United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

Preventing and Ending Homelessness in the United States

Since its creation by the landmark Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has coordinated the Federal response to homelessness by creating partnerships at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness in the nation while maximizing the effectiveness of the Federal government in contributing to the end of homelessness.

**Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness**

On June 22, 2010, USICH and its 19 member agencies released *Opening Doors*, the nation’s first-ever comprehensive plan to prevent and end homelessness. The plan has been amended twice, first in 2012 and most recently in June 2015. *Opening Doors* serves as a roadmap for joint action by the Federal government and its partners at the state and local levels.

*Opening Doors* has four key goals:

- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 2017
- Prevent and end Veterans’ homelessness in 2015
- Prevent and end homelessness among families, youth, and children in 2020
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

The Plan presents 66 strategies based on best practices from around the country that build upon the lesson that mainstream housing, health, education, and human service programs must be fully engaged and coordinated to prevent and end homelessness.

**Progress**

Since the launch of *Opening Doors* in 2010, we have proven not only that homelessness is a solvable problem but that we have made great strides toward solving it and to achieving the vision that everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home. Homelessness is down by 10 percent nationwide. Homelessness among Veterans is down by 33 percent, including a 43 percent drop in unsheltered homelessness among Veterans. Chronic homelessness is down 21 percent. And family homelessness is down 15 percent, including a 53 percent drop in unsheltered homelessness among families.

**Interagency Leadership and Collaboration**

USICH is an independent agency within the Federal executive branch and is composed of 19 Cabinet secretaries and agency heads. The current chairperson is Department of Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez; Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell serves as the vice chairperson. The executive director of USICH is Matthew Doherty.

For more information, visit the Council’s website at [www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov)
Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness

On June 22, 2010, USICH and its 19 member agencies released Opening Doors, the nation’s first-ever comprehensive strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. The Plan was first amended on September 12, 2012, and most recently on June 22, 2015, to include new strategies and lessons learned over the past five years. Opening Doors serves as a roadmap for joint action by the Federal government and its partners at the state and local levels.

VISION
No one should experience homelessness—no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

GOALS
- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in 2017
- Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in 2015
- Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

THEMES
INCREASE LEADERSHIP, COLLABORATION, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Objective 1: Provide and promote collaborative leadership at all levels of government and across all sectors to inspire and energize Americans to commit to preventing and ending homelessness

Objective 2: Strengthen the capacity of public and private organizations by increasing knowledge about collaboration, homelessness, and successful interventions to prevent and end homelessness

INCREASE ACCESS TO STABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Objective 3: Provide affordable housing to people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness

Objective 4: Provide permanent supportive housing to prevent and end chronic homelessness

INCREASE ECONOMIC SECURITY

Objective 5: Improve access to education and increase meaningful and sustainable employment for people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness

Objective 6: Improve access to mainstream programs and services to reduce people’s financial vulnerability to homelessness

IMPROVE HEALTH AND STABILITY

Objective 7: Integrate primary and behavioral health care services with homeless assistance programs and housing to reduce people’s vulnerability to and the impacts of homelessness

Objective 8: Advance health and housing stability for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and youth aging out of systems such as foster care and juvenile justice

Objective 9: Advance health and housing stability for people experiencing homelessness who have frequent contact with hospitals and criminal justice

RETOOL THE HOMELESS CRISIS RESPONSE SYSTEM

Objective 10: Transform homeless services to crisis response systems that prevent homelessness and rapidly return people who experience homelessness to stable housing

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