



U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

We know how to end homelessness. Together, we can make it happen.

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness leads the national efforts to prevent and end homelessness in America. USICH drives action among its 19 federal member agencies and fosters relationships at every level of government and with the private sector. By organizing and supporting leaders such as governors, mayors, and other local officials, USICH empowers communities to end homelessness once and for all.

USICH was originally authorized by Title II of the landmark Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 (PL 100-77) to serve as an independent establishment within the executive branch. The agency was most recently reauthorized by the **Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act** of 2009. Our current sunset date is October 1, 2017.

Interagency Leadership and Collaboration

Our current chairperson is Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Department of Education Secretary John King, Jr., serves as the vice chairperson. The executive director of USICH is Matthew Doherty.

Our Council meets four times a year to advance federal collaboration and coordination. In between Council meetings, USICH convenes interagency working groups focused on identifying high-impact strategies and aligning efforts to achieve the goals of *Opening Doors*, the federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness.

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

On June 22, 2010, USICH released *Opening Doors*, the first-ever comprehensive national plan to prevent and end homelessness. The plan has four ambitious goals:

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

Through the urgent action created by *Opening Doors*, overall homelessness has been decreased by 14% nationwide between 2010 and 2016. Homelessness among Veterans has been reduced by 47%, including a 57% decrease in unsheltered homelessness among Veterans. Chronic homelessness has been reduced 27%. And family homelessness has been decreased by 23%, including a 65% drop in unsheltered homelessness among families.

More than 35 communities, including the entire states of Virginia, Connecticut and Delaware, have also effectively ended homelessness among Veterans. That progress has forever changed the conversation about homelessness in this country. It's no longer a matter of if we can end homelessness, but how we can accomplish it sooner.

Department
of Agriculture

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Commerce

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of Education

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Health and Human
Services

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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

Vision

The vision of *Opening Doors* is simple. No one should experience homelessness — no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

Action Areas

Opening Doors directs us to take action across 10 objectives:

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 Homelessness Crisis Response System

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

