheltered homelessness face even greater risk to their health and safety as a result of climate-related crises like wildfires, floods, and hurricanes. Even as homelessness response systems are helping more people than ever exit homelessness, more people are entering or reentering homelessness.

Homelessness has no place in America. *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* (herein referred to as *All In)* is a multi-year, interagency blueprint for **a future where no one experiences homelessness, and everyone has a safe, stable, accessible, and affordable home.** It serves as a roadmap for federal action to ensure state and local communities have sufficient resources and guidance to build the effective, lasting systems required to end homelessness. While it is a federal plan, local communities can use it to collaboratively develop local and systems-level plans for preventing and ending homelessness. To reach the Biden-Harris Administration's vision, the plan sets an **ambitious interim goal to reduce homelessness by 25% by January 2025** and sets us on a path to end homelessness for all Americans.

To develop this plan, USICH undertook a **comprehensive and inclusive process** to gather input from a broad range of perspectives. Through more than 80 listening sessions and 1,500 public comments, USICH received feedback

Within this plan, USICH is using the term "people of color" to be inclusive[4] of all racial groups other than non-Hispanic white, including Black/African American; American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian/Asian American; Latino/a; and; Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. USICH acknowledges that the experiences of each of these groups is not the same and that the needs of each group must be uniquely considered and addressed upon implementation. For more information on terms used in this plan, see the Appendix C on Pages 88-95.

from organizations and people—including **more than 500 who have experienced homelessness**—who represent **nearly 650 communities** across nearly every state as well as tribes and territories. All of this input directly influenced *All In,* which was **created by USICH with collective thinking** of the 19 federal agencies that make up the council.

Although *All In* builds off former federal strategic plans to prevent and end homelessness, it is reflective of the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities. It goes further than any prior USICH federal strategic plan to **comprehensively advance equity and to address systemic racism** and the ways in which federal policies and practices have resulted in severe racial and other disparities in homelessness. While other plans have mentioned homelessness prevention, this plan includes specific strategies focused on **upstream prevention**. And *All In* aligns with the administration's existing work to transform social service systems—including the National Mental Health[5] and National Drug Control[6] strategies. This plan also builds upon the national Housing Supply Action Plan[7] that seeks to close the housing supply gap in the next five years.

How *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan* (FSP) Aligns With Other Biden-Harris Administration Work

Housing Supply Action Plan	National Mental Health Strategy	National Drug Control Strategy
Legislative and administrative actions to close the housing supply shortfall	A vision to transform how mental health is understood and treated	A whole-of-government call to action to combat overdose epidemic
FSP identifies ways to reform zoning and land-use policies and to reduce regulatory barriers. **See Housing & Supports Strategy 2:** Expand engagement, resources, and incentives for the creation of new supportive and affordable housing.	FSP pilots new approaches, expands pipeline of providers, and invests in peer support models. **See Housing & Supports Strategy 6:** Strengthen system capacity to address and meet the needs of people with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders.	FSP focuses on high-impact harm-reduction interventions. **See Housing & Supports Strategies 6 and 7:** Maximize current resources that can provide voluntary and trauma-informed supportive services and income supports to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Ending homelessness requires an **all-hands-on-deck response** grounded in authentic collaboration. Upon release of this plan, USICH will immediately begin working with federal partners as well as local and state entities in the public and private sectors to **develop implementation plans** that will identify key activities, milestones, and metrics for making, tracking, and publicizing progress. USICH will regularly measure progress and update the implementation plans. The plan itself, *All In,* will be annually updated to reflect evolving evidence, input, and lessons.

This plan is built around three foundational pillars—**equity, data, and collaboration**—and three solution pillars—**housing and supports, homelessness response, and prevention**. Each pillar includes strategies the federal government will pursue to facilitate increased availability of and access to housing, economic security, health care, and stability for all Americans.

Summary of *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*

FOUNDATION PILLARS

Lead With Equity

Strategies to address racial and other disparities among people experiencing homelessness:

1. Ensure federal efforts to prevent and end homelessness promote equity and equitable outcomes.
2. Promote inclusive decision-making and authentic collaboration.
3. Increase access to federal housing and homelessness funding for American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.
4. Examine and modify federal policies and practices that may have created and perpetuated racial and other disparities among people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Use Data and Evidence to Make Decisions

Strategies to ground action in research, quantitative and qualitative data, and the perspectives of people who have experienced homelessness:

1. Strengthen the federal government's capacity to use data and evidence to inform federal policy and funding.
2. Strengthen the capacity of state and local governments, territories, tribes, Native-serving organizations operating off tribal lands, and nonprofits to collect, report, and use data.
3. Create opportunities for innovation and research to build and disseminate evidence for what works.

Collaborate at All Levels

Strategies to break down silos between federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and organizations; public, private, and philanthropic sectors; and people who have experienced homelessness:

1. Promote collaborative leadership at all levels of government and across sectors.
2. Improve information-sharing with public and private organizations at the federal, state, and local level.

SOLUTION PILLARS

Scale Housing and Supports That Meet Demand

Strategies to increase supply of and access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing and tailored supports for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness:

1. Maximize the use of existing federal housing assistance.
2. Expand engagement, resources, and incentives for the creation of new safe, affordable, and accessible housing.
3. Increase the supply and impact of permanent supportive housing for individuals and families with complex service needs—including unaccompanied, pregnant, and parenting youth and young adults.
4. Improve effectiveness of rapid rehousing for individuals and families—including unaccompanied, pregnant, and parenting youth and young adults.
5. Support enforcement of fair housing and combat other forms of housing discrimination that perpetuate disparities in homelessness.
6. Strengthen system capacity to address the needs of people with disabilities and chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders.
7. Maximize current resources that can provide voluntary and trauma-informed supportive services and income supports to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
8. Increase the use of practices grounded in evidence in service delivery across all program types.

Improve Effectiveness of Homelessness Response Systems

Strategies to help response systems meet the urgent crisis of homelessness, especially unsheltered homelessness:

1. Spearhead an all-of-government effort to end unsheltered homelessness.
2. Evaluate coordinated entry and provide tools and guidance on effective assessment processes that center equity, remove barriers, streamline access, and divert people from homelessness.
3. Increase availability of and access to emergency shelter—especially non-congregate shelter—and other temporary accommodations.
4. Solidify the relationship between CoCs, public health agencies, and emergency management agencies to improve coordination when future public health emergencies and natural disasters arise.
5. Expand the use of "housing problem-solving" approaches for diversion and rapid exit.
6. Remove and reduce programmatic, regulatory, and other barriers that systematically delay or deny access to housing for households with the highest needs.

Prevent Homelessness

Strategies to reduce the risk of housing instability for households most likely to experience homelessness:

1. Reduce housing instability for households most at risk of experiencing homelessness by increasing availability of and access to meaningful and sustainable employment, education, and other mainstream supportive services, opportunities, and resources.
2. Reduce housing instability for families, youth, and single adults with former involvement with or who are directly exiting from publicly funded institutional systems.
3. Reduce housing instability among older adults and people with disabilities—including people with mental health conditions and/or with substance use disorders—by increasing access to home and community-based services and housing that is affordable, accessible, and integrated.
4. Reduce housing instability for veterans and service members transitioning from military to civilian life.
5. Reduce housing instability for American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.
6. Reduce housing instability among youth and young adults.
7. Reduce housing instability among survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence, including family and intimate partner violence

State of Homelessness

> "Positive results can be achieved if we treat homelessness as a crisis all the time, not just during a pandemic."
>
> **– Person with lived experience from San Diego, California**

Housing is a social determinant of health,[8] meaning lack of stable housing has a negative impact on overall health and life expectancy. Tens of thousands[9] of people die every year due to the dangerous conditions of living without stable housing—conditions that have worsened due to climate change and the rise in extreme weather. For those who survive, the trauma caused by homelessness can have a lasting impact—even after a person moves back into housing. Children who have experienced homelessness are more likely to[10] experience serious health conditions and to become more vulnerable to abuse and violence.

Homelessness Is Deadly*

People who experience homelessness die nearly 30 years earlier than the average American—and at the average age that Americans died in 1900

50 Years Old

77 Years Old

🔴 People who experience homelessness   🟡 Average American

---

*https://nationalhomeless.org/category/mortality/#:~:text=People%20who%20experience%20homelessness%20have,mental%20health%2C%20and%20substance%20abuse[11]

https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db427.htm#Summary[12]

Microsoft Word - MemDayFlyer06.doc (nhchc.org)[13]

According to HUD, on any given night, more than half a million people sleep in shelters and unsheltered places not meant for human habitation, such as cars and encampments. But this single night datapoint only provides part of the picture of who experiences homelessness. While some people experience it for extended periods, most experience homelessness in shorter episodes. Over the course of a year, more than a million individuals and families experience homelessness, and many more experience housing instability placing them at risk for homelessness. For the first time since data collection began, more individuals experiencing homelessness in the U.S. are unsheltered than sheltered. When considering households that are "doubled up"—where multiple families or generations are living together out of necessity—or households that are severely rent-burdened, the number of households experiencing homelessness or housing instability surges even higher.

How Many People Experience Homelessness in the U.S.?*

1. 25 million	1.29 million	1.28 million	582,462
Experienced sheltered homelessness at some point in 2020, the last year for which complete annual HUD data are available	People experiencing homelessness served by the health center program administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration within HHS, including Health Care for the Homeless programs, according to 2020 HHS data	Students (not including their parents or siblings not enrolled in K-12 schools) experienced some form of homelessness during the 2019-20 school year, according to Department of Education data	Experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2022—a .34% increase from 2020—according to HUD's annual Point-in-Time Count

*The data in this graphic does not reflect the COVID-19 pandemic. |

Given the pervasiveness of homelessness, most Americans—often unknowingly—have friends, family, coworkers, or neighbors who are experiencing homelessness today or who have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.

---

*https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf[14]
https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/data-reporting/program-data/national/table?tableName=Full&year=2020[15]
https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Student-Homelessness-in-America-2021.pdf[16]
https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/ahar/[17]

"It is time that we quit blaming people and start blaming bad policy that has displaced people since the beginning of time."

– Person with lived experience from Sacramento, California

Posted May 17, 2023
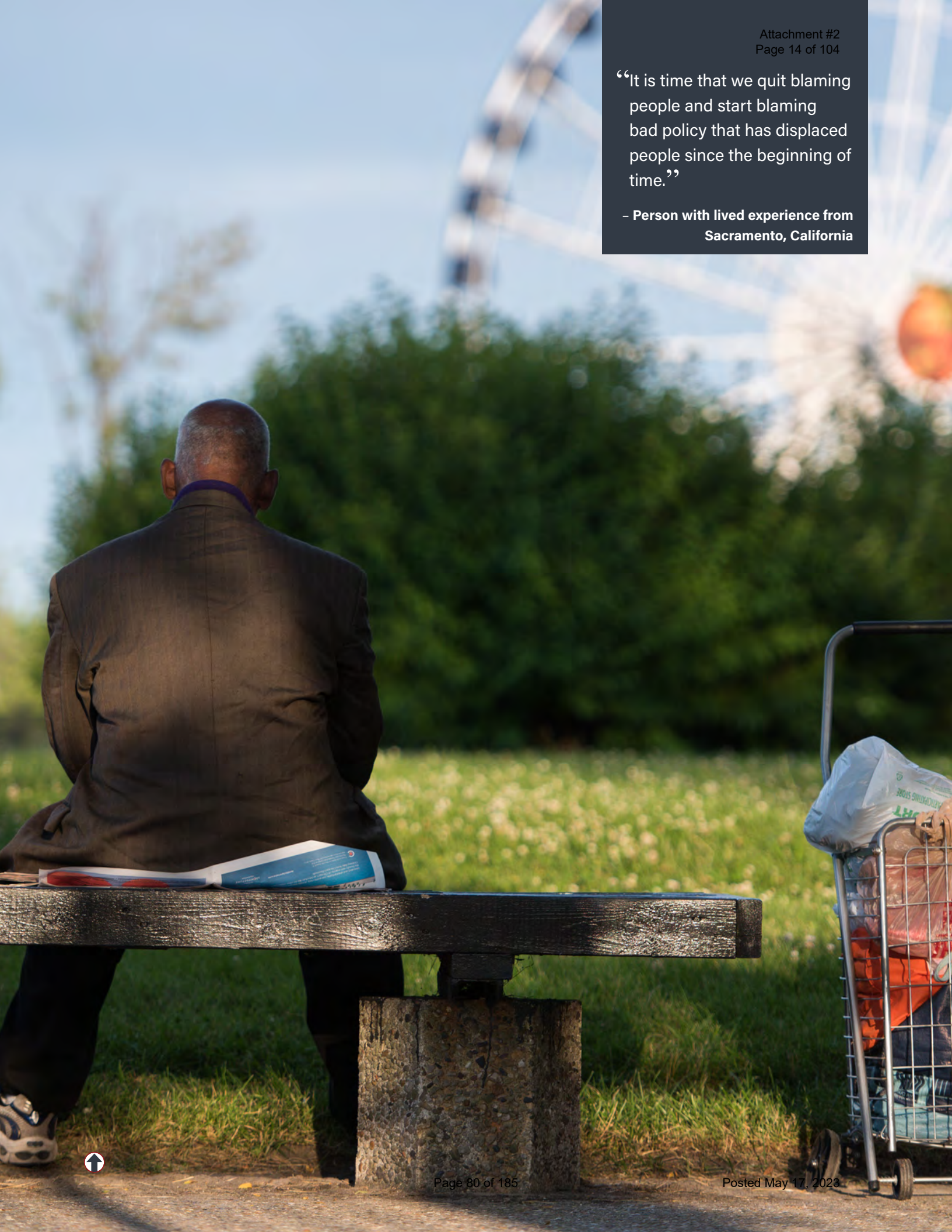
Sheltered vs. Unsheltered Homelessness*

60%
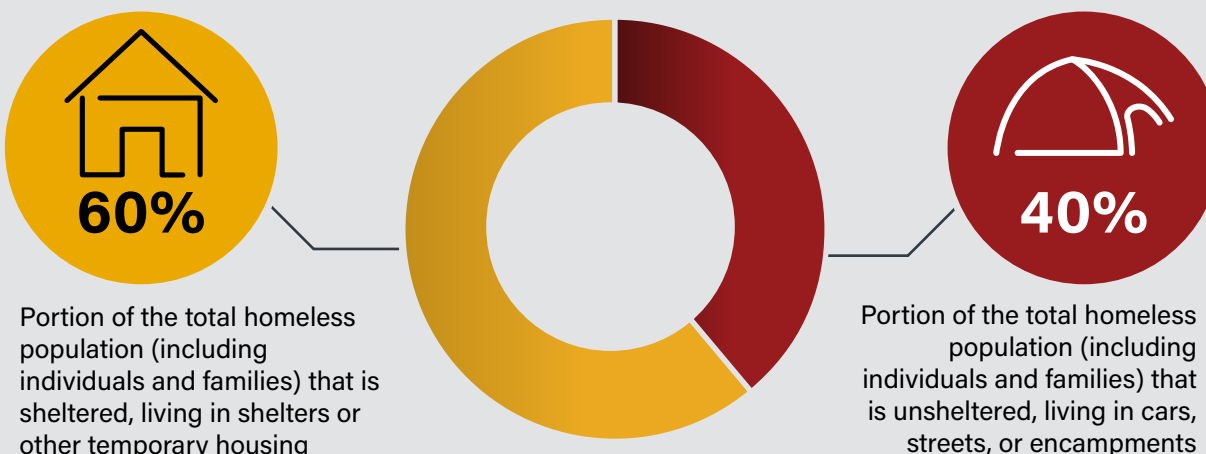
Portion of the total homeless population (including individuals and families) that is sheltered, living in shelters or other temporary housing

40%

Portion of the total homeless population (including individuals and families) that is unsheltered, living in cars, streets, or encampments

While more people experiencing homelessness *overall* live in sheltered locations, according to the 2022 Point-in-Time Count, for only the second time since HUD started collecting this data, people who experience homelessness as *individuals* (versus families) are more likely to live in unsheltered locations.

Homelessness in the United States has surged and receded[18] throughout our nation's history.** The early 1980s marked the emergence of what now may be considered the modern era of homelessness. While there have been many structural drivers, the evidence shows that homelessness is largely the result of failed policies. Severely underfunded programs and inequitable access to quality education, health care (including treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders), and economic opportunity have led to an inadequate safety net that fails to keep individuals and families from falling through the cracks when they fall on hard times. Underinvestment in both affordable housing development and preservation has led to severe shortages of affordable, safe, and accessible housing. Wages have not kept up with soaring housing costs for many working Americans, leading to persistent housing insecurity and in some cases exacerbating poverty.

Central to many of these systemic failures are policies and programs that led to discriminatory practices against people of color and members of marginalized groups. For example, during the 20th century, federal and local governments implemented discriminatory housing, transportation, and community investment policies, such as redlining,*** [19] that segregated neighborhoods, inhibited equal opportunity and wealth creation, and led to the persistent undervaluation of properties owned by people of color. These federal policies eroded intergenerational wealth creation for individuals and families across the United States, leaving many people of color more vulnerable to housing instability and homelessness. Similarly, policies like forced relocation have put American Indians and Alaska Natives at greater risk of housing insecurity and homelessness. At the same time, discriminatory policies and practices against marginalized groups— such as LGBTQI+ Americans, people with disabilities, and people with HIV—have resulted in inequitable

---

*Data Source: https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/ahar/[17]

**According to Kusmer (2002) and Leginski (2007), the most prominent spikes in homelessness occurred during the colonial period, pre-industrial era, post-Civil War years, Great Depression, and today.

***Redlining refers to a discriminatory practice in which services (financial and otherwise) are withheld from potential customers who reside in neighborhoods classified as 'hazardous' to investment; these neighborhoods have significant numbers of racial and ethnic minorities, and low-income residents.

access to economic opportunity, housing security, and an inclusive social safety net.

The impacts of systemic racism[20] and discrimination can be seen in federal homelessness data. While homelessness impacts people of all ages, races, physical and cognitive abilities, ethnicities, gender identities, and sexual orientations, it disproportionately impacts some groups and populations. Compared to their overall proportion of the U.S. population, people of color are overrepresented in the homeless population. Black Americans are especially overrepresented at a rate of 3 to 1 compared to the general population. For American Indians and Alaska Natives, the ratio may be as high as 5 to 1. Latinos and some sub-groups of Asian Americans, including Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, also experience homelessness at high rates. Latinos, however, are routinely and drastically undercounted. **Building an efficient and effective homeless services system will require partners at all levels to understand and address these racial disparities.**

The Disproportionate Impact of Homelessness*

Category	Share of Population Experiencing Homelessness, 2022	Share of U.S. Population, 2020
Non-Hispanic White	50.1%	61.6%
Non-Hispanic Black	37.4%	12.4%
Multiple Races	6.1%	10.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native**	3.4%	1.1%
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	1.7%	0.2%
Asian	1.4%	6.0%
Hispanic or Latino***	24.1%	18.7%

Most people of color are overrepresented in the homeless population.

Data Sources:

*HUD 2020 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report Part 1: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf[17]

U.S. Census Bureau. 2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country: https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html[21]

Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research - The Rental Assistance Demonstration; The Hispanic Housing Experience in the United States - Understanding Low-Income Hispanic Housing Challenges and the Use of Housing and (huduser.gov)[3]

**This number represents the number of individuals identified as AI/AN during the point-in-time count, which the majority of Tribes do not participate in and is therefore a significant undercount.

***All individuals identifying as Hispanic or Latino are included in the Hispanic or Latino category. All other categories exclude those identifying as Hispanic or Latino.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated homelessness, putting more people at risk of losing jobs and homes, and putting people already living without a home at greater risk of disease and death. People experiencing homelessness are more likely to have chronic disease, increasing their vulnerability to COVID-19 and other[22] infectious diseases. The experience of homelessness can also make it more challenging to access and receive necessary care, which can exacerbate homelessness and poor health conditions.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, many agencies that provide vital supportive services and benefits closed their offices to protect the health of employees and the public; public restrooms were locked; and agencies faced severe staff shortages as the trauma of homeless services work intensified and turnover increased. In the early days of the pandemic, many communities heeded the CDC's guidance to avoid clearing encampments. But more recently, in response to unsheltered homelessness becoming more visible in many communities, there has been a sharp rise in the number of local laws and ordinances that reverse course and criminalize homelessness.

The pandemic has also made it even more difficult for some to find shelter. Traditional, congregate shelters drastically cut the number of people that could be served to comply with public health guidelines for mitigating the spread of COVID-19. To account for that limitation, many communities have implemented innovative solutions to expand non-congregate shelters by moving people into hotels, motels, and other previously vacant spaces where they could socially distance from others. This expansion of non-congregate shelter has provided an opportunity to rapidly and effectively address the needs of people experiencing homelessness and has advanced new models that could be sustained and replicated.

> "We can never ever go back to sheltering people as we once did. Too much has changed since this pandemic began. Congregate housing and large shelters didn't work that well in the first place, did not support the dignity of the homeless as people. The pandemic has shown us clearly that other ways of securing housing—such as hotels, small transitional units, and private low-income housing units—are essential, and more creative thinking needs to be encouraged if we are going to eliminate massive homelessness."
>
> **– Person with lived experience from Portland, Maine**

People with preexisting health issues are more likely to experience homelessness, and they are more likely to live in unsheltered locations than shelters. Children who experience homelessness are more at risk for poor health conditions and developmental delays. Health problems—coupled with lack of access to quality health care—can contribute to risk of homelessness, and in turn, homelessness can worsen health, including mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders. While rates of homelessness for people with mental health[23] conditions and/or with substance use disorders are high, the majority of people experiencing homelessness[24] do not have a mental health condition and/or substance use disorder. Furthermore, the majority of Americans with mental health conditions and/or with substance use disorders do not experience homelessness.

Housing Is Health Care*

Certain health conditions are more common among people experiencing homelessness, who are up to 7 times more likely to lack health insurance.

Cerebrovascular accident (i.e., stroke)
4.3% / 1.0%

Dementia
5.7% / 1.9%

Epilepsy
10.9% / 3.3%

Tuberculosis
3.2% / 0.8%

HIV
5.8% / 1.1%

Asthma
22.4% / 16.7%

Cirrhosis
7.2% / 1.9%

Viral, chronic, or acute hepatitis
29.2% / 5.6%

Chronic obstructive lung disease
23.0% / 10.6%

■ People Who Have Experienced Homelessness

■ General Population Sample With Similar or Same Reported Age and Gender

---
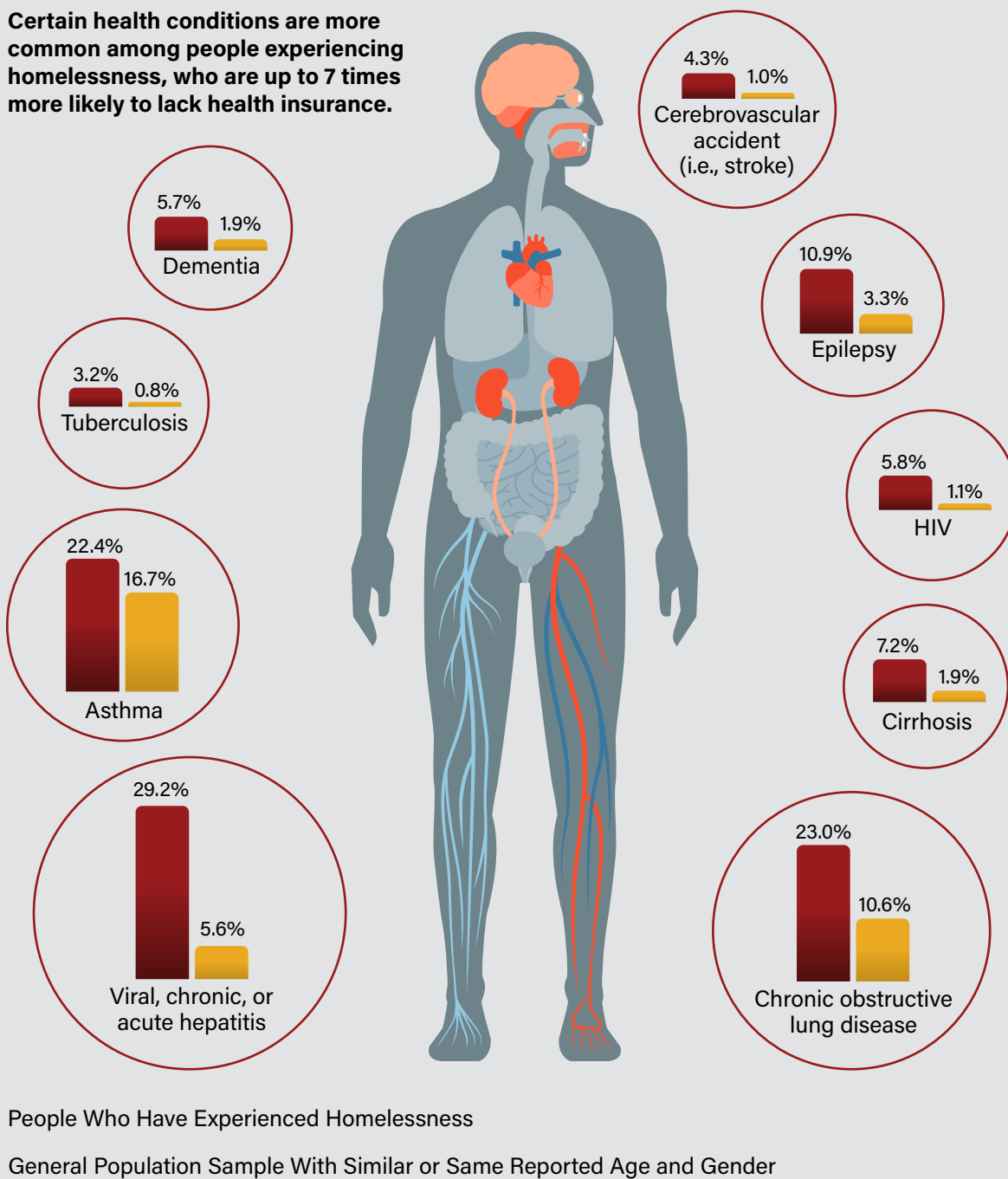
* Health Conditions Among Individuals with a History of Homelessness Research Brief | ASPE (hhs.gov)[25]
Fact sheet (nhchc.org)[26]
CoC_PopSub_NatlTerrDC_2020.pdf (hudexchange.info)[27]

⬆ **Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness**   **18**

Challenges and Opportunities

Through the comprehensive input process to inform the development of this plan, USICH heard about the key challenges to implementation as well as opportunities to advance progress, which are highlighted below.

Challenges

> "Direct service providers are soul-crushingly tired. Please reach out to them. Please listen to them. They need to know that people in power support them and want to improve the broken systems they're working in."
>
> **– Provider from Fairbanks, Alaska**

Lack of Housing Supply

While housing is the solution to homelessness, the United States suffers from a severe shortage of safe, affordable, and accessible rental housing. Prior to the pandemic, there was a shortage of 7 million[28] affordable and available homes for renters with the lowest incomes. The shortage is caused by many factors,[29] including a shortage of available land and labor, increased costs of raw materials, local zoning restrictions, land-use regulations, opposition to inclusive development—which is commonly referred to as "Not In My Back Yard" (NIMBY), and the destruction of homes in climate change's path. Compounding this, people with housing vouchers or other rental assistance compete for limited housing in a highly competitive rental market, and they often face stigma, barriers, and/or discrimination from landlords. In addition, many landlords deny housing to people based on their criminal records and/or credit history. And many renters of color, LGBTQI+ renters, and renters with disabilities continue to face outright discrimination when they apply for housing. The lack of accessible housing for some people with disabilities further complicates the situation.*

Rise of Rent Amid Slow Wage and Income Growth

Wage growth has been slow for the lowest-paid workers for decades, and for many Americans, rental housing is unaffordable because wages have not kept up with the fast rise of rent. According to a 2021 report, in no state[30] can a person working full-time at the federal minimum wage afford a two-bedroom apartment at the fair market rent. As a result, 70% of the lowest-wage households routinely spend more than half of their income on rent, placing them at risk of homelessness if any unexpected expenses or emergencies arise. Housing unaffordability disproportionately impacts people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, and people of color. Discriminatory employment practices toward these groups further contribute to these disparities. Similarly, there is no housing market within the U.S.[31] in which a person living solely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can afford housing without rental assistance.

---

*The American Housing Survey of 2011 found that less than five percent of housing in the U. S. is accessible for individuals with moderate mobility difficulties and less than one percent of housing is accessible for wheelchair users. Accessibility of America's Housing Stock: Analysis of the 2011 American Housing Survey (AHS) | HUD USER

Inadequate Access to Quality Health Care, Education, and Supportive Services

"Low-barrier," culturally appropriate, readily available, and accessible supportive services—including treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders—often are not available or funded at a level to meet the need. This is particularly true in rural areas. As a result, people seeking these services may face long waits or may not receive them at all, and service providers may only be reimbursed for a fraction of the cost of care. Furthermore, collaboration and coordination between homelessness response and other systems—including health, victim services, workforce development, aging- and disability-related services, early care and education,*[32] K-12 and higher education—is often not as strong as it could be, creating silos in service delivery. People of color, especially Black people and other marginalized populations face greater barriers[33] to receiving the supports they need, which leads to severe health inequities and disparities in health outcomes.

Limited Alternatives to Unsheltered Homelessness

The number of people living in unsheltered locations is rising, yet there are often not enough safe, low-barrier shelter or interim housing options for people waiting for permanent housing and support. Many shelters are full or deny entry to people who are struggling with a mental health condition and/or who have a substance use disorder, have criminal records, live with a disability or chronic condition, or identify as LGBTQI+—despite regulations that prohibit this discrimination. People who have disabilities, pets, partners, or older children (especially male teenagers) have fewer options for sheltering together. Additionally, shelters often fail to meet the needs of people either because they are not culturally appropriate or do not have the capacity to provide adequate support and accommodations for people with significant physical disabilities, mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders. As unsheltered homelessness increases in some communities, the impact on surrounding neighborhoods has eroded support for further investments in homeless services.

Criminalization of Homelessness

In some communities, a rise in encampments has resulted in harmful public narratives and opposition to development of affordable housing and programs that serve people experiencing homelessness. As elected leaders respond—and not always in the most effective ways—some have resorted to clearing encampments without providing alternative housing options for the people living in them. Many communities have made it illegal for people to sit or sleep in public outdoor spaces or have instituted public space design that makes it impossible for people to lie down or even sit in those spaces. Unless encampment closures are conducted in a coordinated, humane, and solutions-oriented way that makes housing and supports adequately available, these "out of sight, out of mind" policies can lead to lost belongings and identification which can set people back in their pathway to housing; breakdowns in connection with outreach teams, health care facilities, and housing providers; increased interactions with the criminal justice system; and significant traumatization—all of which can set people back in their pathway to housing and disrupt the work of ending homelessness.

---

*Early care and education includes child care, Head Start, home visiting and preschool

Trauma and Fatigue Among Providers

The pandemic has strained the capacity of service providers—many of whom earn wages low enough to qualify them for the programs they help administer. Even before the pandemic, housing and service programs had high staff turnover. These essential workers provide life-saving crisis services while dealing with staffing shortages, navigating evolving guidance for protecting themselves and their clients, and doing their best to implement best practices and quickly deploy new federal funding. Many are overwhelmed and exhausted from the pressure and trauma associated with supporting not only the people they serve but also themselves and their families during a sustained global pandemic.

Opportunities

"When there is adequate funding and community will to do something, a large difference can be made."

– Person with lived experience from San Diego, California

Unprecedented Investment of New Funding

The American Rescue Plan—along with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act—provides billions of dollars for new and existing programs that can move people into housing and increase the availability of housing and housing subsidies. Section 2001 of the ARP[34] also created new funding to directly connect students experiencing homelessness with educational and wraparound supportive services. These resources provide communities with a historic opportunity to innovate and improve existing systems. Moreover, President Biden's budget request for Fiscal Year 2023 includes significant increases in funding for targeted programs, vouchers, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, as well as new funding to increase the affordable housing supply.

Demonstrated Commitment Through Regulatory Flexibility and Executive Action

The CARES and American Rescue Plan Acts created regulatory flexibilities that spurred greater innovation, strengthened partnerships, and created new collaborations. Furthermore, the Biden-Harris Administration has taken critical action to address the challenges outlined in the previous section. President Biden has issued several executive orders focused on bold and ambitious steps to root out inequity within the economy and to expand opportunity for people of color and other marginalized groups. The White House has also initiated whole-of-government action plans and strategies that address the nation's most pressing needs, such as the Housing Supply Action Plan,[7] the National Mental Health Strategy,[5] and the National Drug Control Strategy.[6]

Many communities are using American Rescue Plan funds to convert vacant hotels and motels into non-congregate shelters.

Lessons Learned From the Pandemic

COVID-19 has spurred a sense of urgency and innovation across government to keep people safe and healthy. Federal programs have found ways to rapidly waive requirements that were impeding mitigation and recovery. As a result, new partnerships have been created and new approaches have emerged, including the conversion of previously vacant hotels to non-congregate shelter and housing; expansion of unemployment benefits; use of eviction moratoriums; launch of emergency rental assistance; and provision of direct cash transfers. The expansion of non-congregate shelter, in particular, and the greater coordination among public health, health care, aging and disability network organizations, and other supportive services has provided an opportunity to improve housing stability and health outcomes.

Increased Focus on Racial Equity

The murder of George Floyd during an encounter with law enforcement in 2020 sparked greater awareness of historic and ongoing racism—especially anti-Black racism—and its impact. A nationwide discourse on racial justice ensued, demanding urgent change and accountability at all levels of government in public policies and programs that either intentionally or unintentionally perpetuate racism. Since then, awareness of racial disparities has risen, along with efforts to correct these inequities, at all levels of government and in the homelessness sector. While homelessness impacts people of all races, ethnicities, gender identities, and sexual orientations, it disproportionately impacts some groups and populations, particularly people of color, and especially Black people. This increased focus, as well as the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to a whole-of-government approach to advancing equity, provides an opportunity to hold federal, state, and local governments accountable for achieving more equitable outcomes for people of color.

Dedication of Providers

The homeless services sector is comprised of many passionate and compassionate people—many of whom are volunteers—who dedicate every day of their lives to the work of preventing and ending homelessness in their communities. This work is difficult under any circumstances, and the pandemic made it exponentially more difficult. But people continue to show up, persevering through the toughest circumstances.

The following plan offers a roadmap to bring renewed energy to address these challenges and make the most of these opportunities.

Vision for the Future
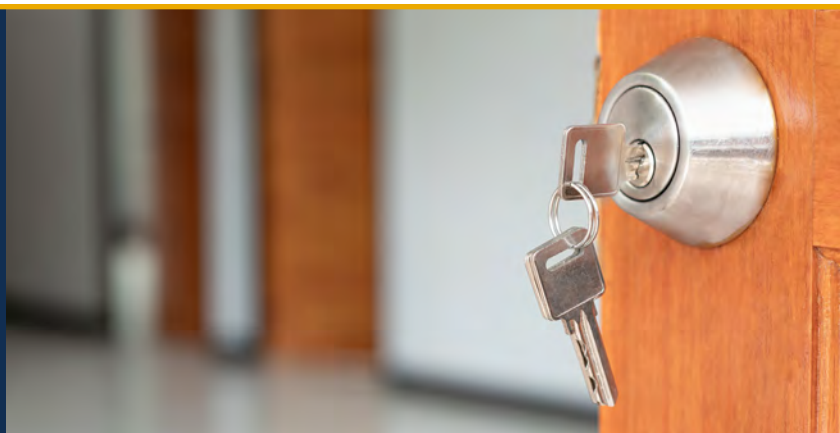
This plan is built upon our vision of **a nation in which no one experiences the tragedy and indignity of homelessness, and everyone has a safe, stable, accessible, and affordable home.**

We envision a future where every state and community have the systems and the resources to prevent homelessness whenever possible, or if it cannot be prevented, to quickly connect people experiencing homelessness to permanent housing with the services and supports they need to help them achieve and maintain housing stability.

Achieving this vision for the future will require the transformation of systems and institutions that displace and exclude people from housing.

National Goal

This plan sets the United States on a path to end homelessness and **establishes an ambitious national goal to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness by 25% by January 2025.**[*] Such a reduction will serve as a down payment on the longer-term work of ending homelessness once and for all.

Achieving this ambitious national goal is the responsibility of all public systems in partnership with the private sector and philanthropy—not the homelessness response system alone. It will require a whole-of-government, cross-system approach to implement. **We encourage state and local governments—in collaboration with people who have experienced homelessness and with local organizations working to end homelessness—to establish their own, more ambitious goals for 2025.**

In the months ahead, USICH will provide guidance on setting local goals and measuring local progress. It will also provide additional metrics, equity outcomes, and other federal data targets that can be monitored to measure progress toward the national reduction goal. In the meantime, the Framework for Implementation on Pages 70-71 can serve as a reference.

---

[*]This goal reflects a projected 25% reduction in total overall homelessness in the 2025 Point-in-Time count compared to the 2022 Point-in-Time count. In January 2022, the total number of people experiencing homelessness on a single night was 582,462. A 25% reduction would mean fewer than 437,000 people will be counted on a single night in January 2025.

As the strategies outlined in this plan are implemented, USICH will work with a broad range of stakeholders to adopt a "targeted universalism"[35] framework that promotes a universal reduction goal with targeted and tailored solutions based on the structures, cultures, and geographies of certain groups to help them overcome unique barriers. USICH recognizes that tailored solutions are needed for specific populations and geographic areas and that individuals and families experiencing multiple barriers often require special consideration and resources. USICH also recognizes that the federal government will need to rely on those most impacted by the policies and strategies promoted in this plan to design the tailored actions and guidance.

Key Populations and Geographic Areas

This plan recognizes that the needs of people experiencing homelessness vary based on factors like age, location, disability, race and ethnicity; and it acknowledges that tailored guidance will be needed for key populations and geographic areas. For the purposes of this plan, this includes:

Racial/Ethnic Groups ("People of Color")

- American Indians and Alaska Natives
- Asian/Asian Americans
- Black/African Americans
- Hispanics/Latinos
- Multiracial people
- Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders

Marginalized Groups

- Child welfare-involved families and youth
- Immigrants, refugees, and asylees
- LGBTQI+ people
- People with chronic health conditions and co-occurring disorders
- People with current or past criminal justice system involvement
- People with disabilities
- People with HIV
- People with mental health conditions
- People with substance use disorders
- Pregnant and parenting youth
- Survivors of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, and human trafficking

Subpopulations

- Children (younger than 12)
- Youth (age 12-17)
- Young adults (age 18-25)
- Families with minor children
- Older adults (age 55 and older)
- Single adults (age 25 to 55)
- Veterans

Geographic Areas

- Remote
- Rural
- Suburban
- Territory
- Tribal land/Reservation
- Urban

Federal Strategic Plan

All In serves as a roadmap for federal action to ensure state and local communities have sufficient resources and guidance to build the effective, lasting systems required to end homelessness. While it is a federal plan, local communities can use it to collaboratively develop local and systems-level plans for preventing and ending homelessness. This plan creates an initial framework for meeting the ambitious goal of reducing overall homelessness by 25% by 2025 and sets the United States on a path to end homelessness.

This plan is built around six pillars: three foundations—equity, evidence, and collaboration—and three solutions—housing and supports, homelessness response, and prevention—all of which are required to prevent and end homelessness. Within each pillar of foundations and solutions are strategies that the federal government will pursue to facilitate increased access to housing, economic security, health, and stability. Some agency commitments, cross-government initiatives, and efforts are already underway and are highlighted throughout.

Upon release of this plan, USICH will immediately begin to develop implementation plans that will identify specific actions, milestones, and metrics for operationalizing the strategies in close partnership with its member agencies and other stakeholders representing a broad range of groups and perspectives, including people with lived experience. For more on this, please see Framework for Implementation on Pages 70-71.

ALL IN: THE FEDERAL STRATEGIC PLAN:

END
HOMELESSNESS

SOLUTIONS

HOUSING AND SUPPORTS

CRISIS RESPONSE

PREVENTION

EQUITY

DATA AND EVIDENCE

COLLABORATION

FOUNDATIONS

Lead With Equity

> "Anti-Black racism continues to be ignored as a root cause of homelessness, and Black people experiencing homelessness continue to be inadequately protected from housing discrimination, over-policing, criminalization of poverty, and other systemic forces that contribute to their overrepresentation in the total population of people experiencing homelessness."
>
> **– Advocate from Washington, District of Columbia**

As detailed earlier, discrimination in housing, education, employment, criminal justice, and health care have led to inequitable access to wealth and economic opportunity and to a greater likelihood of experiencing homelessness. To acknowledge and address these and other inequities, the following strategies and actions are intended to ensure that the solutions in this plan will be designed and implemented equitably.

Strategy 1: Ensure federal efforts to prevent and end homelessness promote equity and equitable outcomes.

In recent years, the homelessness sector has increasingly focused on equity and inclusivity. To achieve equity, we must build off the work already underway through President Biden's Executive Order on "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government" and take additional steps to affirmatively advance equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Identify expected equity outcomes with qualitative and quantitative measures and plans for how programs and agencies responsible for carrying out strategies and actions included in this plan will collect and report on the information used to measure these outcomes.

- Establish tools and processes for identifying, analyzing and updating agency-specific policies, practices, and procedures for programs and agencies responsible for carrying out strategies and actions included in this plan that may inhibit opportunity to advance and promote equity.

- Create a mechanism to publicly report federal actions taken by USICH and its member agencies to advance equity and support local and state efforts to address disparities.

- Provide messaging and guidance to state and local stakeholders about promising practices that are having a measurable impact on disparities.

- Ensure all guidance, tools, and websites are designed to be accessible and to ensure effective communication for people with disabilities; and take steps to ensure meaningful access for people with limited English proficiency.

- Create learning opportunities across USICH and its member agencies on racial equity, cultural competence, cultural humility, and disability competence.

- Hire people and partner organizations with a strong equity analysis to inform actions taken under this strategy.

How People With Lived Experience Can Shape Policy

Influencer — Leader

Advisor — Partner

Grantee — Staff

Strategy 2: Promote inclusive decision-making and authentic collaboration.

It is critical that people who have experienced or who are experiencing homelessness and housing instability lead and participate in the development and implementation of policies and programs. This includes not only people of color but other historically marginalized groups that are overrepresented in homeless populations, especially people identifying as LGBTQI+ and people with disabilities.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Identify existing federal advisory groups, committees, and workgroups that are focused on preventing and ending homelessness and seek ways to expand membership to include people with lived experience and for ensuring meaningful participation and compensation for their time and expertise.

- Review federal processes and administrative requirements for contractors that deliver relevant technical assistance (TA) and capacity-building related to implementation of the strategies within this plan to allow for an expanded pool of selected contractors and firms with higher diversity of staff and management and/or people with lived experience.

- Identify ways to conduct accessible outreach to and hire people with lived experience in federal job announcements for programs and agencies responsible for carrying out strategies and actions included in this plan.

- Allow for and incentivize inclusive processes that allow for meaningful engagement in all federal funding grants that directly impact people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

- Create flexibilities in existing federal programs to encourage funding recipients that serve people at risk of or experiencing homelessness to hire people with lived experience and compensate them on par with other staff.

- Create flexibilities in existing federal programs to allow recipients to use program funds to compensate people with lived experience participating on local advisory councils.

- Examine barriers such as federal program caps on earned income and explore opportunities to provide flexibilities for people with lived experience to be compensated for their participation in planning activities and input processes without risking any benefits or assistance that they receive from the federal government.

- Incentivize, strengthen, and expand opportunities for professional development and mentoring focused on supporting people with lived experience as they take on new types of roles, especially leadership roles.

- Create learning opportunities across USICH and its member agencies on creating environments that will allow people with lived experience to thrive and not be retraumatized.

Strategy 3: Increase access to federal housing and homelessness funding for American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.

Although tribes have exercised inherent sovereignty over their lands, AI/AN communities continue to face unique challenges today—including federal disinvestment in basic infrastructure, severe housing shortages that lead to dangerous overcrowding, and complex legal constraints related to land ownership. These challenges make it extremely difficult to improve housing conditions. Solutions to these challenges must be developed and designed through consultation and in partnership with tribes and must be culturally appropriate and adaptive to the unique circumstances of AI/AN communities living on and off tribal lands.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- In accordance with Executive Order 13175 and the Presidential Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships,[36] build upon the tribal consultation that took place to inform the development of this plan and further consult tribes on strategies and solutions that will impact housing instability and homelessness for American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.

- Explore opportunities to expand Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act programs (the primary vehicle for developing housing in tribal land).

- Promote and expand opportunities to hire more AI/AN people across agencies responsible for carrying out strategies and actions included in this plan.

- Coordinate a federal TA strategy to support efforts of tribes and Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land to address homelessness and increase access to funding streams that are newly available to tribes.

Strategy 4: Examine federal policies and practices that may have created and perpetuated racial and other disparities among people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

"Inequitable access is rooted from the top down. The federal government must be tasked with recognizing and ALLOWING FOR the undoing of systemic and institutional discrimination that PERMEATES its systems."

– Person with lived experience

Policies and practices that may be intended to promote racial neutrality sometimes inadvertently led to worse housing outcomes for people of color. Our collective response to homelessness should advance policies and practices specifically designed to eliminate racial inequities in homelessness and housing.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Partner with the agencies responsible for carrying out the strategies and actions within this plan and review policies and regulations associated with the federal programs and initiatives to assess whether and how current policies and programs may perpetuate racial disparities or create barriers for marginalized groups and people of color and identify achievable policy and program changes to advance equity.

- Develop tools and provide direct TA to help grantees, states, local governments, and U.S. territories to implement equitable policies and practices and build the capacity of organizations to serve people of color and marginalized groups who face current and historic discrimination based on race, disability, class, and gender identity.

- Highlight communities that achieve reductions in racial and other disparities, and create tools, products, and guidance based on their strategies.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to *Lead With Equity*

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**Memo on "Redressing Our Nation's and the Federal Government's History of Discriminatory Housing Practices and Policies"**	Issued to Secretary of HUD to declare that the Biden-Harris Administration will work to **end housing discrimination** and ensure equitable access to housing for all
White House	**Executive Order 13985:** **Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to pursue **comprehensive approach to equity** for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by poverty and inequality
White House	**Executive Order 13988:** **Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to address overlapping forms of discrimination, to **prevent and combat discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation**, and to fully enforce Title VII, the Fair Housing Act, and other laws that prohibit such discrimination
White House	**Executive Order 14008:** **Tackling the Climate Crisis Abroad and at Home**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to **address the climate crisis proactively** and includes the development of the Justice40 Initiative, which seeks to ensure that disadvantaged communities receive 40% of any investments made in areas such as clean energy and energy efficiency; affordable and sustainable housing; and the development of critical clean water infrastructure
White House	**Executive Order 14020**: **Establishment of White House Gender Policy Council**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to ensure that the federal government is working **to advance equal rights and opportunities, regardless of gender or gender identity**, in advancing domestic and foreign policy, and to prevent and address gender-based violence in the United States
White House	**Executive Order 14031:** **Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders**	Established **President's Advisory Commission** on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders as well as the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders
White House	**Executive Order 14035:** **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to cultivate federal workforce that draws from **full diversity** of the nation and establishes procedures to advance this priority
White House	**Executive Order 14045:** **White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to advance educational equity, excellence, and economic opportunity for **Hispanic communities** from early childhood until their chosen career
White House	**Executive Order 14049:** **White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to advance equity, excellence, and justice in our nation's education system and to further **tribal self-governance**
White House	**Executive Order 14050:** **White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Black Americans**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to advance educational equity, excellence, and economic opportunity for **Black/African Americans** and communities from early childhood until their chosen career

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to *Lead With Equity*

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**Executive Order 14058: Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery To Rebuild Trust in Government**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to prioritize service delivery and **customer experience** and to empirically measure both with on-the-ground results
White House	**Executive Order 14069: Advancing Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness in Federal Contracting by Promoting Pay Equity and Transparency**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to **eliminate discriminatory pay practices** that inhibit economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of federal workforce and/or federal procurement
White House	**Executive Order 14075: Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration combat unlawful discrimination and eliminate disparities that harm LGBTQI+ individuals and their families, defend their rights and safety, and pursue a comprehensive approach to delivering the full promise of equality for LGBTQI+ individuals; Charges HUD to lead an initiative that aims to prevent and address homelessness and housing instability among LGBTQI+ individuals, including youth, and households
HHS	**Brief on "Methods and Emerging Strategies to Engage People With Lived Experience"**	Identified methods and emerging strategies to engage **people with lived experience** in federal research, programming, and policymaking
HUD	**Equity Tools for Homeless Response Systems**	Promoted equity by expanding procurement, using current data, and engaging people with lived experience while developing coordinated investment plans
HUD	**Memo on "Eliminating Barriers That May Unnecessarily Prevent Individuals With Criminal Histories From Participating in HUD Programs"**	Secretary Fudge instructed department to review programs and policies that may pose **barriers to housing for people with criminal records**—an issue that disproportionately impacts people of color
HUD	**Equal Access Rule**	Affirmed commitment to the rule, which provides equal access to HUD programs without regard to a person's actual or perceived **sexual orientation, gender identity**, or marital status
HUD	**Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP)**	Released **four rounds of funding** for FHIP agencies to conduct housing education and outreach and to address fair housing inquiries, complaints, and investigations
HUD	**FY 2021and FY 2022 Notices of Funding Opportunity for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program and the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Program**	Prioritized equity in these and other Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs); Allowed **Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities** (TDHEs) to participate for the first time in the CoC Program, due to the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021
Multiple Agencies	**Equity Action Plans**	Released by **more than 90 federal agencies** to address—and achieve—equity for all Americans in part by identifying accountability mechanisms, success metrics, and key milestones toward progress
Multiple Agencies	**Interagency Task Force on Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity (PAVE)**	Comprised of federal partners and led by Secretary of HUD and director of White House Domestic Policy Council; Released **action plan** for how all Americans can benefit fairly from homeownership
Multiple Agencies	**Interagency Working Groups**	These groups coordinate equity policy and include **the COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force**, chaired by Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith, and the **Interagency Working Group on Safety, Opportunity, and Inclusion for Transgender Individuals**, convened by the White House's Gender Policy Council and Domestic Policy Council

Use Data and Evidence to Make Decisions

"Bring people of color to the tables where discussions are happening. Don't just rely on nuanced data that we know is inaccurate."

– Advocate from Texas

This plan is driven by evidence from a growing body of research, data, and perspectives of people who have experienced homelessness—and a commitment to continue to rely on data and these critical perspectives. As the evidence and our understanding of what works evolves, so will our plan. By shifting to evidence-based practices for streamlining connections to housing and ensuring wraparound services, national homelessness declined by 14% between 2010 and 2017.

Strategy 1: Strengthen the federal government's capacity to use data and evidence to inform federal policy and funding.

Collection, analysis, and reporting of quality, timely qualitative and quantitative data is essential for targeting interventions, tracking results, making strategic decisions, and allocating resources at the federal, state, and local levels. The federal government must continue efforts already underway and strengthen its capacity to responsibly integrate data across systems to better understand the scope and dynamics of homelessness and to break down silos between systems and to promulgate the recommendations put forth by the Equitable Data Working Group.[37]

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Catalyze existing federal infrastructure to leverage underused qualitative and quantitative data sources that could be utilized to better understand people experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness to inform federal policy and funding decisions.

- Collaborate to strengthen existing and identify new ways to formally share and use data across all partner agencies, particularly HUD, DOJ, SSA, DOL, Education, HHS, USDA, and VA.*

- Gather input from a broad range of experts to ensure that federal data-sharing and data-use strategies do not perpetuate inequities, increase administrative burdens, compromise personal information, or reduce trust.

- Provide guidance and messaging about how national data can be used to inform state and local processes and decision-making.

- Create a federal dashboard to track and report relevant data from across various federal data sources with the goal of making data available sooner and increasing capacity for utilizing data to inform actions taken in relation to this plan.

- Promote federal actions to create publicly available data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability, income, veteran status, age, or other key demographic variables while being intentional about when it is collected and shared while protecting privacy.

*Data can be shared with FEMA, for instance, when a presidential declared disaster or emergency has been issued in an area with existing high rates of homelessness.

Strategy 2: Strengthen the capacity of state and local governments, territories, tribes, Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, and nonprofits to collect, report, and use data.

In recent years, communities have increasingly begun to disaggregate data by race and ethnicity, gender, household, and other important dimensions. As a result, it is possible to understand specific trends and needs, and to make strategic decisions about how to use resources equitably. But there is a continued need for increased coordination across the federal government to streamline processes that reduce the burdens that data collection and reporting place on state, local, and nonprofit organizations as well as on the people experiencing homelessness whose information is being collected.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Increase state and local use of Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) and identify ways to expand coverage, especially of street outreach efforts, to better track unsheltered homelessness and by expanding coverage by non-traditional partners through incentives and/or training and technical assistance.

- Expand community capacity to integrate HMIS data with other federal data sources (i.e., VA HOMES data) as well as state and local administrative data (i.e., Medicaid, corrections, child welfare) to inform planning and decision-making. Support this by developing standards to permit data interoperability between data systems while protecting the confidentiality of all individuals.

- Increase state and local capacity to ensure accurate counts of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, especially unaccompanied minors, youth and young adults, and families, by leveraging existing federal resources, such as AmeriCorps volunteers and members.

- Increase state and local capacity to collect additional data related to housing and homelessness status.

- Ensure that increased use of HMIS and integration of HMIS data with other data sources does not result in the exclusion of victim service providers from strategic decisions about how to use resources equitably, considering that they are prohibited from entering client-level data into HMIS and must use comparable databases instead.*

- Issue guidance on the creation of cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding and on perceived legal barriers associated with sharing data.

- Coordinate and provide federal guidance, technical assistance, and training for state and local governments, territories, tribes, Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, homeless service organizations, and local school districts on data collection and utilization methodologies that are culturally appropriate, and trauma informed. Build capacity for robust equity assessment of compounded experiences and overlapping identities.

- Provide guidance and other resources to support the co-creation, implementation, and analysis of qualitative data with communities at the federal and community levels.

- In consultation with Tribal Nations and Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, identify existing data sources to examine aggregate quantitative and qualitative data on tribal homelessness and housing instability both on and off reservations. Additionally, explore ways to allow

---

*Victim services providers that are recipients or subrecipients under HUD's Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant programs are required to collect client-level data consistent with Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data collection requirements.

"Go to where the community is. Don't expect them to come to you."

– **Person with lived experience from Washington, District of Columbia**

for tribal identification within HMIS.

- Engage in efforts to identify more effective ways of collecting data on subpopulations that are historically undercounted, including older adults; people with disabilities; LGBTQI+ people; homeless youth; Latinos; people with HIV; and individuals and families residing in rural areas or tribal lands.

Strategy 3: Create opportunities for innovation and research to build and disseminate evidence for what works.

Federal funding requirements often hinder the ability of state and local governments, territories, tribes, Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, nonprofits, CoC leaders, and homeless service providers to be flexible and innovative. To promote progress at all levels of government and encourage local adaptation and innovation, federal agencies must allow their funds to be used more flexibly.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Develop a federal homelessness research agenda in collaboration with federal agencies, academic researchers, people with lived experience, and innovative programs to conduct, compile, and disseminate research on best practices, the effectiveness of various interventions, and metrics to measure outcomes.

- Identify promising population-specific interventions* and mobilize public-private partnerships to fund effectiveness research.

- Identify mechanisms to provide more flexibility, speed up the approval for, and reduce administrative burdens sometimes associated with waivers.

- Review all COVID-19 flexibilities effectiveness—including the extent to which they increased equity—and determine the feasibility of extending or making them permanent, based on input from recipients of federal funding.

- Engage stakeholders, including people with lived experience, to better understand which federal requirements are most inhibiting to local responses to homelessness and share the findings with federal agency partners to develop strategies to foster innovation.

- Identify and promote lessons learned through successful programs, such as HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program, HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program VA's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, and HUD's Family Unification Program (FUP).

- Expand efforts to evaluate local and state innovative approaches as well as how tribes are addressing tribal-specific needs such as overcrowding.

---

*Population-specific interventions for those key populations and geographic areas highlighted in the graphic "KEY POPULATIONS AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS" on page 24.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to
Use Data and Evidence to Make Decisions

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**Executive Order 13994: Ensuring a Data-Driven Response to COVID-19 and Future High-Consequence Public Health Threats**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to respond to COVID-19 pandemic with effective **science- and data-based approaches** and by building back better public health infrastructure
White House	**Executive Order 14007: President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to make evidence-, science- and data-based decisions and established **President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology**
ED	**Report on Student Homelessness in America**	Published data for school year (SY) 2017-18 through SY 2019-20
HHS	**Advancing Contextual Analysis and Methods of Participant Engagement (CAMPE)**	Project that aims to advance knowledge of and capacity to employ innovative research and evaluation methods that put participants at the center of the government's work to inform program operations and policy development
HHS	**Report on Health Conditions Among Individuals With a History of Homelessness**	Published research and brief
HHS	**Report on SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) Program**	Published 2021 **outcomes of SOAR**, which aims to increase access to Social Security disability benefits for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or co-occurring substance use disorder
HHS	**Toolkit for Data Sharing for Child Welfare Agencies and Medicaid**	Offers guidance for development of **automated, two-way data exchanges** between information systems for children/youth under placement and care of title IV-E agency
HHS	**Report on Data Trends for Runaway Crisis Services and Prevention Report**	Highlights **trends and challenges of youth** reaching out to National Runaway Safeline
HHS	**Housing and HIV-Related Health Care Outcomes Among HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Clients in 2020**	Provides an **overview of housing status and health outcomes** among clients receiving Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program services
HUD	**Report on Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of Unsheltered Homelessness at the Community Level**	Published in February 2022
HUD	**Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) Part 2. Year-Long Estimate of Sheltered Homelessness in the U.S.**	Published 2021 AHAR Part 1, which reports on Point-in-Time Count—the **annual point-in-time indicator of homelessness trends** in America
HUD	**Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) Part 2. Year-Long Estimate of Sheltered Homelessness in the U.S.**	Published 2020 AHAR Part 2, which reports on **annual estimates of the scale of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness** in the U.S. at some point during the year in both 2019 and 2020
HUD	**FY 2022 HMIS Data Standards**	Published to allow for **standardized data collection** on homeless individuals and families across systems
Multiple Agencies	**Report on Encampments**	HHS and HUD published to help federal, state, and local policymakers and practitioners understand encampments, **strategies** for responding to them, and **costs** associated with those strategies

Collaborate at All Levels

"Homelessness and affordable [housing] supply won't change without a long-term commitment and implementation through a partnership of public- and private-sector stakeholders."

– Housing developer from Portland, Oregon

A core function of USICH is to break down silos and improve coordination across the federal government and with state and local governments, educational systems and providers, territories, tribes, Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, CoCs, public and private organizations, philanthropy, and people who have experienced homelessness. Interdisciplinary, interagency, and intergovernmental action is required to effectively create comprehensive responses to the complex problem of homelessness.

Strategy 1: Promote collaborative leadership at all levels of government and across sectors.

Successful implementation of this plan will only occur when there is broad support and leadership from all levels of government and all sectors. At the local level, collaboration is necessary between business and civic leaders, public officials, faith-based organizations, and mainstream systems and programs that provide housing, employment, education, legal, human services, and health care.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Engage in a cross-agency media campaign to educate the public on the scope, causes, costs, and solutions to homelessness.

- Engage state and local leaders in a renewed commitment to prevent and end homelessness and provide TA and guidance to state and local governments, territories, tribes, and Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land on how to create local action plans that are aligned with the federal strategic plan but reflective of local conditions and resources.

- Launch targeted and place-based cross-agency technical assistance strategies to drive progress on preventing and ending homelessness in regions with highest rates of homelessness.

- Authentically[38] engage people with lived experience and people from historically marginalized groups in all aspects of planning and implementation. Expand partnerships with philanthropy to fill resource gaps, leverage government resources, and hold government accountable for better performance.

- Identify opportunities to engage businesses, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations on relevant issues related to ending and preventing homelessness.

- Develop and implement strategies to support organizations that receive federal funding to maintain and increase staff capacity, reduce burnout, increase compensation to a living wage, and promote the well-being of staff.

Strategy 2: Improve information-sharing with public and private organizations at the federal, state, and local level.

Communities have been adopting more strategic approaches to prevent and end homelessness—collaborating effectively, directing resources toward evidence-informed practices, monitoring and making performance improvements, and targeting interventions based on household needs and strengths. The federal government should better support this ongoing work by providing the tools and resources needed for success.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Coordinate relevant federal TA resources and provide information to CoCs, state and local governments, aging-and disability- network organizations, territories, tribes, school districts, local housing and service providers, and Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land on how to access the support they need.

- Launch a coordinated messaging campaign to challenge public narratives that stigmatize, blame, and dehumanize people experiencing homelessness and to combat local opposition to new affordable housing development and local laws which criminalize homelessness.

- Make information more readily available and accessible on best practices and strategies to finance them at scale as well as tailored guidance and tools for key populations and geographic areas.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to *Collaborate at All Levels*

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**Executive Order 14015: Establishment of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership**	Established **Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership** to work with leaders of different faiths and backgrounds—more than 250 of whom committed to increasing awareness of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program among their collective reach of more than 5 million people
HUD	**Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS)**	Encouraged TA firms to hire and subcontract with **people with lived expertise**; partnered with TA providers to lead and inform development of tools and products; created two TA provider groups focused on racial equity and perspectives of people with lived experience to inform, review, and provide input on all SNAPS-related TA activity
Multiple Agencies	**Housing and Services Resource Center**	**HUD and HHS** launched to share tools, resources, and innovative strategies to help communities improve access to affordable housing and critical services that make community living possible
Multiple Agencies	**Joint Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness**	**HUD, USICH, and VA** developed and released in November 2021 to lead with evidence-based Housing First approach, reach underserved veterans, increase supply of and access to affordable housing, ensure delivery of quality supportive services, and prevent homelessness among veterans
Multiple Agencies	**House America: An All-Hands-on-Deck Effort to Address the Nation's Homelessness Crisis**	HUD and USICH launched in September 2021 to help communities make the most of the American Rescue Plan; invited **mayors, governors, and city, county, and tribal leaders** into national partnership to reduce homelessness and expand affordable housing
Multiple Agencies	**Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium**	HUD, DOJ, and HHS fund and support unprecedented, innovative, multi-year approach that brings together **national, state, and local organizations** to provide training, technical assistance, and resource development for housing/homelessness providers and domestic violence and sexual assault service providers
Treasury	**State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds**	Administered and resulted, to date, in: • Nearly **570 governments** committed $11.7 billion to direct household assistance and/or affordable housing expansion • 770,000 households served with rent, mortgage, or utility assistance • More than 100,000 households received eviction prevention services, such as right-to-counsel, housing counselors, and eviction diversion • **120 governments** committed $3.2 billion to affordable housing development, preservation, and innovative approaches to expand housing supply • **150 governments** committed more than $3.2 billion to help people experiencing homelessness find housing through permanent supportive housing and other mechanisms

Scale Housing and Supports That Meet Demand

"Services are not effective without housing, but housing is not sustainable without services.**"**

– Provider from Summit, New Jersey

The fundamental solution to homelessness is housing. When a person is housed, they have a platform to address all their needs, no matter how complex. People are most successful when that housing is paired with the right level of voluntary and accessible support based on their expressed and individualized needs and preferences. To truly bring Housing First to scale for all populations, communities need access to housing and wraparound services and other supports that can be offered to implement this approach with fidelity to the model. The strategies and actions in this section focus on increasing the supply of and equitable access to affordable housing and tailored supports for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. They are aligned with the Biden-Harris Administration's Housing Supply Action Plan,[7] National Mental Health Strategy,[5] and National Drug Control Strategy.[6]

Strategy 1: Maximize the use of existing federal housing assistance.

While some federal housing programs are targeted to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, most are offered more broadly to low-income people. The number of people eligible for federal housing assistance far exceeds the availability of it, and many people in need of such assistance wait years,[39] often falling into or struggling to get out of homelessness in the meantime. To get the greatest impact from all the resources currently available to end homelessness, communities should use each resource for its best purpose while utilizing all the resources together in a coordinated and strategic fashion.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of available policy mechanisms that can increase access to federal housing programs among people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including eligibility, admissions preferences, referral partnerships, funding incentives, and administrative fees.

- Provide guidance, tools, and technical assistance on a wide range of topics, including strategies for serving people with complex service needs; move-on strategies[40]; accessibility strategies including the use of assistive technologies and home modifications; the use of project-based vouchers; and special housing types, such as single-room occupancy, shared housing, group homes, congregate housing, manufactured home space rentals, and cooperative housing.

- Launch a federal landlord engagement campaign to help support local efforts to increase available rental units where housing assistance can be utilized through landlord education and identifying funding for landlord incentives and risk mitigation.

- Identify and enact the full range of options to reduce documentation as a barrier to housing entry, including regulatory flexibility for federal housing programs; improving access to identification, medical, and benefits documentation needed to determine eligibility; and strengthening collaboration between federal, state, and local agencies. Eliminate federal requirements associated with having a permanent address and/or bank account to access federal assistance.

- Encourage partnerships between providers of housing, aging and disability services, and health care—including treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders—to co-locate, coordinate, or integrate health, mental health, substance use disorder, safety, and wellness services with housing and create better resources for providers to connect program participants to culturally appropriate[41] and gender-affirming housing resources.

A Once-in-a-Generation Opportunity to Prevent and End Homelessness

The resources in the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan could quickly rehouse more people than ever before—up to 211,000 households. They include:

$350 billion
for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF)

$46.5 billion
for the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program 1 & 2

$5 billion
for the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program

$5 billion
for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME-ARP), including $25 million for TA

$5 billion
for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) Program, including $10 million for TA

$4 billion
for the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG-CV) Program, including $40 million for TA

$800 million
for the Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Fund

Read the full list of 30+ programs in the American Rescue Plan that can address homelessness online at usich.gov.[43]

Strategy 2: Expand engagement, resources, and incentives for the creation of new safe, affordable, and accessible housing.

Nationally, there are only 37 affordable[1] and available rental homes for every 100 extremely low-income renters. In no state can a person working full-time at the federal minimum wage afford a two-bedroom apartment at the fair market rent.[2] The actions below build off the strategies included in the Housing Supply Action Plan,[7] which will help close the housing supply gap over the next five years. The federal government should do whatever it can to implement this plan to support and incentivize the creation of new supportive and affordable housing while encouraging states, localities and territories to review and adjust their own policies.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Promote continued affordability of units created with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits after expiration of affordability covenants.

- Expand availability and supply of accessible and integrated housing opportunities that meet needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

- Identify and replicate strategies to increase awareness, availability, and use of assistive technology and home modifications that enable people to address accessibility issues and continue to live in their homes.

- Work with state, local, and territorial governments to expand rental assistance and low-cost capital—in part by using State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds—for new construction and rehabilitation of housing for people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness.

- In consultation with tribal leaders and Native-serving organizations operating off tribal land, explore opportunities to strengthen the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act programs for tribes and tribally designated housing entities.

- In consultation with Native Hawaiian leaders, explore opportunities to strengthen the Native Hawaiian Housing Block Grant Program.

- Encourage use of programs like HOME, HOME-ARP, and National Housing Trust Fund allocations to support housing development for very low-income units that target people experiencing homelessness.

- Encourage states to create preferences in their LIHTC Qualified Allocation Plans (QAPs) to increase investments in housing targeted to people experiencing homelessness and educate local stakeholders on their ability to influence the priorities in their states' QAP through the provision of incentives.

- Encourage states and cities to review and update their zoning laws and policies to include more land for multiple units (like multifamily housing), offer density bonuses to developers, ease height and density restrictions, create land banks and streamline the permitting and approval process for missing-middle housing types, such as Accessory Dwelling Units.

- Engage Public Housing Agencies as they pursue strategies to revitalize and create public housing units to consider their community obligation to help prevent and address homelessness.

- Explore opportunities to strengthen project-based subsidy programs such as Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) and project-based vouchers to increase the creation of deeply affordable housing.

- Improve the Title V Federal Surplus Property Program[43] to increase the number of Title V properties that are converted for use by the homeless services system.

- Engage the financial and business sector, private sector, health care system, philanthropic organizations, and faith-based groups that may be willing to donate resources, land, or property for the purpose of building affordable housing.

- Engage congressional committees on the need to expand federal funding for the development of new affordable housing.

President Biden's Proposed Budget for Homelessness

On March 28, 2022, President Biden proposed a $5.8 trillion budget for Fiscal Year 2023 that would target $8.732 billion in federal funding for homelessness assistance programs. Here are highlights:

$32.1 billion
To renew all existing Housing Choice Vouchers and expand assistance to 200,000 more households

11%
Increase (of $363 million) in HUD's homeless assistance grants

$328 million
Increase for capital funding to preserve public housing

30%
Increase (of $450 million) for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program

$35 billion
Mandatory funding for affordable housing production to increase the supply of housing along with additional Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

$200 million
Develop new or rehabilitate affordable Rural Multifamily Rental Housing

Strategy 3: Increase the supply and impact of permanent supportive housing for individuals and families with complex service needs—including unaccompanied, pregnant, and parenting youth and young adults.

Unlike other assistance, permanent supportive housing has no time restrictions for people with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness. Using a Housing First approach,[44] housing is offered without preconditions and with a broad array of voluntary, trauma-informed wraparound services. When implemented to fidelity, the model is a proven solution that leads to housing stability as well as improvements in health and well-being. Although the supply of permanent supportive housing has increased over the years, there is still a shortage of it across the country relative to the need.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Conduct a gaps analysis of permanent supportive housing needs nationally that includes an examination of racial equity.

- Provide guidance, tools, and technical assistance on effective strategies to braid federal, state and local funds for the purpose of expanding permanent supportive housing.

- Examine opportunities to streamline the process of braiding federal funding sources within permanent supportive housing.

- Highlight and promote examples of how state Medicaid, aging, disability, and health care agencies have coordinated housing assistance with Medicaid-financed health care and supportive services for people with high acuity of health needs and encourage expansion of Medicaid in states that have not yet done so.

- Examine requirements (including eligibility and recordkeeping) associated with federally funded permanent supportive housing to create greater flexibility to serve people with intense service needs,

including people experiencing chronic homelessness, and ability to tailor programming to meet needs of specific key populations.

- Promote and amplify lessons learned from the joint HUD/HHS Housing and Services Resource Center.
- Where federal funds are used to create permanent supportive housing, encourage the creation of non-discriminatory preferences for property owners that will agree to operating the property using a Housing First approach and will not further restrict or limit eligibility.

Key Components of Housing First

Strategy 4: Improve effectiveness of rapid rehousing for individuals and families—including unaccompanied, pregnant, and parenting youth and young adults.

Rapid rehousing is an intervention designed to help people quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Rapid rehousing assistance is offered without often-discriminatory requirements for employment, income, sobriety, or clean criminal records; and the resources and services provided are typically tailored to the unique needs of the person. While the supply of rapid rehousing has

grown significantly, continued efforts are needed to strengthen effective implementation of the core components—housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Provide guidance, tools, and technical assistance to communities to assess outcomes being achieved and tailor their financial subsidy and services practices in order to improve outcomes and to reduce returns to homelessness among individuals and families, including households residing in high-cost, low-vacancy markets.

- Promote and amplify lessons learned from VA's Supportive Services for Veteran Families program, HUD-funded programs (including YHDP), and program evaluations and research studies on effective models.

- Promote effective landlord engagement strategies.

Strategy 5: Support enforcement of fair housing and combat other forms of housing discrimination that perpetuate disparities in homelessness.

Despite passage and implementation of the federal Fair Housing Act in 1968, many people still face systemic housing discrimination. The federal government can and should vigorously enforce the Fair Housing Act and other federal fair housing and civil rights laws that provide housing protections, including, but not limited to: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act, as applicable. In addition to protecting the federally protected classes under the Fair Housing Act, other federal fair housing and civil rights laws, and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), agencies should explore ways to protect people using vouchers and other housing subsidies as well as other groups that frequently encounter housing discrimination—especially people with criminal records.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Encourage states and localities to adopt and strongly enforce source-of-income anti-discrimination laws.

- Foster greater collaboration between homeless programs and fair housing programs at the federal, state, and local levels, including with landlords and property owners.

- Provide data, tools, and guidance in line with the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing mandate so that communities are able to track key outcomes, including how to evaluate where affordable housing is being built and who is accessing available housing.

- Provide outreach and education on HUD's 2016 Guidance on Application of Fair Housing Act Standards to the Use of Criminal Records by Providers of Housing and Real Estate-Related Transactions.

- Provide updated HUD guidance and technical assistance on the intersection between the Fair Housing Act and Violence Against Women Act.

- Strengthen compliance with and enforcement of housing protections under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and related federal, state, and local laws.

- Provide guidance, training, and technical assistance to state and local governments, and territories on

the linkages between housing discrimination and homelessness.

- Examine fair housing regulations and policies to identify potential legal barriers to advancing equity for all groups protected by the Fair Housing Act and include ways to allow communities to adopt and implement a targeted universalism framework while ensuring compliance with fair housing.

Strategy 6: Strengthen system capacity to address the needs of people with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders.

> "The COVID-19 pandemic showed us that housing is health care."
>
> – Advocate from Washington, District of Columbia

People experiencing homelessness have higher rates of HIV infection[45] and are at higher risk for chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, lung disease, and serious heart conditions. People with HIV who are experiencing homelessness or lack stable housing are also more likely to delay HIV care and less likely to access care consistently or to adhere to their HIV treatment. Approximately 25%[46] of people experiencing sheltered homelessness have a mental health condition, and roughly 35% have a substance use disorder. These rates tend to be higher for people living unsheltered and for people with disabilities.[47] To end homelessness, we must transform our health and supportive services infrastructure to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness with a mental health condition and/or with a substance use disorder holistically and equitably. The American Rescue Plan laid the groundwork by providing critical investments to expand access to primary health care as well as treatment for mental health conditions and/ or substance use disorders.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Invest in accessible programs grounded in evidence and expand the pipeline of providers to address mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders and improve their geographic distribution to target areas with the greatest unmet need.
- Pilot new approaches to train a diverse group of paraprofessionals to increase the number of community health workers, peer support, and other health support workers providing accessible health care and other services, including treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders , in underserved communities.
- Invest in models that include peer support specialists.
- Integrate treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders into primary health-care settings and other non-traditional settings that lower barriers to services.
- Promote harm reduction and low-barrier models to provide primary healthcare services and treatment for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders.

Strategy 7: Maximize current resources that can provide voluntary and trauma-informed supportive services and income supports to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

"Local social service entities have a 'we know what's best for you' mentality that is (1) not necessarily well-informed and (2) certainly not culturally-informed. True Housing First turns this model upside down by empowering the client (which almost by definition would be culturally-informed)."

– Provider from Astoria, Oregon

Ending homelessness is dependent not only on an adequate supply of housing but also on the availability of community-based, high-quality, low-barrier, and voluntary supportive services that are delivered using a trauma-informed approach. Unfortunately, funds that can pay for supportive services are limited and often have complex requirements that can create a barrier to access for people who are truly in need of those services. While new resources for supportive services are identified, there are existing levers that can be used to maximize the current resources.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Examine policy and program rules to identify ways to encourage earned income, increased savings, and wealth-building in order to address the "benefits cliff."

- Identify ways to align eligibility criteria across programs (i.e., categorical eligibility) so that people do not have to apply and qualify for each program separately (e.g., children in households that receive SNAP are considered categorically eligible for free school meals). Similar categorical eligibility could be applied for other programs.

- Invest in peer-led housing and service delivery models, like recovery coaches for substance use disorders, peer specialists in mental health conditions, and youth mentors/staff with lived experience in youth programs.

- Review federal program requirements and policies associated with programs that serve people at risk of or who are experiencing homelessness to ensure greater compatibility with a Housing First approach with a priority on flexibility, accessibility, and personal choice.

- Provide guidance, training, and technical assistance on accessible and inclusive models and approaches, including but not limited to: person-centered, trauma-informed care, Critical Time Intervention, gender-affirming care, and harm reduction strategies for substance use and health care.

- Identify opportunities to expand upon the federal funding sources that can pay for an array of supportive services as well as training to ensure they are offered with fidelity to best-practice approaches.

- Explore opportunities for philanthropic partners to provide funding for flexible and accessible supportive services.

Strategy 8: Increase the use of practices grounded in evidence in service delivery across all program types.

Although there is always a need for continued learning and evaluation, there is substantial evidence and research supporting several service delivery models, such as Critical Time Intervention (CTI) and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Promote service delivery models—such as Critical Time Intervention (CTI), Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams, and harm-reduction—that are person-centered, culturally appropriate, disability competent, support individual choice, and encourage voluntary participation.

- Encourage states to consider Medicaid-financed service approaches and models.[48]

- Provide tools, guidance, and technical assistance on cultural responsiveness and humility as well as disability competence in the context of service delivery.

- Given the effectiveness of the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) model, assess feasibility of replicating this model for other federal programs and agencies to connect to other entitlements and benefits.

- Building on the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government,[49] identify opportunities to improve the experience of people experiencing, at risk of, or exiting homelessness in their interactions with key federal agencies, including SSA, USDA, DOL, HHS, VA, ED, and Treasury.

- Provide tools to help communities evaluate the consumer experience in their own programs and systems and implement improvements based upon the feedback received.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to
Scale Housing and Supports That Meet Demand

Housing

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**American Rescue Plan Act**	Signed in March 2021; includes $350 billion in **State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds**, $5 billion for **Emergency Housing Vouchers Program**, $5 billion in **HOME-ARP** grants, $750 million for **Native American and Native Hawaiian** programs, and $21.6 billion for **Emergency Rental Assistance Program**
White House	**Housing Supply Action Plan**	Released in May 2022; includes legislative and administrative actions that represent **most comprehensive in history** to help close America's housing supply shortage in five years
HHS	**Brief: Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness: Strategies and Approaches for TANF Agencies**	Summarizes different approaches that TANF agencies can pursue to provide housing and related assistance to families experiencing homelessness
HUD	**Tribal HUD-VASH Expansion**	Awarded $4.4 million in grants to **28 tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities**, including $1 million to house 95 additional veterans
HUD	**Opportunities to Increase Housing Production and Preservation**	Released research on innovative strategies for state and local governments to remove **barriers to affordable housing development**
Multiple Agencies	**Shallow Subsidy Initiative**	DOL and VA collaborated to expand **Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program** and provide $350 million to grantees, in part from American Rescue Plan
VA	**Permanent Housing Placement National Challenge**	Set goal to house **38,000 veterans** experiencing homelessness in 2022

Supports

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
White House	**National Mental Health Strategy**	Announced in March 2022 to holistically and equitably **transform health and social services** infrastructure by strengthening system capacity, connecting more people to care, and creating a continuum of support
White House	**National Drug Control Strategy**	Announced in April 2022 to create whole-of-government response to overdose epidemic that focuses on substance use disorder **treatment** and drug trafficking
White House	**Executive Order 140009: Strengthening Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to protect and strengthen Medicaid and ACA and to make **high-quality health care** accessible and affordable for all
White House	**National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States 2022–2025**	Announced in August 2022 to provide stakeholders across the nation with a roadmap to accelerate efforts to **end the HIV epidemic** in the United States by 2030
Education	**Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund**	Distributed $122 billion from American Rescue Plan to **help schools** in all 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico safely reopen, address pandemic's impact on students, and serve children and youth experiencing homelessness; while all funds could be used to serve homeless children and youth, ARP-HCY set aside $800 million for this purpose
Multiple Agencies	**Housing and Services Resource Center**	Launched in December 2021 to coordinate federal resources, guidance, training, and technical assistance for public housing authorities and housing providers; state Medicaid, disability, aging, and mental health agencies; aging and disability network organizations; homeless services organizations and networks; health-care systems and providers; and tribal organizations

Improve Effectiveness of Homelessness Response Systems

"Homelessness—regardless of a pandemic or other natural disaster—is a crisis, and the response should be a crisis response until the immediate urgency is addressed."

– Provider from Harris County, Texas

A community's response to homelessness must be urgent and focused. The homelessness response system is typically coordinated by the local or regional CoCs. An effective homeless response system should include outreach to unsheltered people, coordinated entry, targeted homelessness prevention and diversion, emergency shelter, permanent housing including rapid rehousing, and wraparound services during and after homelessness.

Strategy 1: Spearhead an all-of-government effort to end unsheltered homelessness.

"You cannot ignore the major effect of criminalization of homelessness. It makes it harder for unsheltered people to get housing, and it impacts health by compounding trauma."

– Advocate

Unsheltered homelessness—and laws that criminalize it—have been rising, especially in places where the cost of housing has rapidly increased. In 2020, 4 in 10 people experiencing homelessness on a given night were in unsheltered locations, and more than half of the unsheltered population lives in the nation's 50 largest cities. This unprecedented rise in unsheltered homelessness—including visible encampments— is a direct result of a lack of accessible and low-barrier shelter options, insufficient supply of affordable housing, and voluntary service and support options. Deploying effective programs to meet their diverse needs takes unwavering commitment and unyielding creativity.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Review requirements for federal programs that fund or support access to basic sanitation supplies and resources, health care services (including services for mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders), and other supports and resources that specifically impact areas where unsheltered people reside to identify barriers to program implementation.
- USICH member agencies that own federal land will promote strong collaboration with local organizations in response to encampments that form on federal property.
- Deploy targeted funding and technical assistance that fosters collaboration between entities that include outreach, housing navigation, aging and disability network organizations, public health, emergency response, law enforcement, health centers and hospitals, and mental health crisis intervention teams.

- Provide guidance and technical assistance on promising and best practices related to encampments, effective street outreach, and harm reduction approaches.

- Spotlight program flexibilities that allow states to take immediate action during emergencies and allow for post-emergency federal approval (with justification) for non-statutory-related requirements, especially housing costs.

- Promote alternatives to criminalization and provide incentives to state, local, and territorial governments to adopt such alternatives.

- Identify strategies for housing-focused outreach that connect people to accessible permanent housing, including rapid rehousing; permanent supportive housing; and affordable and market rent housing, when appropriate.

- Incentivize, strengthen, and expand opportunities for people with lived experience to serve as outreach workers and service providers through programs like Peer Recovery Support,[50] Community Health Workers, and Medicaid HCBS.

The Connection Between Housing Costs and Unsheltered Homelessness*

The Nation's Least Affordable Housing Markets

1. Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA
2. Salinas, CA
3. Anaheim-Santa Ana-Irvine, CA
4. San Francisco-Redwood City-South San Fran, CA
5. San Diego-Carlsbad, CA
6. Napa, CA
7. San Luis Obispo-Paso Robles-Arroyo Grande, CA
8. Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura, CA
9. Stockton-Lodi, CA
10. Modesto, CA
11. San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA
12. Santa Maria-Santa Barbara, CA
13. Santa Cruz-Watsonville, CA
14. Bend-Redmond, OR
15. Madera, CA
16. Boise City, ID
17. Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA
18. Oakland-Hayward-Berkeley, CA
19. Merced, CA
20. Santa Rosa, CA

The areas with the most unsheltered homelessness (as seen on Page 55) are also the most expensive housing markets (as seen on this map).

These cities appear for reference—not accurate geographic location.

*Data Sources:
https://www.nahb.org/news-and-economics/housing-economics/indices/housing-opportunity-index[51]
https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/xls/2007-2020-PIT-Estimates-by-CoC.xlsx

The Connection Between Housing Costs and Unsheltered Homelessness

CoC Name	CoC Number	Unsheltered Homeless Population[52]
Los Angeles City & County	CA-600	45,878
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County	CA-500	7,708
Seattle/King County	WA-500	7,685
Oakland/Alameda County	CA-502	7,135
Sacramento City & County	CA-503	6,664
Phoenix/Mesa/Maricopa County Regional	AZ-502	5,029
San Francisco	CA-501	4,397
San Diego City and County	CA-601	4,106
Georgia Balance of State	GA-501	3,919
Texas Balance of State	TX-607	3,555
New York City	NY-600	3,455
Chattanooga/Southeast Tennessee	TN-500	3,172
Santa Ana, Anaheim/Orange County	CA-602	3,057
Portland, Gresham/Multnomah County	OR-501	3,057
Oregon Balance of State	OR-505	2,886
Las Vegas/Clark County	NV-500	2,867
San Bernardino City & County	CA-609	2,389
Honolulu	HI-501	2,349
Fresno/Madera County	CA-514	2,338
Richmond/Contra Costa County	CA-505	2,329

Strategy 2: Evaluate coordinated entry and provide tools and guidance on effective assessment processes that center equity, remove barriers, streamline access, and divert people from homelessness.

One key purpose of coordinated entry is to create more fair and standardized processes for access, assessment, and referral. But upon implementation, an overreliance on scores generated by assessment tools and a reliance on "matching" households to a specific resource has often resulted in long waiting lists, rationing of assistance, and exacerbated disparities.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Collaborate with people with lived experience as well as a range of service providers inside and outside the homeless response system.

- Review and revise federal policies and programs related to coordinated entry to identify inherent challenges that create barriers.

- Commission a multi-community study to evaluate coordinated-entry implementation and recommend federal policy changes to remove barriers and improve process effectiveness.

- Create a new overarching framework for effective coordinated entry using a targeted universalism approach that is inclusive of all key populations, access points, programs, and systems serving people experiencing homelessness and which allows for local flexibility and tailoring based on the needs and resources within the specific community.

- Highlight communities adopting a spectrum of assessment activities that center equity in prioritization, trauma-informed data collection, and offer solutions that tailor assistance based on what clients need.

- Provide guidance, tools, and TA in partnership with people with lived experience and service providers on coordinated-entry system design, assessment processes, and performance measurement that is inclusive of addressing specific needs and goals of different key populations.

- Identify ways to test different approaches to assessment and prioritization—including the use of health and other administrative data—and share outcomes and lessons learned.

Strategy 3: Increase availability of and access to emergency shelter—especially non-congregate shelter—and other temporary accommodations.

> "The pandemic's opening up of resources, particularly non-congregate shelter beds, demonstrated that many experiencing homelessness who had previously been resistant to shelter were actually just resistant to congregate shelter."
>
> **– Advocate from New York**

Emergency shelter—both congregate and non-congregate—serves a temporary and life-saving role for people in crisis and should be implemented with as few barriers as possible. The key components to effective emergency shelter include culturally appropriate, gender-affirming, and specific, low-barrier access and housing-focused services aimed at rapid exits back to permanent housing.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Fully implement the Equal Access Rule[53] to reduce barriers for LGBTQI+ people.
- Increase the availability of and access to medical respite care to meet the needs of people who need recuperative care after hospital discharge.
- Increase the availability of and access to low-barrier, and culturally appropriate shelter, especially non-congregate shelter.
- Provide guidance, technical assistance, and training related to the Americans with Disabilities Act and all applicable federal fair housing laws to ensure compliance and that shelters meet the disability-related needs of people with disabilities, including those with mobility-based disabilities.
- In alignment with the 2022 National Drug Control Strategy,[6] promote the integration of high-impact harm reduction interventions within emergency shelter.
- Provide guidance on emergency shelter that defines the role of emergency accommodations, the connection to the larger system, the need to incorporate non-congregate shelter options, bridge housing, and strategies for downsizing shelter over time.
- Provide guidance, technical assistance, and training for emergency shelter operators, including faith-based; family-focused; youth-focused; and domestic violence shelters on (1) evaluating and updating shelter rules, structure, and operations to a low-barrier model that is more accessible and supportive of the needs of people and (2) providing housing-focused services and integrating health care and supportive services into the provision of non-congregate shelter. For families with children, this should also include resources to address the health and developmental needs of children and to improve the environmental conditions while children are living at a shelter.

Strategy 4: Solidify the relationship between CoCs, public health agencies, and emergency management agencies to improve coordination when future public health emergencies and natural disasters arise.

"Trust and relationships matter at all levels of serving in a crisis. Building those relationships before a disaster will allow your community to respond more quickly and at a higher level."

– Person with lived experience from Punta Gorda, Florida

The pandemic and the increase in natural disasters have demonstrated that most communities do not have adequate resources to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness during disasters. Given the multi-faceted needs of people, homelessness response systems should empower all partners—housing and non-housing—to screen, assess, and make referrals to housing systems that can quickly act and provide follow-up support.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Encourage CoCs, especially in rural and tribal areas, to have an inclusive community crisis response plan in the event of an emergency or a local surge in the need for shelter and/or housing placements.

- Enhance and expand technical assistance and training on disaster response and recovery planning for homelessness systems with special attention to the disparate impact to already unhoused people.

- Facilitate greater collaboration between federal partners that play a key role on disaster and public health response—including HUD, HHS, and DHS—and national emergency management associations and trade groups—including the National Emergency Management Association, International Association of Emergency Managers, and Association of Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Professionals.

- Continue to encourage state emergency management agencies to include people experiencing homelessness in their disaster response and emergency management protocols with attention to particularly vulnerable populations such as older adults and people with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness. Share resources with cities and counties on how to create multi-system coalitions that partner with local public health agencies to drive down homelessness and reduce barriers to permanent supportive housing.

- Increase collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency to focus on better understanding how climate change will exacerbate the condition of homelessness.

Strategy 5: Expand the use of "housing problem-solving" approaches for diversion and rapid exit.

Housing problem-solving (HPS)[54] is a set of techniques that support the effective implementation of diversion and rapid exit strategies[55] and should be integrated into all homelessness response and coordinated entry systems. HPS is a person-centered approach that seeks to identify flexible and cost-effective alternative housing solutions that can be implemented quickly. HPS is typically initiated through an exploratory conversation that can occur during street outreach, emergency shelter intake, or coordinated-entry access. HPS can increase equity, reduce trauma, and support community efforts to end homelessness while ensuring housing assistance is prioritized for the people with the highest needs.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Identify federal programs that can be used and adapted to support community efforts to integrate housing-problem solving into homelessness response systems, ensuring accessibility to all populations.

- Encourage partners—such as law enforcement, early childhood settings and schools, employment training centers, and hospitals—to adopt housing problem-solving that is inclusive in its approach.

- Provide guidance, training, and technical assistance on housing problem-solving, providing accommodations, and associated practices, such as motivational interviewing and mediation to homeless services providers as well as other community partners such as law enforcement, schools, employment training centers, and hospitals.

Strategy 6: Remove and reduce programmatic, regulatory, and other barriers that systematically delay or deny access to housing for households with the highest needs.

"Governments, agencies, and nonprofits need to have flexible funding to provide supports to end the cycle of homelessness. Homelessness is complex and complicated and needs to be addressed with compassion, flexibility, mindfulness, and without time limits."

– Provider from Spokane Valley, Washington

Complicated eligibility and documentation requirements can significantly delay the process of getting someone off the streets and into housing. The federal government should ensure that programs "fit" people experiencing homelessness and do not require people experiencing homelessness to "fit" into programs.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Examine ways to ease eligibility and documentation requirements for specific subpopulations, such as people who are chronically homeless.

- Consider strategies that would streamline eligibility and access processes such as "categorical eligibility", which would allow people to qualify for multiple programs at once without duplicative processes and "conditional eligibility," which would allow immediate entry into housing with a grace period for required documentation.

- Provide more training and guidance on fidelity to Housing First and promote examples of successful implementation.
- Review all programs targeted to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness and remove barriers to implementing Housing First approaches with fidelity.

Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to *Improve Effectiveness of Homelessness Response Systems*		
Agency/Entity	**Policy/Program/Initiative**	**Action**
White House	**Unsheltered Homelessness**	Launched government-wide initiative in June 2022 to **address unsheltered homelessness** through agency commitments and a place-based initiative
White House	**Executive Order 14074: Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices To Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety**	Established policy of Biden-Harris Administration to strengthen public safety, build trust between law enforcement and the community, and build and reform a criminal justice system that respects the dignity and equality for all
DHS	**Reimbursement of COVID-19 Non-Congregate Shelter**	FEMA offered Public Assistance funds to state and local governments for certain costs related to COVID-19 mitigation, including **non-congregate shelter** so people could move out of shelters and encampments and into spaces (such as hotel and motel rooms) where they could isolate and quarantine
HHS	**COVID-19 Guidance for Homeless Populations**	CDC issued to support response of local and state health departments, homelessness service systems, housing authorities, emergency planners, health facilities, and homeless outreach services
HHS	**American Rescue Plan**	Committed to spending more than $1.6 billion on **COVID-19 testing and mitigation for high-risk congregate settings**, including homeless encampments and shelters for people experiencing homelessness and people fleeing domestic violence
HUD	**Continuum of Care (CoC) Supplemental Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to Address Unsheltered and Rural Homelessness**	Released a first-of-its-kind package of resources to address unsheltered homelessness and homeless encampments, including funds set aside specifically for rural communities
HUD	**Emergency Housing Voucher Program**	Provided **70,000 vouchers to local PHAs** to help people experiencing or at risk of homelessness; people fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking; and people who were recently homeless or have a high risk of housing instability
Multiple Agencies	**COVID-19 Guidance for Homeless Service Providers**	USICH published guidance—in collaboration with HHS, HUD, and VA—to help communities **minimize spread and impact of COVID-19** variants among people experiencing homelessness

Prevent Homelessness

> "So much of the work around houselessness is focused on the emergency of it. That is kind of the nature of the work, which I understand. But until we can go way upstream, it will always be an emergency, and people will always be struggling."
>
> **– Student from Missoula, Montana**

The overall number of people experiencing homelessness will only go down if more people exit homelessness than enter it. Ending homelessness requires working on both fronts—rehousing people who are already homeless while preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place. This pillar focuses on upstream, universal prevention approaches that will require an all-hands-on-deck effort across government to broadly reduce the risk of housing instability for households most likely to experience homelessness. Strategies such as increasing availability of and access to affordable and accessible housing and housing assistance and addressing housing discrimination that perpetuate disparities are both critical to preventing homelessness and are addressed in the *Scale Up Housing and Supports* pillar.

The following strategies and actions are informed by the White House Homelessness Prevention Working Group that convened from October 2021 through January 2022. It is important to note that while this pillar does include strategies for some specific subpopulations and groups, it is understood that there is intersectionality between each of these groups and all strategies must be considered together.

Closing the Door to Homelessness*

Preventing homelessness before it starts is critical to ending it.
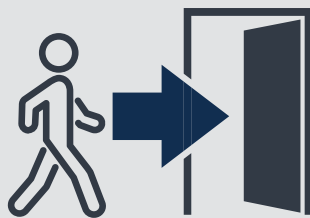
908,530
Average who entered
homelessness each year
between 2017 and 2020
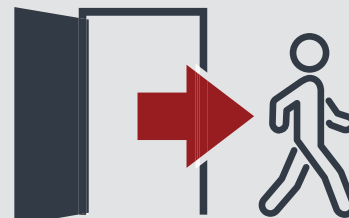
900,895
Average who exited
homelessness each year
between 2017 and 2020

---

*Data Source: HUD

Strategy 1: Reduce housing instability for households most at risk of experiencing homelessness by increasing availability of and access to meaningful and sustainable employment, education, and other mainstream services, opportunities, and resources.

It is necessary to strengthen partnerships between, and connections to, a larger array of federal, state, local, and private programs that serve low-income households, including programs that address poverty; advance education and employment opportunities and support upward economic mobility; provide connections to health, including mental health services; and link people to a range of other programs and systems that support strong and thriving communities, such as quality early care and education, schools, home and community-based services, and family and caregiver support.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Increase on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities and supported employment for low-income households most at risk of becoming homeless to ensure access to jobs that pay a living wage.

- Review federal program policies, procedures, regulations, and administrative barriers to improve access to employment opportunities and income support for households experiencing housing instability—particularly for historically marginalized groups, including Black; trans; and non-binary people.

- Encourage state and local governments, and territories to implement a flexible array of supports that impact housing stability, including quality case management and care coordination, peer supports and navigation services, intensive in-home services, mobile crisis and stabilization services, transportation services, and other home- and community-based services.

- Support communities to increase access to and retention within high-quality education programs, including quality childcare and early childhood education through elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education.

- Share examples and best practices on strategies and resources that promote the long-term stability of people who have entered permanent housing, including employment supports, energy burden assistance, case management and peer support, emergency financial assistance, transportation, legal services, early care and education, connection to programs, and other necessary services and supports.

- Strengthen coordination between early childhood, education, housing, health care and public health, aging and disability network organizations, employment and vocational rehabilitation, and homeless services providers as part of a whole-family approach to improve both child and family outcomes through meaningful connections to community-based programs and resources that target and prioritize the assessed needs of the entire household, including infants and young children, for sustained housing stability and economic mobility.

- Promote equitable strategies and expand programs that are focused on preventing evictions, including legal services; protection and advocacy services; independent living services; elder rights; and housing counseling services.

Where Do People Go When They Get Evicted?
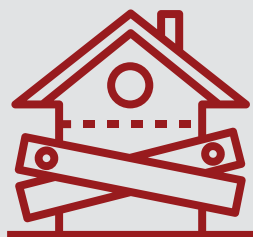
Nearly a million[55] **households are evicted every year.**
According to a 2018 report[56] **by the Seattle Women's Commission and**
the King County Bar Association:

37.5%	**25%**	**25%**
End up living on the streets	Move into shelter or transitional housing	Move in with family or friends

Strategy 2: Reduce housing instability for families, youth, and single adults with former involvement with or who are directly exiting from publicly funded institutional systems.

Many people experiencing homelessness have prior involvement with or are exiting directly from publicly funded institutional systems, including child welfare and foster care, juvenile and adult corrections, long-term care, health, and mental health and substance use treatment facilities. Ending homelessness will require a whole-of-government approach to close gaps and provide greater support to increase the likelihood of housing stability and decrease the likelihood of a subsequent occurrence of homelessness. Because people of color are often overrepresented in the criminal justice system and child welfare system, failure to address the pipeline from these publicly funded institutions into homelessness will further racial disparities among those experiencing homelessness. Reducing housing instability for people exiting publicly funded institutional systems will also reduce disparities among homeless populations.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Strengthen cross-system partnerships and expand upon existing initiatives and programs that target or primarily serve youth, individuals and families who have current or prior involvement with a publicly funded institutional system.

- Pursue Executive actions, legislative amendments, and policy changes around eligibility and other definitions that limit access to programs for youth, individuals and families who have prior involvement with a publicly funded institutional system.

- Increase intergovernmental collaboration on existing programs that serve youth, individuals and families who have prior involvement with a publicly funded institutional system including older adults and adults with disabilities who have been in contact with protective services.

- Provide guidance and technical assistance to local systems of care for better integration of housing stability screening to allow for earlier intervention and support.

The Foster Care-to-Homelessness Pipeline
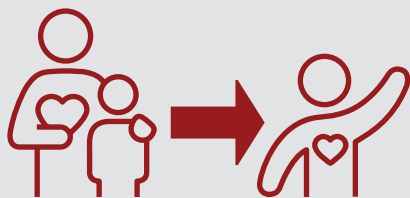
- In a given year, **almost 20,000** foster youth age out of care.*

- **Between 31% and 46%** youth exit foster care and experience homelessness by age 26.**

Strategy 3: Reduce housing instability among older adults and people with disabilities—including people with mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders—by increasing access to home- and community-based services and housing that is affordable, accessible, and integrated.

"Housing IS health!"

– Person with lived experience from Redmond, Oregon

Poor housing conditions are shown to worsen health conditions—especially for older adults and people with disabilities—which in turn can lead to homelessness. Older adults and people with disabilities face dual health and housing crises and need more access to community-based health care and support services, such as mental health care, outpatient treatment for substance use disorders, transportation, assistive technology, and personal care assistance. This is particularly true for people of color, especially Black people, and other marginalized populations.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Provide guidance and technical assistance to states and local governments on service improvement and the provision of housing-related supports for older adults and people with disabilities— especially those in rural communities, people transitioning out of institutions and into integrated community-based housing, and people at risk of institutionalization.

- Explore feasibility of expanding the scope of programs that provide housing-related supports to allow for greater flexibility in terms of allowable costs and eligibility to ensure people at risk of homelessness are covered. This could include expanding use of funds to cover home repairs, modifications, renovations, and costs to address disability-related needs, such as innovative accessibility features, to reduce likelihood of housing insecurity and potential health impacts.

- Expand housing options for people with disabilities and older adults by providing guidance, technical assistance and expanding and enforcing requirements related to accessibility of housing.

- Expand cross-agency collaboration on the development of guidance, tools, and technical assistance opportunities to strengthen partnerships across disability, aging, health, and housing sectors to

Data Sources:
*Foster Care Statistics 2019 (childwelfare.gov)[57]
**Homelessness During the Transition From Foster Care to Adulthood | AJPH | Vol. 103 Issue S2 (aphapublications.org)[58]

prevent homelessness and increase access to culturally appropriate affordable housing and high-quality, accessible housing and community-based supports.

- Strengthen coordination between CoCs, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Aging and Disability Resource Centers/No Wrong Door Systems, housing, Social Security, healthcare, AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers, and homeless service providers to improve housing stability for older adults and people with disabilities who are experiencing homeless or at risk of homelessness.

- Promote the use of flexible funding to cover first or last deposit for renters with reliable sources of income such as Supplemental Security Income which provides for little to no discretionary spending.

Veteran Homelessness
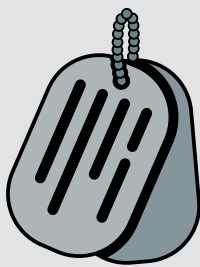
6.9%
Adults experiencing homelessness who are veterans of the U.S. military*

Veteran women are
more than twice as likely
as non-veteran women to experience homelessness.**

Strategy 4: Reduce housing instability for veterans and service members transitioning from military to civilian life.

Veterans are more likely than civilians to experience homelessness, especially if they have mental health conditions and/or have substance use disorders or disabilities that impact successful reintegration, particularly into the civilian workforce. Veterans are also at higher risk of experiencing traumatic brain injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which are some of the most significant[59] risk factors for homelessness.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Increase and improve coordination between DoD, VA and other partner agencies to identify opportunities to strengthen appropriate housing connections with follow-up services for transitioning service members (TSMs).

- Provide information and outreach to military communities and legal service providers about federal foreclosure and eviction protections for service members and veterans.

- Broaden community outreach and marketing of VA's resources to promote health, volunteerism and national service, wellness, education, employment, economic mobility, and legal assistance.

- Strengthen and build partnerships across federal, state, and private entities to expand housing stock availability as identified in the VA Homeless Programs Office Strategic Plan for 2021-2025.[60]

- Promote the use of tools and provide guidance on how to screen for housing instability for TSMs

Data Sources:
*Homelessness_in_America._Focus_on_Veterans.pdf (usich.gov)[61]
**Women Veterans and Homelessness, July 2016 (va.gov)[62]

Tribal communities experience severe housing shortages, geographic isolation, and limited job opportunities near family and community support networks.

Posted May 17, 2023

sooner to refer to appropriate supports to avert a housing crisis that could lead to homelessness.

- Support expansion of VA partnerships with community-based legal providers (including those following the medical-legal partnership model) that help veterans with civil legal problems.

Strategy 5: Reduce housing instability for American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.

Tribal communities experience severe housing shortages, geographic isolation, and limited job opportunities near family and community support networks. It is imperative to support tribal governments in identifying barriers to housing instability in their communities and designing and implementing culturally responsive solutions.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Consult with tribes, in accordance with Executive Order 13175[63] and the Presidential Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships, and will build off the tribal consultation that took place to inform the development strategies and recommendations to increase housing stability for American Indians and Alaska Natives, including policy recommendations related to programs funded under the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 1996 (NAHASDA).

- Reengage the USICH Interagency Working Group on American Indian and Alaska Native Homelessness and work to implement the strategies set forth in the action plan[64] for interagency coordination and collaboration for setting a path for ending homelessness among American Indian and Alaska Native communities living on and off tribal lands.

Strategy 6: Reduce housing instability among youth and young adults.

> "Wraparound services are very needed, especially dealing with youth. They don't have the background knowledge to fall back on, and this is usually their first time trying to navigate the systems during a crisis situation."
>
> **– Provider from Ames, Iowa**

A nationwide study released by Chapin Hall[65] in 2017 found that 700,000 youth (ages 13-17) and 3.5 million young adults (ages 18-25) had experienced some form of homelessness—including couch-surfing and doubling up—over a 12-month period. Addressing housing instability among youth and young adults, especially those who are LGBTQI+, requires a holistic and developmentally appropriate approach that explores the unique intersections that affect young people.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and relevant member agencies will:

- Explore feasibility of expanding existing programs that target youth or young adults, including programs for foster youth with and without disabilities aging out of foster care, and pregnant and parenting youth, to focus on activities that will increase protective factors that will reduce the

likelihood of experiencing housing instability and subsequent occurrence of homelessness.

- Provide targeted technical assistance to communities to strengthen partnerships and collaboration for the prevention of youth homelessness with entities including schools and local educational agencies, child welfare, and other local systems of care that have regular and direct contact with this population to promote more collaborative relationships, seek to strengthen familial ties and support networks for youth, and allow for earlier identification of young people at increased risk of experiencing a housing crisis.

- Support the creation of pilot programs that are focused on the use of housing problem-solving and the provision of direct cash assistance as a means of preventing youth and young adult homelessness.

- Promote the creation of local youth advisory councils comprised of young people, including those who are at risk, to partner and lead the design and implementation of programs that focus on youth homelessness prevention.

- Strategy 7: Reduce housing instability among survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence, including family violence and intimate partner violence.

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness, especially among families, in the United States. Survivors of sexual assault also face unique challenges to obtaining and maintaining stable housing. Additionally, survivors of human trafficking are often part of marginalized populations and left financially insecure, which, in turn, makes them susceptible to re-exploitation. In addition, people experiencing homelessness—especially youth and young adults—are at increased risk of being trafficked. Conversely, experiencing human trafficking places youth and others at a greater risk for becoming homeless.

To accomplish this strategy, USICH and its member agencies will seek to align with and build off of the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality and the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking[66] and will:

- Expand federal collaboration and partnerships with federally funded technical assistance groups on opportunities to reduce housing barriers for survivors of human trafficking; sexual assault; and domestic violence (including family and intimate partner violence) and explore additional strategies to prevent homelessness among survivors, such as strategies to prevent evictions resulting from crime-free programs and nuisance property laws.

- Support the creation of pilot programs that promote supportive housing and services models for survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence.

- Explore feasibility of expanding existing programs that focus on helping survivors access and maintain long-term, safe, stable, and affordable housing to reduce housing instability and avoid occurrences of homelessness.

- As recommended by the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking 2021 report, increase capacity of providers serving survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault to also serve human trafficking survivors.

- Develop tools and provide collaborative technical assistance on topics such as increasing affordable housing stock, engaging landlords, and family interventions specific to this population through policy academies, learning collaboratives, and expert panels.

# Recent Biden-Harris Administration Actions to *Prevent Homelessness*

Agency/Entity	Policy/Program/Initiative	Action
HHS	**Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund**	Provided $1 billion to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program to help families with a range of pandemic-related needs, including support for people behind on rent or experiencing other **housing insecurity due to the pandemic**
HUD	**Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative**	Awarded nearly $15 million to PHAs (in partnership with public child welfare agencies) in **Housing Choice Vouchers** for 18- to 24-year-olds experiencing or at risk of homelessness who left or will leave foster care within 90 days
HUD	**Eviction Protection Grant Program**	Awarded $20 million in **first-of-their-kind grants** for 10 legal service providers that offer no-cost services to low-income tenants at risk of or subject to eviction in areas—including rural—with high eviction rates
Treasury	**Economic Impact Payments**	Provided millions in **direct cash assistance**, also known as stimulus checks, for people experiencing homelessness; Reduced overall poverty by 45% (20.1 million people) in 2021, when combined with state payments

In addition to the actions taken above, the White House convened the **White House Homelessness Prevention Working Group** from October 2021 through January 2022. The following are some of the commitments that were made through that effort.

Agency	Commitment
HHS	Encourage grantees to exercise existing flexibilities to change or create policies that support people when they gain additional income that may result in ineligibility or benefit reductions known as **"benefit cliffs"**
HUD	Identify barriers—and develop strategies to reduce barriers—to using **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits** for the creation of housing that serves extremely low-income households and to highlight examples of successful state policies
DOL	Identify opportunities in the **workforce system** to incentivize screening for housing instability and to promote system coordination during employment services intake and service provision
HHS	Promote **child welfare funding and services** that support families who are at risk of homelessness and child welfare involvement
HUD	Partner with DOJ Office of Justice Programs to develop tools to improve **reentry/discharge planning** by using DOJ and HUD resources to support prevention programs for people likely to become homeless for the first time
DOJ	Seek to enhance discharge planning from jails/prisons/correctional facilities to reduce the number of people exiting institutions without stable housing
HHS	Identify opportunities for service improvement and provide progress measures to achieve program goals related to housing-related supports for individuals transitioning out of institutions, supporting community-based housing for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and building partnerships between state Medicaid systems, aging and disability network organizations, and state level housing agencies through Money Follows the Person
SSA	Streamline **the SSI application** to reduce the number of required questions under current program rules and create an online intuitive application that will make it easier to apply for benefits
VA	Support **expansion of VA partnerships with community-based legal providers** (including those following the medical-legal partnership model) to assist veterans with civil legal problems (e.g., evictions, child support payments) and continue connecting veterans with legal services to address issues that could result in eviction or housing crisis
DOJ	Coordinate with VA to provide outreach and training on **Fair Housing Act protections** for housing-vulnerable veterans and their service providers
HHS	Collaborate with federal partners to explore pilot opportunities focused on initiating prevention strategies for **youth and young adults** at risk of experiencing homelessness, including those affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking

Framework for Implementation
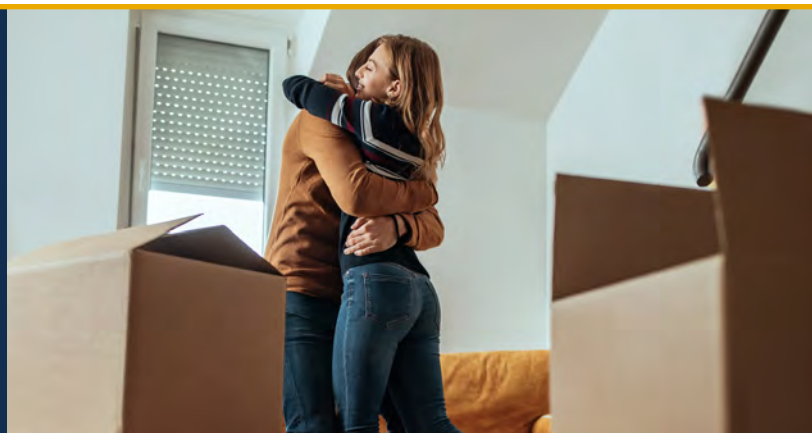
This is a multi-year roadmap to create the systemic changes needed to end homelessness in our country. This plan establishes an initial goal to reduce overall homelessness by 25% from the Point-in-Time Count in 2022 by 2025. To drive progress toward this ambitious goal, USICH will develop implementation work plans and begin putting the strategies in the plan into action during FY 2023. These implementation work plans will include:

- Specific action steps;
- Expected outputs and outcomes; and
- Timelines for when action steps will be completed.

USICH has already started to convene working groups comprised of our member agencies and other stakeholders to implement the plan and develop mechanisms for reporting on progress. As we move toward implementation of *All In,* we are committed to partnering with and incorporating regular input from people with lived expertise and stakeholders representing a broad range of groups and perspectives, including: CoCs and homeless and victim service providers; Native-serving organizations operating on and off tribal lands; health, transportation, and school systems; aging and disability network organizations; the business, faith, and philanthropic communities; leaders from local, state, territorial, and tribal governments and organizations in rural and urban areas; technical assistance providers; and national organizations.

Measuring Progress

All In represents a long-term commitment, and implementation of it will be dynamic, results-driven, and transparent. Progress will be assessed regularly, and the implementation work plans will be adapted in real-time to reflect new actions and commitments as well as new data and information that can inform future work. USICH will also publish an annual update to the plan that will include progress toward the 25% reduction goal, adjustments to the plan, and updates on implementing strategies at the federal level and across the country. USICH will share information as it is available on its website: usich.gov, and report to the USICH Council and the public on progress and actions taken to implement this plan.

USICH will also work with its federal partners and other stakeholders to identify additional data sources and qualitative and quantitative metrics for measuring overall impact. As a starting point,* USICH will focus on available federal data including the following:

---

*USICH and its member agencies will work to further identify measures and metrics to ensure that we are using all available data to inform action and implementation and is inclusive of key populations and marginalized groups including, but not limited to, people with disabilities and older adults.

- The total number of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in the annual Point-in-Time Count

- The number of children and youth, including students in families and unaccompanied students, identified as experiencing homelessness at some point during the school year

- Changes across the following HUD system performance measures:

  » Length of time people remain homeless

  » Returns to homelessness within 6 to 12 months and within 2 years

  » Number of people who become homeless for the first time

  » Number of homeless people

  » Successful placement in and retention of housing from street outreach

  » Racial disparities in homelessness, including inflow, length of time homeless, and successful housing placements

Recognizing that much of this data is only reported annually, USICH and its member agencies will be working to identify additional metrics and benchmarks for measuring progress nationally and locally. Going forward, this data and information will be used to inform future work plans, the USICH annual performance management plan, annual updates to the federal strategic plan, and reports to Congress and the White House.

Appendix A: How This Plan Was Created

People experiencing homelessness have the most knowledge about their needs but have historically had the least opportunity to shape homelessness policies and programs. USICH recognizes the need to have people with lived experience of homelessness actively involved in the design of policies and programs, decisions about solutions, and allocation of budgets at all levels of government.

That is where this plan started.

Between August and December 2021, USICH requested and analyzed feedback from more than 500 people with lived experience of homelessness. Their wisdom, which has been shared throughout this document, heavily influenced the development of this plan.

During the same period, USICH solicited input from a wide range of additional stakeholders, including:

- CoC representatives, leadership, and board members
- Direct services provider organizations and frontline staff
- Leaders in racial equity, criminal justice, and health care
- National organizations committed to the rights of people experiencing homelessness
- Advocates for LGBTQI+ individuals, youth and young adults, and people with disabilities
- State, city, county, territory and tribal officials
- Regional and state Interagency Councils on Homelessness
- Organizers and volunteers for mutual aid and housing justice

The People Who Influenced This Plan
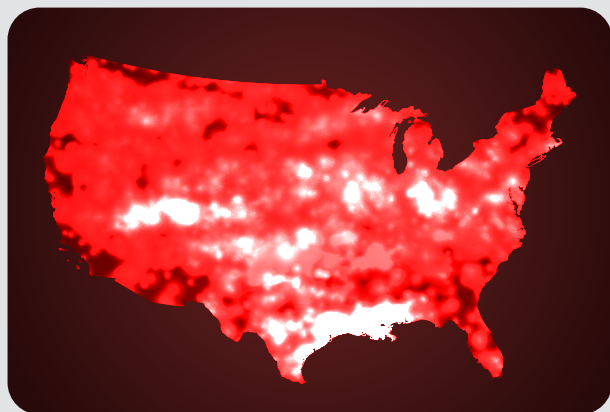
Through **more than 1,500** online comments and **80** listening sessions, USICH received feedback from people and groups in nearly every state, including **649 communities** and more than **500 people with lived experience.**

Appendix B: Inventory of Targeted and Non-Targeted Federal Programs to Prevent and End Homelessness

AGENCY

Agriculture

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Food and Nutrition Service

Rural Development

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Community Facilities Programs
- Rural Development Single-Family Housing Programs
- Rural Development Multi-Family Housing Programs
- 4-H & Positive Youth Development
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness: USDA collects information on housing status as part of the certification process for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

[USDA Offers New ERA Incentives and Support for Property Owners | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)](#)

  » With state and local governments struggling to deliver emergency rental assistance (ERA) to renters and landlords, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced new incentives and support for property owners, property management agents, and USDA field staff. "USDA will now offer:

   – Additional support to property owners waiting to receive the U.S. Treasury's Emergency Rental Assistance funds by allowing them access to reserves for operating shortfalls;

   – Financial incentives to property management agents that tap ERA to clear arrearages; and

   – Increased support from USDA field staff to amplify ERA to local leaders and public housing authorities in rural communities."

- SNAP Benefits - COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond | Food and Nutrition Service (usda.gov)

  » Separate from COVID-19, Congress directed USDA to study the costs required to purchase a healthy diet. As a result, SNAP benefit amounts have been permanently adjusted as of Oct. 1, 2021, to provide 40-cents more per person, per meal.

AGENCY

AmeriCorps

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps Seniors

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- AmeriCorps VISTA
- AmeriCorps NCCC
- AmeriCorps State and National
- AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program
- AmeriCorps Seniors Senior Companion Program
- AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Program

AmeriCorps, a federal agency, brings people together to tackle the country's most pressing challenges through national service and volunteering. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers serve with organizations dedicated to the improvement of communities, including reducing and preventing homelessness. AmeriCorps helps make service to others a cornerstone of our national culture. Find out more about AmeriCorps.

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

AmeriCorps as resource to ending Homelessness - Home Again Richmond

> In the state of Virginia, AmeriCorps VISTA members have played a critical role in the fight against homelessness. Under the Virginia Housing Alliance, members have served in a variety of ways and at different levels; some support the efforts of local planning groups, such as the New River Community Action Coalition, or the Greater Richmond Continuum of Care; and others serve in specific agencies like Homeward, HomeAgain, and St. Joseph's Villa.

AGENCY

Commerce

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Census Bureau

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

The Opportunity Project

Census Bureau

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness: The U.S. Census Bureau provides an opportunity for people experiencing homelessness to participate in the decennial Census. Data are combined with total population counts. The Census Bureau publishes counts of the people staying at emergency and transitional shelters; however, it does not publish separate reports or estimates on the total population experiencing homelessness.

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

How the 2020 Census Counts People Experiencing Homelessness

> The U.S. Census Bureau conducted special operations to provide an opportunity for people experiencing homelessness in communities across the country to participate in the decennial census. Specially trained census takers counted people Sept. 22-24 at emergency and transitional shelters, soup kitchens and mobile food van stops in an operation called Service-Based Enumeration. Census takers counted people who lived

outdoors, in transit stations, and at other locations where people were known to sleep in an operation called Targeted Non-Sheltered Outdoor Locations.

AGENCY
Defense

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES
Military-Civilian Transition Office

AGENCY OVERVIEW
Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves
- Military OneSource
- Transition Assistance Program
- Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
- DoD Safe Helpline

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness: The Department of Defense collects data on the number and percentage of transitioning service members with inadequate housing plans who were provided a warm handover to VA, DOL, or another agency for post-transition services and support.

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

DoD Safe Helpline is a secure, confidential, and anonymous crisis support service specially designed for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. Safe Helpline is available 24/7, worldwide. Safe Helpline staff receive highly specialized training on providing help to members of the military community. Safe Helpline staff provide emotional support, help with long- and short-term safety planning, listen to a visitor's needs and concerns, provide information about specialized resources and, if desired, connect the visitor with local help.

AGENCY
Education

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of School Support and Accountability

AGENCY OVERVIEW
Targeted Programs:
- McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program
- American Rescue Plan Homeless Children and Youth Program
- National Center for Homeless Education

Legislation:
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Non-Targeted Programs:
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B and Part C
- Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:
- Data from the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program found that in School Year 2019-20, public schools identified 1,280,886 students who experienced homelessness.

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

Education Department Distributes ARP ESSER and ARP-HCY Funds to All 50 States | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

» The Department of Education approved every state's plan for American Rescue Plan Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) funds and distributed $800 million targeted to serving homeless children and youth. This was in addition to the $122 billion in funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) distributed to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico before the end of December which also serves special populations of students most impacted by the pandemic

AGENCY

Energy

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Office of Weatherization Assistance and Intergovernmental Program

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

• Weatherization Assistance Program/State Energy Program

• Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs Office

» Utility bills burden low-income communities and can cause homelessness. Energy and environmental justice are core to the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) mission. DOE is dedicated to helping communities overcome barriers to energy justice by pairing meaningful community engagement with the latest science and technology through programs such as the Weatherization Assistance Program and the State Energy Program.

AGENCY

General Services Administration

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Office of Real Property Utilization and Disposal

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

• Federal Real Property Assistance Program (jointly administered with HHS and HUD)

Legislation: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Non-Targeted Programs: N/A

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

Homeless Assistance (gsa.gov)

» Pursuant to Title V of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, state and local governments, as well as nonprofit organizations, are eligible to apply for land and buildings that have been determined to be "suitable and available." Properties may be used for a wide variety of programs and services for homeless people, including, but not limited to, emergency shelters, transitional programs (with occupancy limited to 24 months), food banks, job training, storage facilities, or administrative space.

AGENCY

Health and Human Services

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Administration for Children and Families

Administration for Community Living

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Health Resources and Services Administration

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

- Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals
- Health Care for the Homeless Program
- Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness: Basic Center Program; Transitional Living Program; Maternity Group Home Program; Street Outreach Program
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness
- Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (TIEH)
- SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)
- The National Communication System for Runaway and Homeless Youth (i.e., National Runaway Safeline)

Legislation: Public Health Service Act, Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, Social Security Act, Affordable Care Act

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Adult Protective Services
- Child Care and Development Fund
- Child Support Enforcement Program
- Community Mental Health Services Block Grant
- Community Services Block Grant
- Demonstration Grants to Strengthen the Response to Victims of Human Trafficking in Native Communities Program
- Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking Services and Outreach Program
- Emergency Response Grants
- Family Violence and Prevention Services
- Head Start
- Health Center Program
- Independent Living Programs (including State Independent Living Councils and Centers for Independent Living)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
- Low Income Household Water Assistance Program
- John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee program), including the Education and Training Voucher Program
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Children's Health Insurance Program
- Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program
- No Wrong Door Programs (including Aging and Disability Resource Centers)
- Older Americans Act funded programs and formula grants to State Units on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging

- Older Americans Act Title VI programs (programs that support American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians)
- State Protection and Advocacy Systems Programs
- Promoting Safe and Stable Families
- Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program
- Social Services Block Grant
- State Assistive Technology Act Programs
- State Developmental Disabilities Council Programs
- State Opioid Response Grants
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program
- Trafficking Victim Assistance Program
- Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth
- Tribal Opioid Response
- University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Programs

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

- Head Start collects data on the number of children experiencing homelessness who are served during an enrollment year. Through the Chafee Program, data is also available on older youth who are in or have exited foster care and their experiences with homelessness.
- Office of Child Care collects data as part of the Child Care and Development Fund reporting requirements. States and territories submit monthly case-level data describing the characteristics of the populations they serve, including whether the family is experiencing homelessness.
- HRSA collects data on patients of Health Center Program grantees identified as experiencing homelessness (based on definition used by HRSA; see Appendix A: Glossary for more information) through the Health Center Uniform Data System.
- HRSA's HIV/AIDS Bureau collects data on housing and HIV-related health care outcomes among HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) clients.
- HRSA's MIECHV Program works with parents/families experiencing homelessness

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

HRSA Health Center Program

> » In fiscal year 2022, HRSA will award $481 million to Health Care for the Homeless health centers to support services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

> » On August 17, 2022, HRSA released the FY 2023 National Training and Technical Assistance Partners (NTTAP) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Through this NOFO, HRSA will award approximately $23.5 million to fund 22 organizations. The purpose of this funding is to support the development and delivery of training and technical assistance that assists health centers to deliver comprehensive care; address emergent public health issues and health needs; improve operational effectiveness and quality; and advance health equity. Up to $2.4 million will be designated to support two NTTAPs focused on the homeless population.

- HHS Expands COVID-19 Testing and Mitigation for Homeless Shelters and Encampments | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

> » With coronavirus cases on the rise, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that it will invest more than $1.6 billion in testing and mitigation for high-risk congregate settings, including homeless encampments and shelters for people experiencing homelessness and for people fleeing domestic violence.

- Populations Experiencing Homelessness | COVID-19 | CDC

> » The CDC issued guidance to support response to COVID-19 by local and state health departments, homelessness service systems, housing authorities, emergency planners, healthcare facilities, and homeless outreach services serving people experiencing homelessness.

- Housing and Services Resource Center | ACL Administration for Community Living

> » HUD and HHS created the Housing and Services Resource Center to make community living a reality for all.

This partnership will expand accessible, affordable housing; help people exit homelessness; improve home and community-based services; and address the institutional bias in America's long-term care system. The Center will implement a federally coordinated approach to providing resources, program guidance, training, and technical assistance to public housing authorities and housing providers; state Medicaid, disability, aging and mental health agencies; the aging and disability network organizations; homeless services organizations and networks; health care systems and providers; and tribal organizations.

AGENCY

Homeland Security

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Federal Emergency Management Agency

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

• Emergency Food and Shelter Program

Legislation: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Non-Targeted Programs:

• FEMA Public Assistance

• FEMA Individual Assistance

• FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

• FEMA Extends Coverage of COVID-19 Response Costs | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

  » On June 28, 2022, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided updated sheltering guidance by issuing the Emergency Non-Congregate Sheltering (NCS) Memorandum. Please refer to this Memorandum for FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Policy and guidance on NCS at Public Assistance Disaster-Specific Guidance - COVID-19 Declarations | FEMA.gov.

AGENCY

Housing and Urban Development

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Office of Community Planning and Development

Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity

Office of Multifamily Housing

Office of Policy, Development, and Research

Office of Public and Indian Housing

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

• Continuum of Care Program

• Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program and Emergency Solutions Grant Program-CARES Act (ESG-CV)

• HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) and Tribal HUD-VASH

• Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

• Emergency Housing Vouchers provided by the American Rescue Plan

Legislation:

• McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

• Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act

- SUPPORT Act

Non-Targeted Programs:

- HOME Investment Partnerships Program and HOME-American Rescue Plan
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program
- Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities
- Public Housing
- Family Unification Program Voucher Program
- Foster Youth to Independence Initiative
- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) and HOPWA-CV
- HUD-DOJ Pay for Success Permanent Supportive Housing Demonstration
- Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy Program
- National Housing Trust Fund
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and CDBG-CV

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

- The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress found that 580,466 people experienced homelessness in the United States on a single night in 2020.

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

FYI | HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

» The Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative makes Housing Choice Voucher assistance available to Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in partnership with Public Child Welfare Agencies. Under FYI, PHAs provide housing assistance on behalf of: Youth at least 18 years and not more than 24 years of age (have not reached their 25th birthday) who left foster care, or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan described in Section 475(5)(H) of the Social Security Act, and are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless at age 16 or older.

- House America | HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

» House America: An All-Hands-on-Deck Effort to Address the Nation's Homelessness Crisis is a federal initiative in which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) are inviting mayors, city and county leaders, Tribal Nation leaders, and governors into a national partnership. House America will utilize the historic investments provided through the American Rescue Plan to address the crisis of homelessness through a Housing First approach.

- HUD Awards $20 Million For Eviction Protection and Diversion | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

» The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced $20 million in inaugural grants from the Eviction Protection Grant Program. The funding will be awarded to 10 legal service providers that offer no-cost services to low-income tenants at risk of or subject to eviction in areas with high eviction rates, including rural areas.

» HUD Reaffirms Commitment to Equal Access to Housing, Shelters, and Other Services Regardless of Gender Identity | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

– In April 2021, HUD announced that it is reaffirming its commitment to upholding the Equal Access Rule.

» Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

– The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) is an exciting new initiative designed to reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness. The goal of the YHDP is to support selected communities, including rural, suburban, and urban areas across the United States, in the development and implementation of a coordinated community approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness. Additionally, HUD is committed to sharing that experience of YHDP communities and mobilizing communities around the country toward the same end.

AGENCY

Interior

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Bureau of Indian Affairs

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Housing Improvement Program
- Tiwahe Initiative
- Public Law 102-477 Demonstration Project
- Tribal Transportation Program

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

Housing Improvement Program | Indian Affairs (bia.gov)

> » The Housing Improvement Program is a home repair, renovation, replacement and new housing grant program administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and federally recognized Indian Tribes for American Indians and Alaska Native individuals and families who have no immediate resource for standard housing.

AGENCY

Justice

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Office on Violence Against Women

Office of Justice Programs

Civil Rights Division

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

Office for Access to Justice

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

- Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program
- Tribal Governments Program
- Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Human Trafficking

Relevant Legislation:

- Violence Against Women Act
- Fair Housing Act
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Second Chance Act Program
- Office on Violence Against Women administers 19 grant programs designed to prevent and end domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking
- The Second Chance Act Pay for Success Initiative
- Servicemembers and Veterans Initiative

- Community Policing Development (which includes funding for crisis intervention teams)
- Access to counsel in evictions and eviction diversion initiatives
- Office for Victims of Crime currently administers 8 grant programs (FY2022) to support victims of human trafficking

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

- Justice Department Awards $34 Million to Support Community Crisis Response | OPA | Department of Justice
  - » The Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs announced grant awards totaling $34 million to help communities address crises involving homelessness, mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders, and other public health and public safety emergencies.

- Justice Department Awards Nearly $87 Million to Combat Human Trafficking and Help Victims
  - » The Justice Department's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) announced almost $87 million in FY2021 in funding to combat human trafficking, provide supportive services to trafficking victims throughout the United States and conduct research into the nature and causes of labor and sex trafficking. This includes the Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Human Trafficking program; under this program, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) awarded approximately $15 million to provide safe, stable housing and appropriate services to victims of human trafficking. OVC has awarded over $50 million in the past two fiscal years (FY2020-FY2021) to support transitional housing for survivors of human trafficking.

- Justice Department Announces Nearly $225 Million in Grants to Support Coordinated Community Responses to Domestic and Sexual Violence on the 28th Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act | OPA | Department of Justice
  - » The Department of Justice announced $224.9 million in grants designed to enhance victim services and justice solutions for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. This includes 73 grants totaling $36,195,932 to provide housing and related wraparound services to survivors and their children under the Transitional Housing Program.

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness: N/A

AGENCY

Labor

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Veterans' Employment and Training Service

Employment and Training Administration

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

- Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program

Legislation:

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Non-Targeted Programs:
- Indian & Native American Program
- Job Corps
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)
- National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs)
- Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) Program
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service
- WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs
- WIOA Youth Program
- YouthBuild

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

- **Labor Department Awards $52M to Help Homeless Veterans | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)**
  - » The Department of Labor announced more than $52 million in grants to help veterans experiencing homelessness reenter the workforce. The money can be used to provide training, skills development, career support, and other services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of it. It's part of the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program and administered by the department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS).
  - » In addition to working with VETS, grant recipients will partner with the Department of Veterans Affairs' Supportive Services for Veteran Families program and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care program.

AGENCY

Office of Management and Budget

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Office of Management and Budget

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Office of Management and Budget does not administer any programs. The agency is responsible for producing the President's budget, coordinating the interagency review of all significant Federal regulations from executive agencies, and coordinating the clearance of legislative and other materials, including agency testimony, legislative proposals, and other communications with Congress, and coordination of other Presidential actions.

- **FACT SHEET: The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2023 | The White House**
  - » The President's Budget for fiscal year 2023 and Administration actions demonstrate a strong and enduring commitment to building evidence capacity across the Federal Government and engaging in high-quality evaluations to learn and improve. The Budget supports Federal Agencies in using evidence to advance their missions and operations and in building evidence where it is lacking. This budget would invest $8.732 billion in federal funding for homelessness-related programs.

AGENCY

Social Security Administration

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Social Security Administration

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Old Age and Survivors Insurance
- Supplemental Security Income
- Social Security Disability Insurance

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

- People Facing Barriers:
  - » SSA identified several at-risk and marginalized groups who face barriers to service including people who are homeless or at greater risk of homelessness. These groups include the aged, children with disabilities, people with limited English proficiency, people diagnosed with mental illness, veterans, and people recently released from incarceration. SSA uses its network of national public affairs specialists, advocate and interagency collaboration, social media and other online messaging, and additional strategies, to reach people in these communities directly and through organizations who support them. Initiatives listed in this strategic plan also support SSA's People Facing Barriers Initiative. SSA will continue to implement and monitor progress of its Equity Action Plan in support of the President's Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.

⬆ Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness   **83**

- Third-Party SSI Claims Taking and Outreach:
  - » During the pandemic, SSA experienced a reduction in applications for SSI benefits. SSA was particularly concerned about reaching underserved Americans, especially due to pandemic-related operating procedures that reduced in-person services. SSA was able to help some people in person by appointment only in limited critical situations. SSA partnered with, and trained, third-party organizations to help complete and submit SSI claims. SSA resumed in person services, both walk-in and by appointment, on April 7, 2022. SSA is evaluating the effectiveness of the claims-taking initiative by engaging with partner groups.

- SSI Administrative Simplification:

SSA is undertaking a thorough review of the SSI filing experience, business process, policy, regulations, law, and software capability. For instance, SSA is exploring ways to make filing the SSI application easier by considering how customers experience the application process. SSA is researching how SSI applicants understand the application questions, how the user interacts with SSA and the application, and will use this data to inform how the application and process should look. SSA plans to deliver an application that is user-centered, responsive, intuitive, equitable, easy to use, and accessible online. This will make it easier to apply for benefits. For example, in April 2022, SSA launched a new online option, which takes five to ten minutes, to request an appointment to file for SSI for oneself or another adult or a child.

AGENCY

Transportation

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Federal Transit Administration

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Public Transportation on Indian Reservations Program
- FTA Tribal Transit Competitive Program
- FTA's Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning
- FTA Formula Grants for Rural Areas
- FTA All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP)
- FTA's Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Program

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness: N/A

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

"Transportation Leaders Against Human Trafficking" initiative (https://www.transportation.gov/stophumantrafficking) The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) combats human trafficking by working with public and private sector stakeholders to empower transportation employees and the traveling public to recognize and report possible instances of human trafficking.

  »

AGENCY

Treasury

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Internal Revenue Service

Community Economic Development

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Child Tax Credit
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

November Set New ERA Record as Evictions Remained Below Pre-Pandemic Levels | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

» Using Treasury Department funding, state and local governments provided a record amount of emergency rental assistance (ERA) to a record number of people in November—$2.9 billion to approximately 665,000 renters and landlords.

- More Than Half of Recent Economic Impact Payments Go to Harder-to-Reach People | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

» The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Department of the Treasury, and the Bureau of the Fiscal Service disbursed more than 2.2 million Economic Impact Payments in the last six weeks.

» More than half, about 1.3 million, of the recent payments went to harder-to-reach people who the IRS previously lacked enough information for, which includes people experiencing homelessness who may lack a permanent mailing address and/or bank account. Neither are required to receive Economic Impact Payments.

AGENCY

US Postal Service

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

US Postal Service

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation: N/A

Non-Targeted Programs:

- USPS Homeless Mail Service: Receive Mail Without an Address

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

Is there Mail Service for the Homeless? (usps.com)

» People experiencing homelessness may submit an application for PO Box™ service to a local Post Office™. The Postmaster may approve the application under certain conditions.

AGENCY

Veterans Affairs

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

Homeless Programs Office

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs:

- Community Resource and Referral Centers
- Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans Program
- Grant and Per Diem Program
- Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program
- Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team
- Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services

- Homeless Veterans Dental Program
- HUD-VASH
- Supportive Services for Veterans Families
- Veteran Justice Outreach Initiative
- Legal Services for Homeless Veterans and Veterans At-Risk for Homelessness Grant Program

Legislation:

- Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-387)

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Compensated Work Therapy
- Enhanced Use Lease Program
- National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

[VA outlines new goals towards ending Veteran homelessness](#)

» To support, revitalize, and streamline VA's investment in and commitment to end veteran homelessness and ensure veterans at risk of becoming homeless are safeguarded from this crisis, VA established a nationwide goal to permanently house 38,000 homeless veterans during calendar year 2022.

- [VA Designates Flexible Funding for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)](#)

» Through a time-limited congressional authority, VA Medical Centers can use these funds for safety and survival and to support stability and health for transportation and communications equipment and services. VAMCs have used the funds for groceries, meals, apartment start-up kits, furniture, merchandise vouchers, and laundry vouchers, and to create a nationally coordinated rideshare program to help veterans who need transportation assistance to meet health, housing, legal, and employment needs.

- [VA Partners With Uber and Lyft to Offer Rides to Veterans Experiencing Homelessness | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)](#)

» Referrals are required, and VA providers coordinate the rides, which can bring veterans to and from their place of employment, health appointments, and home following their discharge from care.

- [VA Provides Relief for Veterans in High-Cost Rental Markets | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)](#)

» The Department of Veterans Affairs has amended its regulations governing the Supportive Services for Veteran Families grant program. Under the amended regulations, which apply in certain high-cost communities, the SSVF grant will cover up to 50%—an increase from 35%—of veterans' "reasonable rent" for two years without recertification. The new rule also increases the allowed length of stay in veteran emergency housing from 45 to 60 days.

AGENCY

White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

KEY PROGRAM OFFICES

White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Targeted Programs: N/A

Legislation:

Non-Targeted Programs:

- Training and technical assistance for faith-based groups
- Mobilizing faith leaders and community members around key issue

Data Collected on Populations Experiencing Homelessness:

Agency-Specific Initiatives:

FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Celebrates First Anniversary of the Reestablishment of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships | The White House

Over the course of the last year, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships has worked with leaders of different faiths and backgrounds who are the frontlines of their communities in crisis and who can help us heal, unite, and rebuild. Efforts include helping prevent evictions by increasing awareness of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program among faith and community leaders across the nation, including outreach commitments from more than 250 faith and community partners representing reach to more than 5 million people.

Appendix C: Glossary

Aging and Disability Network Organizations:[67] The aging and disability networks are made up of local, state, and national organizations and committed advocates working to support older adults and people with disabilities. Some organizations focus on a particular type of disability, age group, or type of service, whereas others have a more comprehensive mission.

Chronically Homeless:[68] An individual or head of household with a disability who has been living in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven for at least 12 months either consecutively or cumulatively over four occasions in a three-year period of time.

Congregate Shelter: Emergency shelter where residents share a common sleeping and bathing areas.

Continuum of Care (CoC):[69] Defined at 24 C.F.R. 578.3 to mean the group organized to carry out the responsibilities required by HUD to carry out the components of the CoC Program interim rule and is composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons to the extent these groups are represented within the geographic area and are available to participate**.**

Coordinated Entry (CE):[70] Commonly understood as the process that provides a consistent, streamlined process for accessing the resources available in the homelessness response system. The core elements of coordinated entry are access, assessment, prioritization, and referral. The CoC Program interim rule at 24 C.F.R. 578.3 defines centralized or coordinated assessment as the following: "...a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool..."

Criminalization of Homelessness:[71] Policies, laws, and ordinances that make functional behaviors illegal, difficult, or impossible when they occur outside of the home or shelter—such as sleeping in public, going to the bathroom, and eating.

Critical Time Intervention:[72] A time-limited evidence-based practice that mobilizes support for society's most vulnerable individuals during periods of transition. It facilitates community integration and continuity of care by ensuring that a person has enduring ties to their community and support systems during these critical periods.

Cultural Competency:[73] Integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services and produce better outcomes.

Cultural Humility:[74] Cultural humility is a lifelong process of self-reflection and discovery in order to build honest and trustworthy relationships **and** must be combined with a willingness to learn directly from individuals with cultural differences and experiences.

Culturally Appropriate:[75] Programming and policy that respond to the cultural and linguistic needs of the community being served as defined *by* the community and demonstrated through needs assessment activities, capacity development efforts, policy, strategy and prevention practice implementation, program implementation, evaluation, quality improvement and sustainability activities.

Dating Violence:[79] Violence committed by a person— (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) The length of the relationship. (ii) The type of relationship. (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Disability:[76] The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity, including people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability. It is unlawful to discriminate against a person based on that person's association with a person with a disability. .

Disability Competence:[77] The ability to provide person-centered and appropriate treatment, services, supports and related accommodations to individuals with disabilities while ensuring that the individual's goals, values, interests and preferences inform the design and delivery of care.

Disparities:[78] The Cambridge Dictionary defines "disparity" as "a lack of equality or similarity, especially in a way that is not fair."

Domestic Violence: The use or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim (or similarly situated to a spouse of the victim), is cohabitating or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, shares a child in common with the victim, or commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under a jurisdiction's family or domestic violence laws. Cite: See 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(12).

Emergency Shelter:[80] Facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

Equity:[81] The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer, intersex, and more, (LGBTQI+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Fair Market Rent (FMR):[82] Cost to rent a moderately-priced dwelling unit in a local housing market, which is calculated by HUD as the 40th percentile of gross rents for typical, non-substandard rental units occupied by recent movers in a local housing market. A Small Area FMR allows for FMR rate to be based on specific zip codes in areas with significant voucher concentration or market conditions where using a Zip Code-based FMR would increase opportunities for voucher holders.

Gender-Affirming Care: Utilization of a gender affirmation framework in providing care, treatment, and support services. Gender affirmation describes processes whereby a person receives social recognition, value, and support for their gender identity and expression.

Harm Reduction:[83] A proactive and evidence-based approach to reduce the negative personal and public health impacts of behavior associated with alcohol and other substance use at both the individual and community levels. Harm reduction approaches have proven to prevent death, injury, disease, overdose, and prevent substance misuse or disorder. Harm reduction is an effective approach to addressing the public health epidemic involving substance use as well as infectious disease and other harms associated with drug use.

Homelessness: In general, a situation in which an individual or family lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. There are several Federal statutory definitions of homelessness.

- The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009[84] amended the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and updated the definition of homelessness for use in the Emergency Solutions Grants Program and the CoC Program. HUD's Final Rule on Defining Homeless defines homelessness into four categories:

  ◊ Category 1: Literally Homeless Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: (i) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation; (ii) Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or (iii) Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution

  ◊ Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness: Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
    - (i) Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

    - (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and (iii) the individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

  ◊ Category 3: Homeless under other Federal statutes refers to unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
    - (i) Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;

    - (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;

    - (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and

    - (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers

---

*HUD anticipates promulgating regulations to reflect the amendments to the Category 4 homeless definition, as required by the reauthorization of VAWA in 2022.

◇ Category 4[*]: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence is defined as any individual or family who:
- (i) is experiencing trauma or a lack of safety related to, or fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous, traumatic, or life-threatening conditions related to the violence against the individual or a family member in the individual's or family's current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized;
- (ii) Has no other safe residence; and
- (iii) Lacks the resources to obtain other safe permanent housing.

◇ Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act,[85] which is used by the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care, defines homeless children and youths as follows:

◇ The term "homeless children and youths"—
- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1) of this title); and
- B. includes—

  » i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

  » ii. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C) of this title);

  » iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

  » iv. migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii)

• Section 330 (h)(5)(A) of the Public Health Service Act,[86] 42 U.S.C. 254b(h)(5)(A), part of the statutory authority for the Health Center Program, defines "homeless individual" as an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility that provides temporary living accommodations and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing.

• The Runaway and Homeless Youth Final Rule[87] youth experiencing homelessness as an individual who cannot live safely with a parent, legal guardian, or relative, and who has no other safe alternative living arrangement. For purposes of Basic Center Program eligibility, a homeless youth must be less than 18 years of age (or higher if allowed by a state or local law or regulation that applies to licensure requirements for child- or youth-serving facilities). For purposes of Transitional Living Program

eligibility, a homeless youth cannot be less than 16 years of age and must be less than 22 years of age (unless the individual commenced his or her stay before age 22, and the maximum service period has not ended).

Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS):[88] An information system designated by the Continuum of Care to comply with the HMIS requirements prescribed by HUD.

Housing First:[89] An approach to quickly and successfully connects individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Voluntary supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.

Housing Problem-Solving:[90] Approach and set of techniques that support effective implementation of *diversion* and *rapid exit* strategies that should be part of every coordinated entry (CE) process and offered as alternative housing pathways for all populations.

- *Diversion:* Avoiding emergency shelters or unsheltered homelessness.
- *Rapid exit*: Reducing shelter stays by identifying safe and stable alternative housing for people who don't require deeper levels of assistance.

Human Trafficking:[91] Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud, or coercion was used.

LGBTQI+:[92] Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning or Queer, Intersex, and more. This is an inclusive way to refer to people who broadly fall into the queer community and is used throughout this report except when sources cited specifically used other terminology.

Limited English Proficiency: The inability to read, write or understand English well, by a person who does not speak English as their primary language. Limited English proficient individuals may be proficient in English for certain aspects of communication (e.g., speaking, or understanding), but still be limited for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing).

Low-Barrier Shelter and/or Services:[93] Shelter or service provision that are designed to screen-in rather than screen-out applicants with the greatest barriers and assistance is provided without service participation requirements and restrictive rules related to pets, partners, possessions, etc.

Mainstream Benefits: Publicly-funded assistance for a variety of needs—including food, health care, housing, and childcare, Head Start—for people who meet eligibility criteria and are generally low-income.

Marginalized:[94] Marginalized communities are those excluded from mainstream social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life. Examples of marginalized populations include, but are not limited to, groups excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status. Marginalization occurs due to unequal power relationships between social groups.

Medical respite care:[95] Acute and post-acute care for people experiencing homelessness who no longer have a clinical reason to remain in a hospital but are too ill to recover on the streets.

Moving On:[40] A strategy that enables individuals and families who are able and want to move on from PSH to do so by providing them with a sustainable, affordable housing option and the services and resources they need to maintain continued housing success

Native-serving organization: Native-led organizations that primarily serve AI/AN, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander tribal members off of tribal land in rural and urban areas.

Not In My Backyard (NIMBY):[96] Actions taken by people who designate certain changes—especially new development (e.g., an emergency shelter, supportive housing, a group home) or change in occupancy within an existing development—as undesirable within their local area, typically based on assumed characteristics of the population that would be living in the development.

Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS):[97] Emergency shelter that provides private units or rooms as temporary shelter to individuals and families experiencing homelessness and do not require occupants to sign a lease or occupancy agreement.

People of Color:[4] For the purposes of writing this plan, this term is used to be inclusive of racial and ethnic groups other than non-Hispanic White and includes people from the following racial and ethnic groups:

- American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
- Asian and Asian American
- Black, African American, or African
- Latino/a
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

People With Lived Experience/Expertise:[98] Individuals who have personally experienced homelessness either previously or currently.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):[99] Permanent supportive housing means permanent housing in which supportive services are provided to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently.

Person-Centered Strategies:[100] Identification of individual strengths, goals, preferences, needs, and desired outcomes that staff, family, and other team members use to help people access paid and unpaid services.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count:[101] a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness on a single night during the last 10 days in January. HUD requires that CoCs conduct a biennial count of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and sheltered homelessness, including those who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens.

Primary Health Care:[102] Health services that cover a range of prevention, wellness, and treatment for common illnesses, including reproductive health services.

Primary Prevention:[103] Universal strategies broadly aimed at reducing the risk of housing instability and homelessness "upstream" and before an individual requires assistance from the homelessness response system. Activities may include increasing income, increasing familial connections, increasing availability of and access to affordable housing, providing legal protections for people facing discrimination, and ensuring increased overall access to quality health and behavior health services.

Public Health:[104] Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles, researching disease and injury prevention, and detecting, preventing and responding to infectious diseases. Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country or region of the world.

Public Housing Agency (PHA):[105] Any State, county, municipality, or other governmental entity or public body, or agency or instrumentality of these entities, that is authorized to engage or assist in the development or operation of low-income housing under the 1937 Act.

Publicly Funded Institutional System: For the purposes of this plan, this term is used to encompass foster care and institutions including corrections, hospitals, mental health conditions and/or substance use disorders treatment facilities.

Rapid Re-housing (RRH):[106] An intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing. Rapid re-housing assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are typically tailored to the unique needs of the household. The core components of a rapid re-housing program are housing identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management. While a rapid re-housing program must have all three core components available, it is not required that a single entity provide all three services nor that a household utilize them all.

Redlining:[107] An illegal practice in which lenders deny or discourage applications or avoid providing loans and other credit services in neighborhoods based on the race, color, or national origin of the residents of those neighborhoods.

Sexual assault:[82] Any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

Social Determinants of Health:[108] Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Sheltered Homelessness:[109] Situation in which individuals or households are staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens.

Stalking:[79] Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to— (A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or (B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Systemic Racism:[110] Policies and practices that exist throughout a whole society or organization, and that result in and support a continued unfair advantage to some people and unfair or harmful treatment of others based on race.

Targeted Universalism:[35] Setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based upon how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. Targeted universalism is goal oriented, and the processes are directed in service of the explicit, universal goal.

Technical Assistance (**TA**): The process of providing targeted support to an organization that is a recipient of funding from a Federal agency and is commonly provided by entities that have entered into an agreement or a contract with the Federal agency to deliver this service. The purpose of technical assistance, generally, is to help build the capacity of the recipient organization and can be done in a variety of forms such as one-on-one direct technical assistance; the provision of guidance, training and tools; or the facilitation of peer-to-peer collaborative workshops.

Transitional Housing (TH):[111] Programs that provide a temporary place for people experiencing homelessness that provides supportive services to facilitate the movement into permanent housing.

Trauma-Informed Care:[112] A framework for organizational and individual service delivery across the homelessness services system that acknowledges and responds to the trauma experienced by all members of the household. Trauma-informed practices are policies, procedures, interventions, and interactions among clients and staff that recognize the likelihood that a person receiving services has experienced trauma or violence. For effective service delivery and stable housing placements, organizations and staff must understand the impact of trauma on individuals and families and learn how to effectively minimize its effects and respond appropriately with cultural awareness and competence, without contributing to further trauma.

Unsheltered Homelessness:[113] People with a primary nighttime location—public or private—that is not designated for sleeping, such as vehicles, parks, or streets.

Unaccompanied Youth:[114] Individuals up to 24 years old who are not accompanied by their parent or guardian and who have no children. For purposes of housing programs, unaccompanied youth also includes pregnant and parenting youth.

Veteran: Adult who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces, including the military reserves and the National Guard, regardless of how long they served or the type of discharge they received.

Waiver: Temporary change or opportunity to modify otherwise-required provisions. Unless specifically permitted, waivers apply only to regulations and policies—not to statutory provisions.

Appendix D: References

1. "New Data Shows 11% Decline in Veteran Homelessness Since 2020—The Biggest Drop in 5+ Years". USICH. (2022). https://www.usich.gov/news/new-data-veteran-homelessness-drop

2. "American Rescue Plan – Funding the Fight Against COVID-19 in Underserved Communities." Health Resources and Services Administration, 2022, https://www.hrsa.gov/.

3. Aiken, Claudia, et al. "Understanding Low-Income Hispanic Housing Challenges and the Use of Housing and Homelessness Assistance." *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2021, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27039955.

4. Mcleod, J. (2021, March 11). Understanding Racial Terms and Differences. National Institutes of Health. https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/understanding-racial-terms-and-differences

5. FACT SHEET: President Biden to Announce Strategy to Address Our National Mental Health Crisis, As Part of Unity Agenda in his First State of the Union. The White House. (2022). https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/01/fact-sheet-president-biden-to-announce-strategy-to-address-our-national-mental-health-crisis-as-part-of-unity-agenda-in-his-first-state-of-the-union/

6. President Biden Releases National Drug Control Strategy to Save Lives, Expand Treatment, and Disrupt Trafficking. The White House. (2022). https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/briefing-room/2022/04/21/president-biden-releases-national-drug-control-strategy-to-save-lives-expand-treatment-and-disrupt-trafficking/

7. President Biden Announces New Actions to Ease the Burden of Housing Costs. The White House. (2022). Retrieved from https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/16/president-biden-announces-new-actions-to-ease-the-burden-of-housing-costs/

8. "Housing Instability." Housing Instability - Healthy People 2030, https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/housing-instability.

9. "Homeless Mortality Toolkit." *National Health Care for the Homeless Council*, 2021, https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Homeless-Mortality-Toolkit-FULL-FINAL.pdf.

10. Smith-Grant, J., Kilmer, G., Brener, N., Robin, L., & Underwood, J. M. (2022). Risk behaviors and experiences among youth experiencing homelessness—youth risk behavior survey, 23 U.S. states and 11 local school districts, 2019. *Journal of Community Health*, *47*(2). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-021-01056-2

11. *Remembering Those Lost to Homelessness*. National Coalition for the Homeless. (2018). https://nationalhomeless.org/remembering-those-lost-to-homelessness/

12. Murphy, S. L., Kochanek, K. D., Xu, J. X., & Arias, E. (2021). *Mortality in the United States, 2020*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db427.htm

13. *The Hard, Cold Facts About the Deaths of Homeless People*. National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (2006). https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/HardColdFacts.pdf

14. *The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress Part 2: Estimates of Homelessness in the United States*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2020). https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2020-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

15. *2020 Health Center Data*. Health Resources and Services Administration. (n.d.). https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/data-reporting/program-data/national/table?tableName=Full&year=2020

16. U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Student Homelessness in America School Years 2017-18 to 2019-20*. National Center for Homeless Education. https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Student-Homelessness-in-America-2021.pdf

17. Office of Community Planning and Development. *The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/ahar/

18. Kusmer, K. L. (2003). *Down and Out, On the Road: The Homeless in American History*. Oxford University Press.

19. Rothstein, R. (2018). *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W. W. Norton & Company.

20. Olivet, J., Wilkey, C., Richard, M., Dones, M., Tripp, J., Beit-Arie, M., Yampolskaya, S., & Cannon, R. (2021). Racial Inequity and Homelessness: Findings from the SPARC Study. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 693(1), 82–100. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716221991040

21. Marks, R., Ramirez, R., Ríos-Vargas, M., & Jones, N. (2021, August 12). *2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country*. U.S. Census. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html

22. Perri, M., Dosani, N., & Hwang, S. W. (2020). Covid-19 and people experiencing homelessness: Challenges and mitigation strategies. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, *192*(26). https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.200834

23. *About Mental Health*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). https://www.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/learn/index.htm

24. *Current Statistics on the Prevalence and Characteristics of People Experiencing Homelessness in the United States*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2011). https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/homelessness_programs_resources/hrc-factsheet-current-statistics-prevalence-characteristics-homelessness.pdf

25. Sutherland, H., Ali, M. M., & Rosenoff, E. (2021). *Health Conditions Among Individuals with a History of Homelessness Research Brief*. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. https://aspe.hhs.gov/reports/health-conditions-among-individuals-history-homelessness-research-brief-0

26. *Health Insurance at HCH programs, 2020*. National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (2021). https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/HCH-Insurance-Issue-Brief_2020.pdf

27. *HUD 2020 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. CoC_PopSub_NatlTerrDC_2020.pdf (hudexchange.info)

28. *The GAP A Shortage of Affordable Homes*. National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2022). https://nlihc.org/gap

29. Zhang, J., Cummungs, R., Maury, M., & Bernstein, J. (2021). *Alleviating Supply Constraints in the Housing Market*. The White House. https://www.whitehouse.gov/cea/written-materials/2021/09/01/alleviating-supply-constraints-in-the-housing-market/

30. Out of Reach: The High Cost of Housing. National Low Income Housing Coalition. (2021). https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2021/Out-of-Reach_2021.pdf

31. "Priced Out: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities." Technical Assistance Collaborative, https://www.tacinc.org/resources/priced-out/.

32. "Early Care and Education Supports for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness." The Administration for Children and Families, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/early-care-and-education-supports-young-children-experiencing-homelessness.

33. Cogburn, C. D. (2019). Culture, race, and health: Implications for racial inequities and Population Health. The Milbank Quarterly, 97(3). https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.12411

34. Guide to American Rescue Plan Funding That Impacts People Experiencing Homelessness. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2021). https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/a-guide-to-american-rescue-plan-funding-that-impacts-people-experiencing-homelessness/

35. University of California, Berkeley. (n.d.). Targeted Universalism. Othering & Belonging Institute. Retrieved from https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism

36. Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships. The White House. (2021). https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/26/memorandum-on-tribal-consultation-and-strengthening-nation-to-nation-relationships/

37. A Vision for Equitable Data Recommendations from the Equitable Data Working Group. White House. (n.d.). https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/eo13985-vision-for-equitable-data.pdf

38. COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Engaging Individuals with Lived Expertise. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Engaging-Individuals-with-Lived-Expertise.pdf

39. Acosta, S., & Gartland, E. (2021). Families Wait Years for Housing Vouchers Due to Inadequate Funding. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/families-wait-years-for-housing-vouchers-due-to-inadequate-funding

40. Moving On. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/moving-on/

41. Reina, Vincent, and Claudia Aiken. "Fair Housing: Asian and Latino/a Experiences, Perceptions, and Strategies Fair Housing." RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences, vol. 7, no. 2, 2021, https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2021.7.2.10.

42. Guide to American Rescue Plan Funding That Impacts People Experiencing Homelessness. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2021). https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/a-guide-to-american-rescue-plan-funding-that-impacts-people-experiencing-homelessness/

43. Title V – Federal Surplus Property For Use to Assist the Homeless. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/titlev

44.	Implementing Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2014). https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Implementing_Housing_First_in_Permanent_Supportive_Housing.pdf

45.	National HIV/AIDS Strategy (2022-2025) | HIV.gov

46.	Current Statistics on the Prevalence and Characteristics of People Experiencing Homelessness in the United States. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2011). https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/homelessness_programs_resources/hrc-factsheet-current-statistics-prevalence-characteristics-homelessness.pdf

47.	Mental Health and Substance Use Among Adults with Disabilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, February–March 2021 | MMWR (cdc.gov)

48.	"Innovation Models: CMS Innovation Center." Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, https://innovation.cms.gov/innovation-models#views=models.

49.	Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government. The White House. (2021). https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/12/13/executive-order-on-transforming-federal-customer-experience-and-service-delivery-to-rebuild-trust-in-government/

50.	What Are Peer Recovery Support Services? Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2009). https://store.samhsa.gov/product/What-Are-Peer-Recovery-Support-Services-/SMA09-4454

51.	"NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index (HOI)." National Association of Home Builders, https://www.nahb.org/news-and-economics/housing-economics/indices/housing-opportunity-index.

52.	Equal Access in Accordance with an Individual's Gender Identity in Community Planning and Development Programs. Federal Register. (2016). https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/09/21/2016-22589/equal-access-in-accordance-with-an-individuals-gender-identity-in-community-planning-and-development

53.	COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Housing Problem-Solving. U.S. Department of Housing and Development. (n.d.). https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Housing-Problem-Solving.pdf

54.	Adopting Housing Problem-Solving Approaches with Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Exit Strategies. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2019). https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Housing-Problem-Solving-July-2019.pdf

55.	Princeton University. (2018). National Estimates: Eviction in America. Eviction Lab. https://evictionlab.org/national-estimates/#:~:text=National%20Estimates%3A%20Eviction%20in%20America%20%20,%20%207.04%20%2013%20more%20rows%20

56.	Seattle Women's Commission, & Housing Justice Project of the King County Bar Association. (2018). LOSING HOME The Human Cost of Eviction in Seattle. https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SeattleWomensCommission/LosingHome_9-18-18.pdf

57.	Children's Bureau. (2021). Foster Care Statistics 2019 - Child Welfare. Child Welfare Information Gateway. https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/foster.pdf

58. Dworsky , A., Napolitano , L., & Courtney , M. (2013). Homelessness During the Transition From Foster Care to Adulthood. American Journal of Public Health. https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301455

59. Fargo J, Metraux S, Byrne T, Munley E, Montgomery AE, Jones H, et al. Prevalence and risk of homelessness among US veterans. Prev Chronic Dis 2012;9:110112. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd9.110112

60. VA Homeless Programs. (2022). 2021-2025 Homeless Programs Office Strategic Plan. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/strategic-plan.asp

61. Homelessness in America: Focus on Veterans. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2018). https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Homelessness_in_America._Focus_on_Veterans.pdf

62. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2016, July). Women Veterans and Homelessness. VA National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans. https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/nchav/resources/docs/veteran-populations/women/Women-Veterans-and-Homelessness-July-2016.pdf

63. Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships. The White House. (2021). https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/26/memorandum-on-tribal-consultation-and-strengthening-nation-to-nation-relationships/

64. Memorandum of Understanding: Action Plan Regarding Interagency Coordination and Collaboration for Setting a Path to End Homelessness among American Indians and Alaska Natives. U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2016). https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/AI_AN_MOU_Action_Plan_03_01_16.pdf

65. Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America. Chapin Hall. (2017, November). https://voicesofyouthcount.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ChapinHall_VoYC_1-Pager_Final_111517.pdf

66. National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality. The White House. (n.d.). https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-Strategy-on-Gender-Equity-and-Equality.pdf

67. "Aging and Disability Networks." ACL Administration for Community Living, 28 June 2018, https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks.

68. Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH): Defining Chronically Homeless Final Rule. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2015). https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4847/hearth-defining-chronically-homeless-final-rule/

69. What is a Continuum of Care? U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2014). https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/programs/continuum-of-care-coc-program/program-administration/general/what-is-a-continuum-of-care/

70. Subject: Notice Establishing Additional Requirements for a Continuum of Care Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2017). https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/17-01CPDN.PDF

71. Bureau of Justice Assistance. (n.d.). Responding to Homelessness: Strategies for Law Enforcement and Partners. U.S. Department of Justice. https://bja.ojp.gov/program/pmhc/responding-homelessness#ifayeh1

72. CTI model - critical time intervention. Center for the Advancement of Critical Time Intervention. (n.d.). https://www.criticaltime.org/cti-model/

73. Cultural Competence In Health And Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). https://npin.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence

74. Yeager, K. A., & Bauer-Wu, S. (2013). Cultural humility: Essential foundation for clinical researchers. Applied Nursing Research, 26(4), 251–256. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apnr.2013.06.008

75. Culturally appropriate definition. Law Insider. (n.d.) https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/culturally-appropriate

76. "Information and Technical Assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act ." The Americans with Disabilities Act , https://www.ada.gov/index.html#mainContent.

77. "Disability Competence Resources Available from the Office of Minority Health and the Medicare-Medicaid." U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, 2017, https://www.hhs.gov/guidance/document/disability-competence-resources-available-office-minority-health-and-medicare-medicaid.

78. Disparity. Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/disparity

79. H.R.1620 - Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021. Congress.Gov. (n.d.). https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620

80. Emergency Solutions Grants Program FAQs. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/esg/faqs

81. What is Racial Equity? Race Forward. (2021). https://www.raceforward.org/about/what-is-racial-equity-key-concepts#:~:text=Equity%20Ensures%20that%20outcomes%20in%20the%20conditions%20of,for%20all.%20Equity%20is%20a%20measure%20of%20justice.

82. Fair Market Rent. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-leasing-rental-assistance-requirements/fmr/

83. Harm Reduction. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.). https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction

84. HUD's Definition of Homelessness: Resources and Guidance. U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hudexchange.info/news/huds-definition-of-homelessness-resources-and-guidance/

85. McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program. Federal Register. (n.d.). https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/03/17/2016-06073/mckinney-vento-education-for-homeless-children-and-youths-program

86. 42 USC 254B: Health Centers. Office of the Law Revision Counsel United States Code. (n.d.). http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid%3AUSC-prelim-title42-section254b&num=0&edition=prelim

87. Runaway and Homeless Youth. Federal Register. (2016, December 20). https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/20/2016-30241/runaway-and-homeless-youth

88. Homeless Management Information System. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/

89.   Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Housing-First-Permanent-Supportive-Housing-Brief.pdf

90.   COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Housing Problem-Solving. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021, October). https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6494/covid19-homeless-system-response-housing-problem-solving/

91.   What is Human Trafficking? The United States Department of Justice. (2020). https://www.justice.gov/humantrafficking/what-is-human-trafficking

92.   Memorandum on Advancing the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Persons Around the World. The White House. (2021). https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/02/04/memorandum-advancing-the-human-rights-of-lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-queer-and-intersex-persons-around-the-world/

93.   "Emergency Shelter Learning Series." National Alliance to End Homelessness, Apr. 2022, https://endhomelessness.org/resource/emergency-shelter/.

94.   Sevelius, Jae M, et al. "Research with Marginalized Communities: Challenges to Continuity During the COVID-19 Pandemic." National Library of Medicine, Springer US, July 2020, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7228861/#:~:text=Examples%20of%20marginalized%20populations%20include%2C%20but%20are%20not,power%20relationships%20between%20social%20groups%20%5B%201%20%5D.

95.   What Is Medical Respite Care? National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (n.d.). https://nhchc.org/clinical-practice/medical-respite-care/

96.   NIMBY (Not in My Backyard). The Homeless Hub. (n.d.). https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/affordable-housing/nimby-not-my-backyard

97.   "Home-ARP Program Fact Sheet: Non-Congregate Shelter." U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/CPD/documents/HOME-ARP-Noncongregate-Shelter-Fact-Sheet.pdf.

98.   COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Engaging Individuals with Lived Expertise. U.S. Department of Housing and Human Services. (2021). https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/6432/covid19-homeless-system-response-engaging-individuals-with-lived-expertise/

99.   Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.) https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-program-components/permanent-housing/permanent-supportive-housing/

100.   Person Centered Planning. Administration for Community Living. (2021). https://acl.gov/programs/consumer-control/person-centered-planning

101.   Point-In-Time Count. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2022). https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc/pit-count

102.   "Primary Care - Glossary." HealthCare.gov, https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/primary-care/.

103.   "Homeless System Response: System Planning: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention." U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-System-Planning-A-Framework-for-Homelessness-Prevention.pdf.

104. What is Public Health? CDC Foundation. (n.d.). https://www.cdcfoundation.org/what-public-health

105. HUD's Public Housing Program. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2021). https://www.hud.gov/topics/rental_assistance/phprog

106. Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing. National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2014). https://endhomelessness.org/resource/core-components-of-rrh/

107. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU v. TRUSTMARK NATIONAL BANK (U.S. Department of Justice 2021).

108. Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Federal Programs. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. (n.d.). https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/health-health-care/addressing-social-determinants-health-federal-programs

109. HUD Releases 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2022). https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/hud_no_22_022

110. Systemic Racism. Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/systemic-racism

111. Transitional Housing. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-program-components/transitional-housing/

112. SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2014). https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884

113. For purposes of the PIT count, who does HUD consider "unsheltered" homeless? For example, would an individual or family sleeping in a garage be counted as unsheltered? Alternatively, would an individual or family sleeping in a friend's kitchen be counted as unsheltered? U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2014). https://www.hudexchange.info/faqs/reporting-systems/homelessness-data-exchange-hdx/pit/pit-general/for-purposes-of-the-point-in-time-pit-count-who-does-hud-consider/

114. Determining Homeless Status of Youth. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (n.d.). https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Determining-Homeless-Status-of-Youth.pdf

Photos are courtesy of Getty Images, Shutterstock, and the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County.

THE 100 YEAR CHAMBER
ANNIVERSARY

GREATER TALLAHASSEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

May 11, 2023

Chairman Nick Maddox
Vice Chairman Carolyn Cummings
Commissioner Christian Caban
Commissioner Rick Minor
Commissioner David O'Keefe
Commissioner Bill Proctor
Commissioner Brian Welch

Attached please find the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce – Homelessness: Statement and Research Results.

This information is being submitted for the purpose of consideration during the Tuesday, May 23rd Workshop on Addressing Homelessness. Representatives from the Chamber will be attendance for this important meeting.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting me at 850-509-0794.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration,

[signature]

Suzanne M. Dick
President/CEO
Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce

CC: County Administrator, Vince Long
        Special Projects Coordinator, Shington Lamy

Homelessness
Statement and Research Results

THE ● CHAMBER
GREATER TALLAHASSEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

May 1, 2023

The role of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber's (The Chamber) Business Advocacy Committee is to identify major issues facing our community and engage in meaningful advocacy efforts. Based on concerns raised by our members, homelessness and its impact on local business operations and employees, The Chamber surveyed member companies to better understand impacts to the business community. Based on the survey results from more than 220 respondents outlined below, the Chamber strongly supports the need for solutions, including an evaluation of current and/or new policy.

The Chamber believes it is essential for government, non-profit organizations, and community stakeholders to collaborate to develop effective and sustainable solutions to homelessness. This collaboration should focus on addressing the root causes of homelessness, such as lack of affordable housing, mental health and substance abuse issues, poverty, and unemployment. At the same time, this collaboration should recognize that the ability to operate a business in a safe manner is becoming more difficult. As reflected in this survey, the search for effective solutions must recognize the immediate need to assist and protect local businesses and their employees and customers from disruptive and threatening activity.

We care about the needs of every individual in our community and will continue to work with homeless service providers as we examine this issue, analyze data and trends, and receive input from our members.

Overview of Survey Findings:

- Nearly **60%** of the respondents indicated the homeless situation in Tallahassee has risen and have experienced negative impacts to their business or business practices such as hours of business, trash and litter, safety protocols, fewer clients, etc.

- Nearly **40%** of the respondents have taken specific measures to deter theft or damage due to homelessness.

- More than **55%** of the respondents indicated employees or customers have been concerned about their safety as a result of homeless individuals in the vicinity of the business.

- More than **62%** of the respondents indicated they have participated in support efforts to help the homeless population.

- Nearly **40%** of the respondents have called the police or crisis hotline due to homeless incidents in the past year.

- Nearly **80%** of the respondents indicated it would be helpful to have a digital or printed resource with information on what to do and whom to call in these situations.

- Nearly all of the respondents were familiar with at least one of the organizations working to assist homeless individuals: Big Bend Continuum of Care, Capital City Youth Services, Family Promise of the Big Bend-HOPE Community, and The Kearney Center.

Location of Survey Respondents

Bar chart showing Location of Survey Respondents:
- Downtown: ~28%
- Midtown: ~16%
- Northeast: ~24%
- Northwest: ~6%
- Southeast: ~6%
- Southwest: ~6%

(Axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%)

Posted May 17, 2023
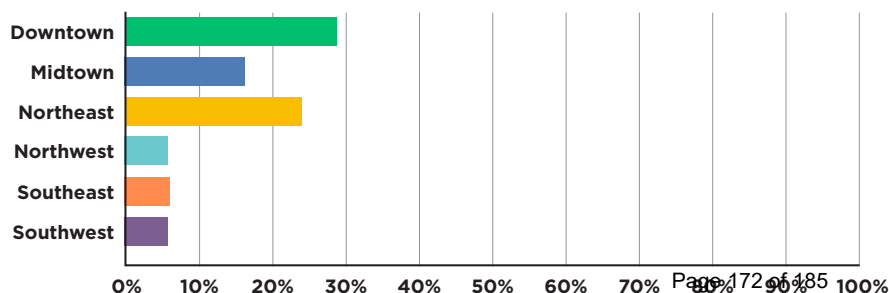
The following provides a sampling of individual responses:

- "It's one of the toughest issues there is, but the impact on the viability of cities is immense."

- "This is a dire situation that has gotten worse over the years. We need a lot more resources and service providers to be able to serve the ever-growing population."

- "I have lived in big cities with serious issues; given TLH's size and spirit, we should be able to do better than many other jurisdictions."

- "We need to stop trying to hide this problem and invest instead into tackling it head on with compassion and determination."

- "I realize that some are homeless by choice, but there is a large majority that are homeless due to job layoffs, mental health issues, and more. Our community and our country is lacking in providing affordable mental health services."

- "Homelessness is a symptom of a greater failure of the community to provide for its least vulnerable. Do not focus on it without addressing the raft of multiple issues that create poverty and deny opportunity to the vulnerable in our community."

- "Success in reducing homelessness in Tallahassee is dependent on a deep and meaningful collaboration of government, private, and nonprofit sectors."

- "We need a combined plan or direction for the business community and the members of the Chamber that we want to provide so many dollars/man hours of support for both sides a.) the organizations/nonprofits that support those that are homeless that want to improve their lives/circumstances. b.) As well as how we can support our officers and giving them the tools they need to handle the part of the homeless community that doesn't want to improve and those whom negatively affect residences and businesses in our community."

- "Instead of doling out what we think they need, we need to ask THEM what they need. Accessing benefits and services is too complicated! We can't punish and shame people into hope and self-respect. CareerSource and FarmShare are great examples of simply providing services to whoever asks."

- "We better do something because our city will become liable if it doesn't reasonably enforce existing laws. Property owners and employers are feeling more and more liable themselves for the safety of their employees; this is not what they have voted and paid taxes for."

- "Very difficult issue but is no doubt detracting from and making our community less attractive to those who may want to move here to start families and careers. Also doesn't help create a community where people want to stay. It's a problem, that has no easy solution. But a solution is needed, badly."

- "I know this is a nationwide issue but we need to find a way to address it before it gets out of hand even more."

- "So many people have severe mental health issues, but there are not many feasible resources to provide the necessary treatment. The second barrier towards employment and independence is typically a criminal background, especially when combined with a disability that also limits opportunities. Having more "second chance" type of resources would be a big help."

- "Police enforcement of trespassing laws would help. Allowing homeless people to sit at every corner of town and solicit money from drivers needs to stop. That encourages the population to grow which in turn causes them to seek overnight/daytime locations to hide/rest. I have no problem with shelters (and in fact encourage the usage), but many for whatever reason do not go to the shelters. Downtown/midtown is becoming increasingly dangerous because of this circumstance."

- "Quit giving into the panhandling and they will move on. Tallahassee has become the place to go if you are homeless. Sad, but true."

- "People standing in the medians, sidewalks, and roadways for ANY reason should be illegal. It is NOT safe and is intimidating to drivers and occupants of vehicles. In addition, some of these areas which are frequent "panhandling areas" are in or right next to residential neighborhoods."

- "Solutions would include additional mental support to community needs and support of our law enforcement as they have been told hands-off, thus the homeless are allowed to make a mess, camp out, and make the rules how they wish. The tax payers are held to higher standards and would not be allowed to impact their homes/neighborhoods with this freedom."

- "Tallahassee should not be the dumping ground for the State of Florida homeless problems, as the other cities brag about sending them to us. This is something we should lead on building solutions and not allowing camping grounds in our greenspaces."

- "Better support and understanding of both sides of the homelessness situation in Tallahassee. Meaning how we can support officers in dealing with the negative side of homelessness and also how we can better support programs/nonprofits that are helping/supporting the homeless in our community."

HAMMERHEAD
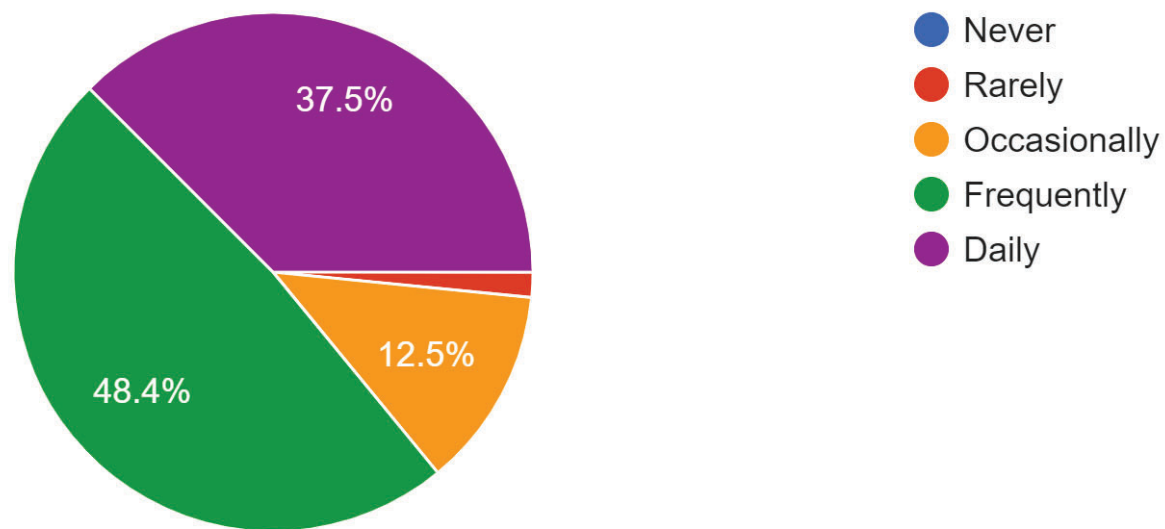## COMMUNICATIONS

Tallahassee
DOWNTOWN
— EST 1824 —

Survey Results
February 9, 2023

Respondents: Homelessness is prevalent

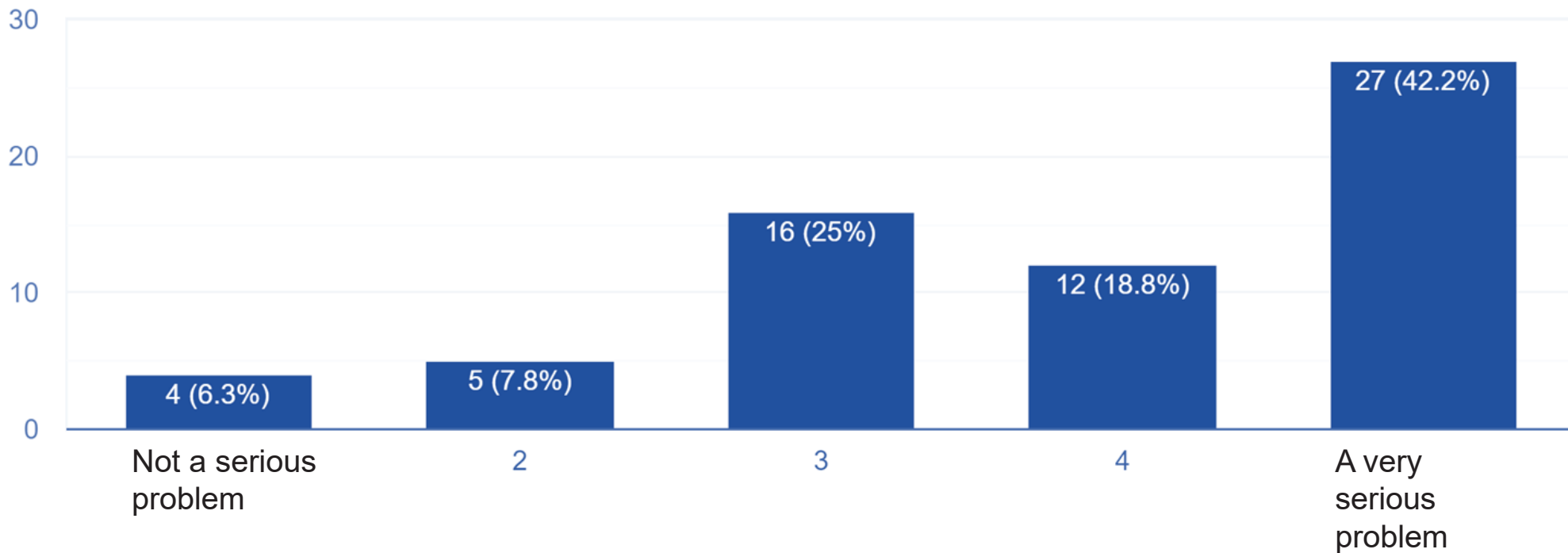How often do you encounter people experiencing homelessness in Downtown Tallahassee?

64 responses

And people downtown are worried about the impact to their businesses.

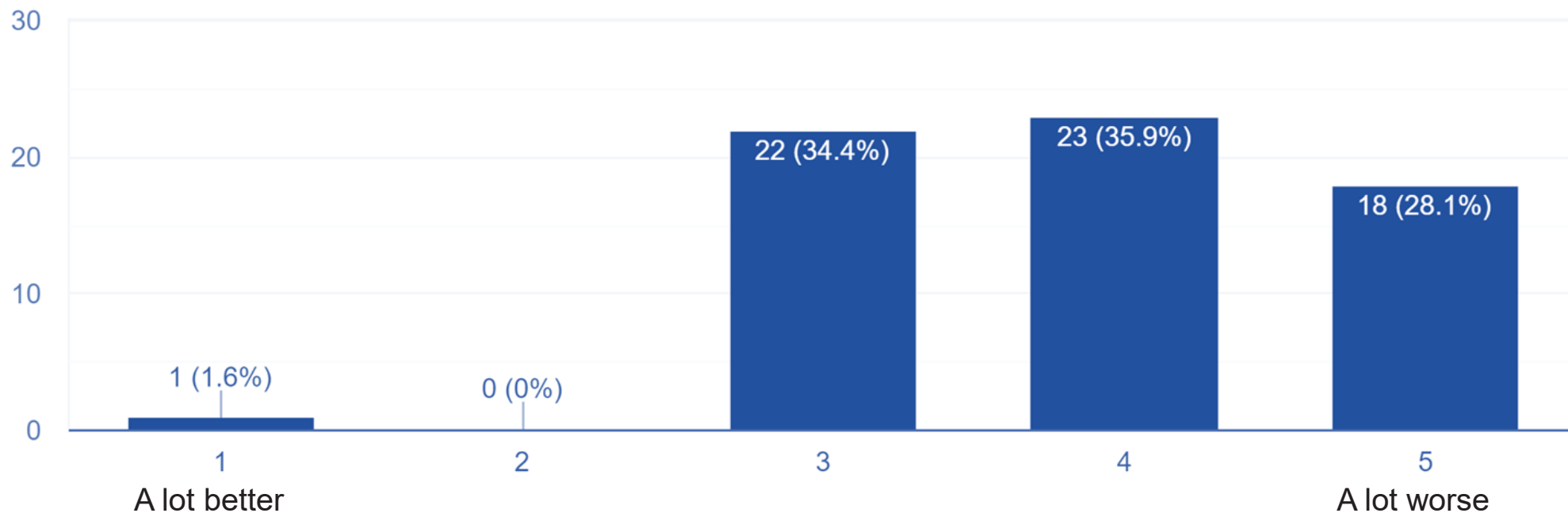In terms of the impact on your business, do you think the homeless situation Downtown is:

64 responses

Most respondents believe the situation is getting worse.

In the past 6 months, do you think the homeless situation Downtown is getting:

64 responses

Most respondents don't know who to call or how to handle non-emergency situations.

How confident are you with knowing who to call when you encounter a non-emergency situation involving a person experiencing homelessness?
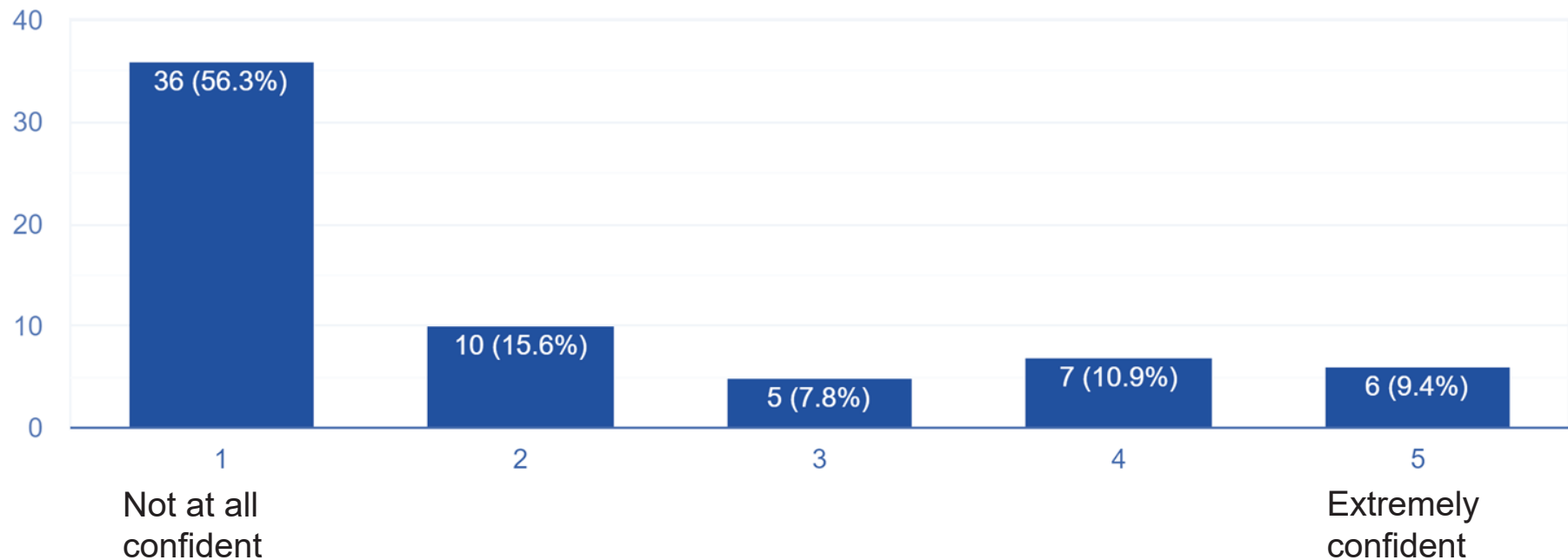
64 responses

Or when to call 911.

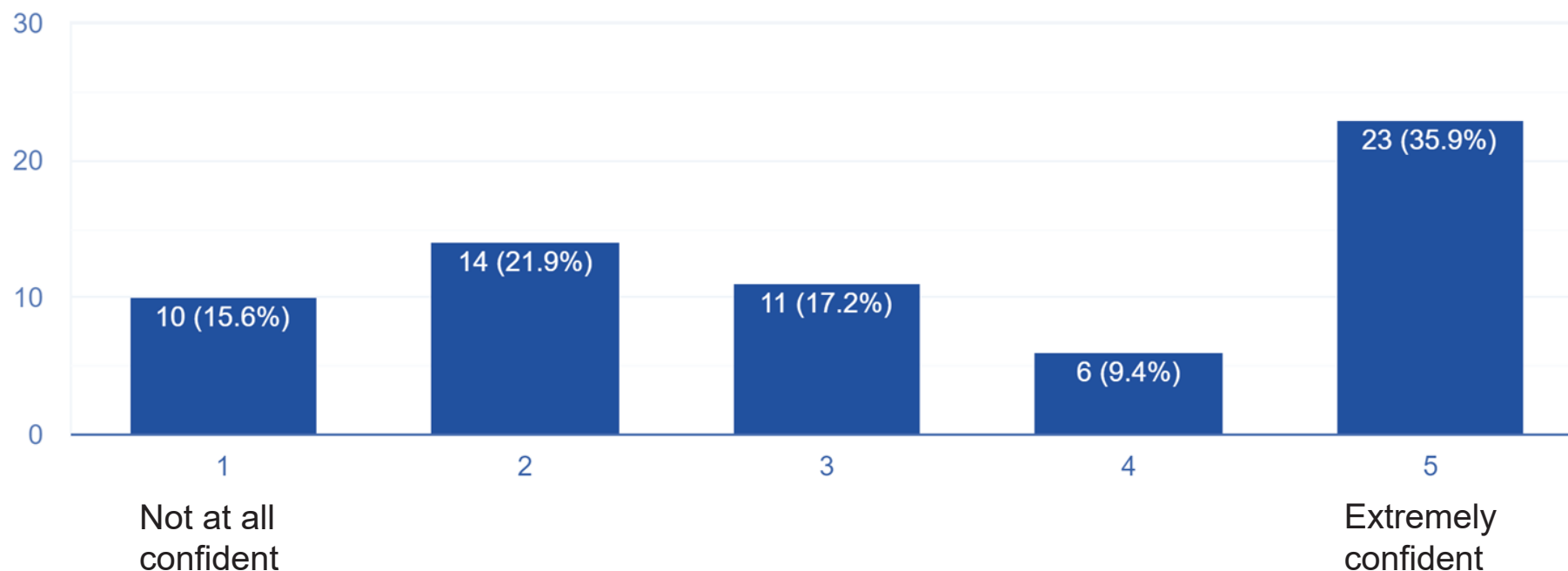How confident are you with when to call 911 involving people experiencing homelessness?
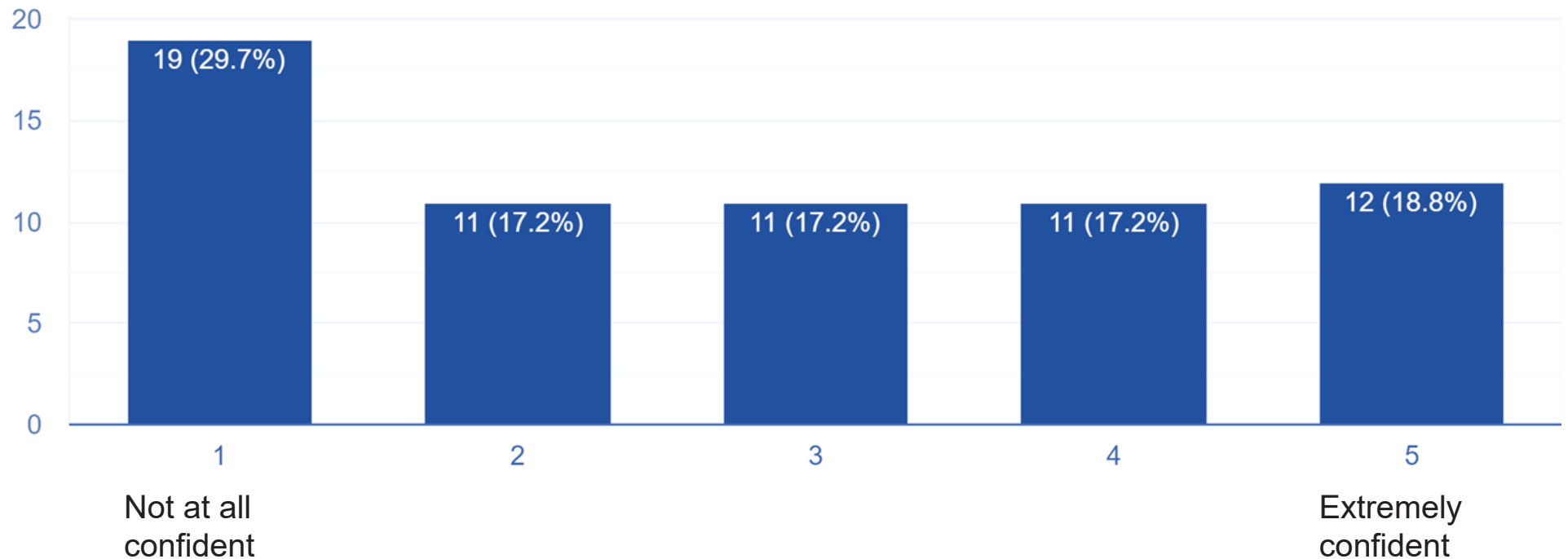
64 responses

There is mixed confidence on requests for money.

How confident are you with knowing what to do when someone experiencing homelessness asks for money?
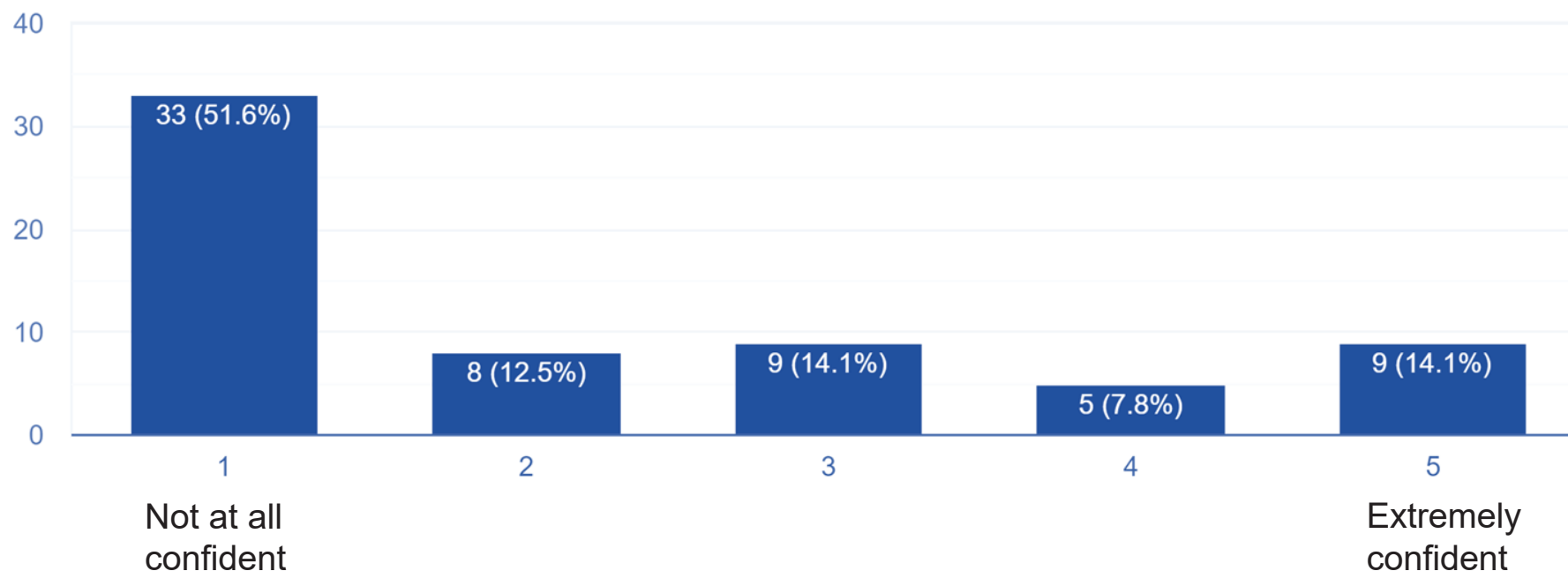
64 responses

There is less confidence on helpful resources.

How confident are you with where to refer individuals experiencing homelessness when they ask for help?
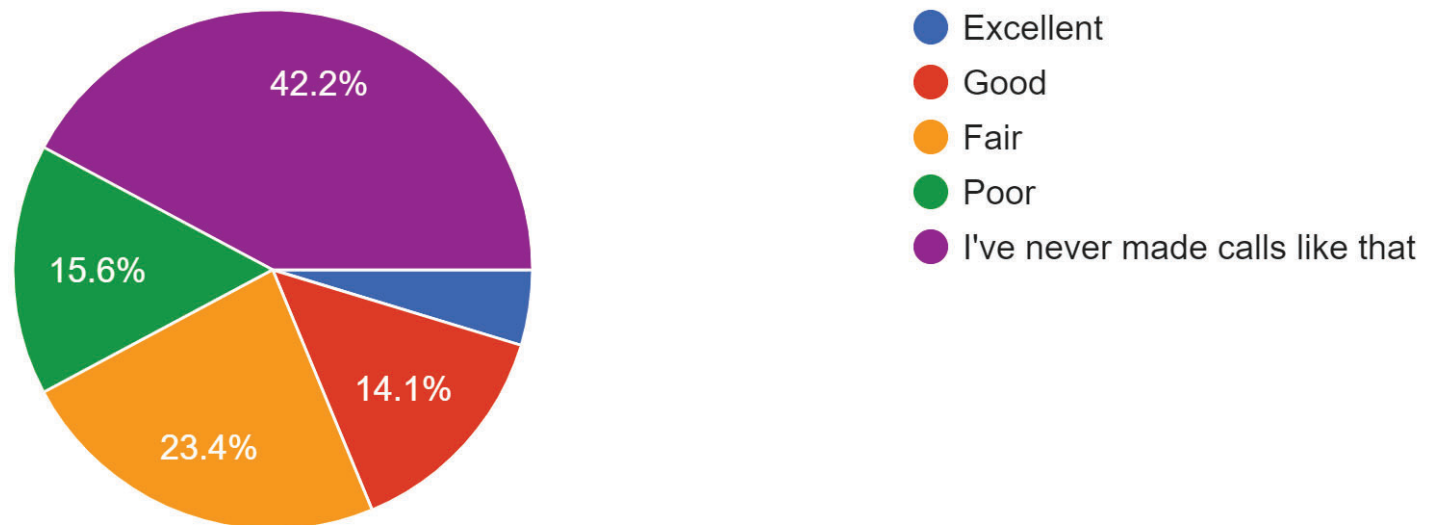
64 responses

Not at all confident   Extremely confident

     Posted May 17, 2023

Most respondents either don't involve law enforcement or have a poor experience when they do.

How would you rate the response to calls you've previously made to law enforcement or local government regarding issues with the homeless population?
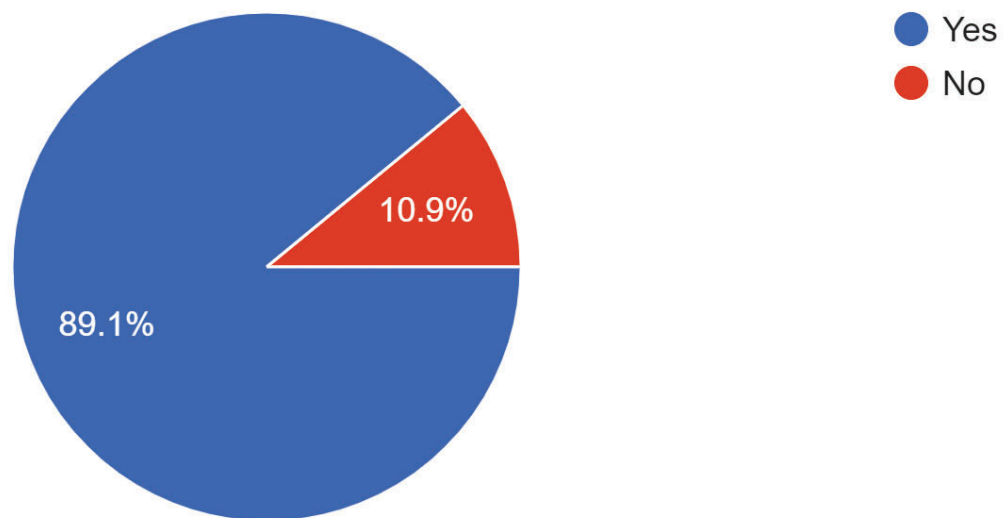
64 responses

Legend:
- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- I've never made calls like that

Pie chart values: 42.2%, 15.6%, 23.4%, 14.1%

A resource guide can help address the awareness gap.

Would it be helpful to you to have a digital or printed resource that summarized what to do and who to call in these situations?

64 responses

- ● Yes
- ● No

89.1%

10.9%

Key areas for better understanding

How to interact compassionately

How to respond to requests for money, food, etc.

How to handle non-emergency situations

How to handle non-emergency situations

How to protect property

What is law enforcement currently doing?

FOR YOUR SAFETY AND THEIRS, PLEASE DO NOT GIVE TO PERSONS IN THE ROADWAY.

CONTRIBUTE TO SOLUTIONS

BIGBENDCOC.ORG

Posted May 17, 2023