



State and Local Governments

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness *proposes a set of strategies that call upon the federal government to work in partnership with state and local governments, as well as the nonprofit, private, and philanthropic sectors to prevent and end homelessness. Through collaboration at all levels of government, the nation can harness public resources and build on the innovations that have been demonstrated at the local level and in cities nationwide to employ cost effective, comprehensive solutions so that everyone—from the most capable to the most vulnerable—has the opportunity to reach their full potential.*

The Plan challenges state and local governments to:

- Encourage and utilize coordinating bodies like State Interagency Councils to serve as a bridge between federal, state, and local efforts.
- Evaluate how state governments can better support local units of government. The effective use of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and other entitlement program funds can and will have a tremendous impact on our collective ability to reduce the number of people who are at risk of or are experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure the adoption and implementation of best practices like investments in permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing for families.
- Involve citizens—including people with firsthand experience with homelessness—and the private sector—businesses, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, foundations, and volunteers—in efforts to prevent and end homelessness.
- Review budget processes to determine avenues for recognizing savings across partners resulting from interventions to prevent and end homelessness.
- Develop and use HMIS systems to collect data on programs targeted at homelessness and plan for outcomes.
- Prepare for Medicaid expansion to effectively enroll people who experience or are most at risk of experiencing homelessness. Health Reform will increase Medicaid eligibility for many more families and individuals by creating a more uniform minimum eligibility threshold and allowing adults without dependent children to enroll. This should include systems to reach out to, engage, and enroll newly eligible people in health care insurance benefits.
- For states and communities with a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness, assess the progress being made toward the Plan's goals and identify opportunities to align with *Opening Doors*.

USICH relied on the advice and support of hundreds of mayors and staff from state governments, as well as providers, advocates, faith-based organizations, businesses, and philanthropy to develop this Plan. We will need their support and partnership to achieve these ambitious goals.