



# 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.

**USICH works to prevent and end homelessness by partnering with Federal, state, and local government, advocates, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness to:**

- ❖ Establish and maintain effective, coordinated, and supportive relationships with every Federal agency
- ❖ Organize and support states and communities to effectively implement local plans to end homelessness
- ❖ Develop an effective portal to Federal programs and initiatives
- ❖ Establish and maintain productive communications with Congress
- ❖ Disseminate relevant research and promote evidence-based approaches
- ❖ Establish partnerships with public and private-sector stakeholders
- ❖ Monitor, evaluate, and recommend improvements
- ❖ Provide professional and technical assistance to states, local governments, and other public and private nonprofit organizations

For more information, visit the Council's website at [www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov)

Department of Agriculture

Department of Commerce

Department of Defense

Department of Education

Department of Energy

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Homeland Security

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Department of the Interior

Department of Justice

Department of Labor

Department of Transportation

Department of Veterans Affairs

Corporation for National and Community Service

General Services Administration

Office of Management and Budget

Social Security Administration

US Postal Service

White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

# 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

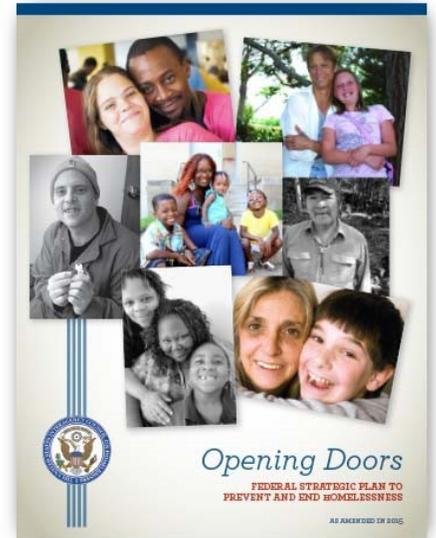
- Objective 5:* Improve access to education and increase meaningful and sustainable employment for people experiencing or most at risk of homelessness
- Objective 6:* Improve access to mainstream programs and services to reduce people's financial vulnerability to homelessness

### 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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