



Tools that Support the Implementation of Home, Together

To end homelessness, every community needs to be able to implement a systemic response that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or, if it can't be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and one-time experience. And that response must endure for the long term. These resources will help you as you work toward the end of homelessness in the United States.

Ensure Homelessness is a Rare Experience

Objective 1.1: Collaboratively Build Lasting Systems that End Homelessness

To achieve the goal of ending homelessness, leaders from all levels of government and the private, non-profit, and faith sectors must come together.

Building momentum behind a common vision

- Federal criteria and benchmarks for ending [Veteran homelessness](#), [chronic homelessness](#), [family homelessness](#) and [youth homelessness](#) will help you focus on the components of your system and how to measure their effectiveness.
- [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness: A Coordinated Community Response](#) can help you understand the overall model for a strong system response.
- [10 Strategies to End Chronic Homelessness](#) and [10 Strategies to End Veteran Homelessness](#) provide actionable steps you can take to get the ball rolling.
- [Family Connection](#) can help you envision your system for ending family homelessness.

Understanding the size and scope of the problem

- [Homelessness in America](#) will help you understand who is at risk of homelessness and who experiences homelessness among individuals, families with children, unaccompanied youth, Veterans, and people experiencing chronic homelessness.
- [Using Homelessness and Housing Needs Data to Tailor and Drive Local Solutions](#) will help you understand the range of data that is available and how to use it to respond to different needs in your community.

Driving implementation

- [The Value of Lived Experience in the Work to End Homelessness](#) and [Beyond Mere Principle: Strategies for Truly Partnering with People who Have the Lived Experience in our Work](#) can help you deepen your partnership with people with expertise through lived experience.
- [The Evidence Behind Approaches that Drive an End to Homelessness](#) can help support implementation of the most effective practices.

- [Emerging Strategies for Addressing Racial Inequities in Our Efforts to End Homelessness](#) can help you create a roadmap to more equitable outcomes.
- [Strengthening Systems for Ending Rural Homelessness: Promising Practices and Considerations](#) provides an initial set of strategies you can use to take advantage of your community's unique strengths.
- [Federal Programs that Can Help Communities End Youth Homelessness](#) can help you understand the range of federal programs available to help implement a coordinated community response.
- [Federal Funding Tool for Addressing Homelessness in Rural Communities](#) provides an easy way for rural communities to identify a wide array of federal programs and resources that can support their work to prevent and end homelessness.

Objective 1.2: Increase Capacity and Strengthen Practices to Prevent Housing Crises and Homelessness

Efforts to prevent homelessness are not yet well researched and the strategies are still being innovated and tested. We've pulled together some resources to help as you learn and explore.

Reducing the prevalence of risk of housing crises

- The Center for Evidence-Based Solutions to Homelessness' recently published [Homelessness Prevention: Review of the Evidence](#) includes citations to many recent studies. You can also [watch a webinar about the report](#).
- HUD's LGBTQ Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative [has generated several planning resources](#).
- Safe Housing Partnerships [has resources for preventing homelessness among victims of domestic and sexual violence](#).

Reducing the risk of homelessness while households are engaged with or transitioning from systems

Child Welfare

- [Building Child Welfare and Housing Partnerships to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness: Nashville's Alternative Response](#), from the YHDP team in Nashville, TN, shares current and planned efforts to build an alternative response as part of their coordinated community plan.
- [Building Partnerships to Support Stable Housing for Child Welfare-Involved Families and Youth](#) reviews how child welfare professionals can collaborate with affordable housing and homelessness services to help families.
- [Addressing Housing Instability in Child Welfare](#), by CSH, summarizes steps state policy leaders and communities can take to optimize the Family First Prevention Services Act and Five-Year State Plan to keep families facing homelessness together and housed.
- [Youth Homelessness in Los Angeles County: Innovation with Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and Coordinated Entry Systems](#) highlights pilots underway in Los Angeles.
- Building Capacity to Evaluate Interventions for Youth/Young Adults with Child Welfare Involvement At-Risk of Homelessness, from HHS, [provides planning and other resources for developing interventions for youth with child welfare involvement](#) who are most likely to experience homelessness.

Justice System

- [Preventing Youth Homelessness: Partnerships Between Homelessness Services and Juvenile Justice Systems](#) spotlights two communities that are leveraging partnerships to disrupt and end the cycle of homelessness among youth and young adults.
- [Re-Entry Starts Here: A Guide for Youth in Long-Term Juvenile Corrections and Treatment Programs](#), from DOJ, provides guidance to young people on housing and other re-entry issues.
- [Connecting People Returning from Incarceration with Housing and Homelessness Assistance](#) provides ways for corrections agencies, re-entry service providers, state and local governments, and community partners to help people exiting the criminal justice system connect with housing resources.

Health Care

- [Case Studies: Connecting Supportive Housing and Health Systems to End Chronic Homelessness among People with Disabilities](#) highlight innovative community partnerships between the homelessness services system and health systems.
- [Partnering with Hospitals to End Homelessness](#) provides some of the ways hospitals can work to help prevent and end homelessness.

TANF

- [Enhancing Family Stability: A Guide for Assessing Housing Status and Coordinating with Local Homelessness Programs for TANF Agencies](#), by the Office of Family Assistance in HHS, encourages TANF agencies to add housing status questions as part of their typical intake process.

Targeting assistance to prevent housing crises from escalating into homelessness

- [Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Exit](#) clarifies the terms prevention, diversion, and rapid exit, explains how they differ from each other, and offers considerations for implementation.
- [Adopting Housing Problem-Solving Approaches with Prevention, Diversion, and Rapid Exit Strategies](#) helps support the effective implementation of homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid exit strategies.
- Barbara Poppe and Associates worked with Your Way Home in Montgomery County, PA, to help develop a community-wide homelessness and eviction prevention strategy called [Unlocking Doors to Homelessness Prevention](#).
- [Eviction Prevention: A Conversation with Communities](#) provides insight from three communities that are undertaking eviction prevention activities.

Ensure Homelessness is a Brief Experience

Objective 2.1: Identify and Engage All People Experiencing Homelessness as Quickly As Possible

It is important to quickly identify and engage individuals and families that fall into homelessness to ensure that experience is brief. Communities can use coordinated, housing-focused outreach to people who are unsheltered, in-reach to people in institutional settings, and data from multiple systems, to identify and engage individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Identify every individual and family experiencing homelessness

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

- [Core Elements of Effective Street Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness](#) identifies universal elements of effective street outreach that cut across various funding streams, and which are broadly applicable to a variety of communities, geographic contexts, and sub-populations.
- [Lessons Learned from SAMHSA’s Expert Panel on the Role of Outreach and Engagement](#) details lessons learned from a 2015 panel, hosted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at HHS.
- [Strengthening Systems for Ending Rural Homelessness: Promising Practices and Considerations](#) explores the unique challenges of building effective rural homelessness response systems and provides an initial set of strategies communities can use to take advantage of their unique strengths.
- [Promising Practices for Counting Youth Experiencing Homelessness in the Point-in-Time Counts](#) highlights several strategies and efforts communities have implemented to better count youth experiencing homelessness.

Collect information from hospitals, jails, schools, the child welfare system, hotlines and 2-1-1, and other community-based programs

- [Interagency Data Disclosure: A Tip Sheet on Interagency Collaboration](#) was developed by ED to help state and local education agency homeless education programs and housing and human service agencies better coordinate services.
- [Enhancing Family Stability: A Guide for Assessing Housing Status and Coordinating with Local Homelessness Programs for TANF Agencies](#) was developed by HHS for TANF agencies.
- [Homelessness Screening Clinical Reminder tool](#) was developed by the VA for use with Veterans accessing health care services.
- [Sample Housing and Homelessness Status Assessment Questions](#) provides a summary of Housing Assessment questions.
- [Crosswalk of Key Federally Funded Child and Youth Homelessness Contacts](#) makes it easier for stakeholders that serve children and youth experiencing homelessness that receive federal funding to know how to contact each other.
- [Q&A: How Connecticut Matched Its Medicaid and Homelessness Data to Improve Health through Housing](#) discusses the success and challenges of HMIS-Medicaid data sharing.

Build and maintain active lists of people experiencing homelessness and track progress toward housing placement

- [Master List Template and Benchmark Generation Tool](#) provides communities with templates to help develop or improve their “by-name” list in order to meet the criteria and benchmarks for ending Veteran homelessness.
- [Reducing Homelessness in Real Time: A Measure That Matters](#) describes data tools used by Built for Zero communities to end Veteran and chronic homelessness.

Objective 2.2: Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter or other Temporary Accommodations to All Who Need It

Emergency shelter and other temporary accommodations are the critical front line of communities' responses to homelessness, helping all people who seek it meet basic survival needs for shelter, food, clothing, and personal hygiene, while also helping them resolve crises and swiftly secure permanent housing opportunities. These resources can help you make sure your shelters are working effectively to make connections to permanent housing.

Providing access to low barrier emergency shelter

- [Key Considerations for Implementing Emergency Shelter within an Effective Crisis Response System](#) discusses how shelter can promote dignity and respect for every person, divert people from the homelessness service system when possible, foster low-barrier access to emergency services, and serve as a platform for housing access.
- [Using Shelter Strategically to End Homelessness](#) provides four things to consider as you assess the effectiveness of the shelter services in your community.
- The [Emergency Shelter Learning Series](#) is a collection of webinars and resources from the National Alliance to End Homelessness focused on explaining the philosophy and practice of effective emergency shelter.
- [How Our Shelter Began Focusing on Permanent Housing and Started Ending Homelessness for Our Clients](#) describes how one shelter run by Northern Virginia Family Service shifted to a housing-focused model.
- [National Health Care for the Homeless Council's webpage](#) links to several resources that reflect what shelter and medical respite providers have learned about providing shelter that is respectful, safe, and healthy for all who seek it.
- The [Recovery Housing Policy Brief](#) on HUD-funded Recovery Housing programs, aims to provide clear guidance regarding the expected and effective operation of substance use-specific services, peer support, and physical design features to support individuals and families on a particular path to recovery from addiction.
- [Caution is Needed When Considering "Sanctioned Encampments" or "Safe Zones"](#) provides some guidance for communities working to address the immediate safety and living conditions of people who are unsheltered, as they consider sanctioned encampments or safe zones as a part of their response.

Providing access to service-enriched, longer-term temporary accommodations when needed and appropriate

- [Role of Long-Term, Congregate Transitional Housing in Ending Homelessness](#) was developed by NAEH and USICH in partnership with VA, HHS, HUD, and DOJ's Office of Violence Against Women.
- [Guide to Reviewing Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Projects within the CoC Competition](#) describes how projects serving victims and survivors of domestic violence, including transitional housing projects, can fit into an effective community system.
- [Case Studies: Connecting Supportive Housing and Health Systems to End Chronic Homelessness among People with Disabilities](#) highlight innovative community partnerships between the homelessness services system and health systems.

- [Partnering with Hospitals to End Homelessness](#) explores opportunities to partner with hospitals on medical respite programs, among other efforts to end homelessness.

Objective 2.3: Implement Coordinated Entry to Standardize Assessment and Prioritization Processes and Streamline Connections to Housing and Services

Coordinated entry processes make it possible for people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness to have their strengths and needs quickly assessed, and to be swiftly connected to appropriate, tailored housing and services within the community. Coordinated entry systems also create the opportunity to bring non-traditional partners and resources to the table as part of a broad and collaborative community effort that engages other public programs and community- and faith-based organizations in preventing and ending homelessness.

Guidance

- HUD's [Notice on Requirements for Coordinated Entry](#) outlines the updated requirements around coordinated entry that Continuums of Care were expected to meet in January 2018.
- HUD's [Coordinated Entry Core Elements](#) helps CoCs strengthen coordinated entry and comply with new HUD requirements.
- HUD's [Coordinated Entry Brief for Youth](#) includes key considerations for coordinated entry processes specifically for youth, key decisions points within the process, and community examples of coordinated entry for youth.
- HUD'S [Outline for a CoC's Coordinated Entry](#) policies and procedures document.
- VA's [Guidance on the Participation of VA Programs in Coordinated Entry](#) provides Medical Centers with expectations for how VA homelessness programs should align with and participate in coordinated entry systems.
- [Enhancing Coordinated Entry through Partnerships with Mainstream Resources and Programs](#), and accompanying sample housing assessment questions, help communities ensure their coordinated entry processes include mainstream programs and resources.
- [Coordinated Entry Processes: Building Mutual Engagement Between Schools and Continuums of Care](#) is a brief developed by ED's National Center for Homeless Education.
- [How and Why to Integrate Income & Employment-Related Questions Into Coordinated Entry Assessments \(Heartland Alliance\)](#) provides a set of sample questions communities can use to assess the employment needs and interests of people experiencing homelessness.
- Safe Housing Partnerships' [Frequently Asked Questions](#) around coordinated entry and domestic violence programs.

Community examples

- [A Coordinated Entry System for Los Angeles: Lessons from Early Implementation](#)
- [Trust and Collaboration Drive Family Coordinated Entry in Phoenix, Arizona](#)
- [Houston Pilots Coordinated Entry for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence](#)
- [Youth Homelessness in Los Angeles County: Innovation with Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice and Coordinated Entry Systems](#)

Objective 2.4: Assisting People to Move Swiftly Into Permanent Housing with Appropriate Person-Centered Services

To end homelessness as quickly and efficiently as possible, communities must focus on streamlining connections to permanent housing and providing people with the appropriate level of services to support their long-term housing stability. [Effective Housing First approaches](#), developed in response to strong evidence, include: expanding access to new and existing affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness; providing rapid re-housing to families and individuals; and providing supportive housing to people with the most intense needs.

Expand access to new and existing affordable housing for people experiencing homelessness

- [Aligning Affordable Housing Efforts with Actions to End Homelessness](#) and an accompanying [webinar](#) provide strategies and resources to support community efforts.
- [The Importance of Housing Affordability and Stability for Preventing and Ending Homelessness](#) provides research on the importance of housing affordability and stability for ending homelessness and achieving other outcomes.
- [Webinar: Making the Case for Affordable Housing and Ending Homelessness](#) provides tools for communities to build the public and political will for affordable housing.
- [Core Components of Centralized Landlord Engagement Programs and Community Landlord Engagement Initiatives](#) helps communities recruit and retain new landlords to efforts to end homelessness.

Connect people to rapid re-housing

- [Federal Resources That Can Fund Rapid Re-Housing](#) is a chart that can help communities scan for additional rapid re-housing resources.
- [Rapid Re-Housing Toolkit](#), from NAEH, helps current and potential rapid re-housing providers design and operate effective rapid re-housing programs.
- [Rapid Re-Housing for Youth](#), from HUD, provides a suite of tools and products, including a Jump Start tool, a set of FAQs, and a checklist.
- [Integrating Rapid Re-Housing and Employment](#), from Heartland Alliance, offers program-level recommendations for enhancing the design and delivery of rapid re-housing with employment supports.
- [Webinar: Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing For Survivors](#), from the National Alliance for Safe Housing, is designed for domestic violence programs who participate/want to participate in their Continuum of Care.

Connect people with the most intense needs to permanent supportive housing

- [Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing](#), from HUD, provides an overview of the principles and core components of the Housing First model.
- [Implementing Housing First in Permanent Supportive Housing](#) discusses permanent supportive housing and Housing First as tools for ending chronic homelessness.
- [Permanent Supportive Housing Evidence-Based Practices Toolkit](#), from SAMHSA, discusses how to develop new programs within mental health systems that are grounded in evidence-based practices.

- [Prioritizing Persons Experiencing Chronic Homelessness in Permanent Supportive Housing](#), from HUD, provides guidance to CoCs on the order in which eligible households should be served in CoC program funded PSH.
- [HHS Primer on How to Use Medicaid to Assist Persons who are Homeless](#) includes innovative strategies for incorporating Medicaid benefits into supportive services for people experiencing homelessness.
- [Case Studies: Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families in the Child Welfare System](#) highlights the results of a 5-year, HHS-funded demonstration program.
- [Examining Non-Time-Limited Youth Supportive Housing as Part of a Coordinated Community Response to End Homelessness](#) discusses the results of a pilot on non-time-limited supportive housing for youth.

Ensure Homelessness is a One-Time Experience

Objective 3.1: Prevent Returns to Homelessness through Connections to Adequate Services and Opportunities

To ensure that individuals and families don't fall back into homelessness, it is necessary to strengthen partnerships with, and connections to, a larger array of federal, state, local, and private programs that serve low-income households.

Mainstream Systems

- [Enlisting Mainstream Resources and Programs to End Homelessness](#) details the mainstream programs that serve low-income people, like TANF, Medicaid, and Housing Choice Vouchers, that should be partners in efforts to end homelessness.
- [Enhancing Coordinated Entry through Partnerships with Mainstream Resources and Programs](#) helps communities ensure their coordinated entry processes include mainstream programs and resources.

Employment

- [Strengthening Pathways to Employment for People Exiting Homelessness](#), from DOL and HUD, encourages communities to further strengthen pathways to employment for people exiting homelessness.
- [Webinar: Improving Employment Outcomes for Veterans Exiting Homelessness](#) goes over strategies for successful collaboration between VA homelessness programs and DOL's Homeless Veterans' Reintegration programs.
- [Coordinating Employment and Housing Services: A Strategy to Impact Family Homelessness](#) presents lessons, acknowledges challenges, and offers recommendations on how best to assist heads of families experiencing homelessness who want and need to work.
- [New Report Offers Ways to Build Better Connections Between Workforce and Homelessness Services](#), from Heartland Alliance, identifies challenges to workforce and homelessness service systems collaboration and recommends strategies for building a more effective relationship.

Education

- [Supporting In-School and Out-of-School Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) provides an overview of education and workforce programs that serve youth experiencing homelessness and suggests strategies for cross-system collaboration among these programs to support youth experiencing homelessness.

- [Case Studies: Higher Education Partnerships for Ending Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness](#) features innovative programs from institutes of higher education working to help unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness navigate the transition from high school to higher education.
- [Case Studies: Building School/Housing Partnerships for Families Experiencing Homelessness](#) features communities that are using innovative, collaborative practices to increase housing stability and school attendance of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Health Care

- [Partnering with Hospitals to End Homelessness](#) describes ways hospitals can work with you to help prevent and end homelessness and improve health and access to effective care for people who experience homelessness.
- [Innovative Models in Health and Housing \(Kresge/California Endowment\)](#) discusses the health care systems in a growing number of communities that are coming to the table to help address housing needs.
- [Case Studies: Connecting Supportive Housing and Health Systems to End Chronic Homelessness among People with Disabilities](#) highlight innovative community partnerships between the homelessness services system and health systems.
- [Case Studies: Successfully Connecting People Affected by Opioid Use to Housing](#) explores how different agencies and organizations support successful housing outcomes and recovery for people who have experienced the effects of both opioid use disorders and homelessness.

Child Welfare

- [Case Studies: Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families in the Child Welfare System](#) discusses a demonstration intended to strengthen partnerships between child welfare, housing, health care, employment, and other local systems, in order to reduce bureaucratic barriers and improve outcomes for the highest-need families.
- [Building Partnerships to Support Stable Housing for Child Welfare-Involved Families and Youth \(HHS\)](#) outlines affordable housing and homelessness services and how child welfare professionals can collaborate with those systems to help families.

Criminal Justice

- [Connecting People Returning from Incarceration with Housing and Homelessness Assistance](#) provides ways for corrections agencies, reentry service providers, state and local governments, and community partners to help people exiting the criminal justice system connect with available housing resources.

TANF

- [Enhancing Family Stability: A Guide for Assessing Housing Status and Coordinating with Local Homelessness Programs for TANF Agencies](#) is designed for state and local Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) agencies to assess and connect TANF recipients to homelessness services.

Sustain an End to Homelessness

Objective 4.1: Sustain Practices and Systems at a Scale Necessary to Respond to Future Needs

Communities across the country are demonstrating that ending homelessness is not just a worthy ambition, but a measurable, achievable goal. In order to sustain those successes, communities will need to monitor outcomes and returns to homelessness, to ensure that adequate investments into the crisis response system and into permanent housing interventions are sustained to address future needs, and to continue to refine projections to address changing needs.

- Criteria and benchmarks for ending [Veteran homelessness](#), [chronic homelessness](#), [family homelessness](#) and [youth homelessness](#) will help you focus on the components of your system and how to strengthen and measure their effectiveness.
- [Sustaining an End to Veteran Homelessness: Strategies for Institutionalizing Your Progress](#) will help you support sustained success as your community achieves the goal of ending Veteran homelessness and pursues an end to homelessness for other populations.

System improvement tools

- [Stella P](#) is a strategy and analysis tool from HUD that helps continuums of care understand how their system is performing in order to continually improve outcomes. In an upcoming release, Stella M will allow CoCs to model how resource investment decisions would affect performance goals.
- [SSVF System Assessment and Improvement Toolkit](#), from the VA, contains templates and sample policies and procedures that may be helpful for program improvement.
- [Rapid Re-Housing Performance Evaluation and Improvement Toolkit](#), from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, will help you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of rapid re-housing practice, both in individual programs and across a system. The toolkit is based on the [Rapid Re-Housing Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards](#).
- [Supportive Housing Quality Toolkit](#), from the Corporation for Supporting Housing, contains tools, templates, and project profiles designed for creating or improving supportive housing.
- [Measuring Up: Youth-level Outcomes and Measures for System Responses to Youth Homelessness](#), from Chapin Hall and Youth Collaboratory, outlines a set of outcomes and measures associated with the core outcome areas in the federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness to help communities gather more consistent outcome data.