

Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness

Part 1: Understanding the Criteria and Benchmarks

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Panelists

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Webinar Agenda

- I. Background and Framing
- II. Purpose of Criteria and Benchmarks
- III. Criteria
- IV. Benchmarks and Indicators
- V. Additional Resources



Federal Vision: Coordinated Community Response

#1 - Build the **foundation** for a coordinated and comprehensive community response

#2 - Build the **capacity of local communities** to implement the components of a coordinated and comprehensive community response

Learn more: [Coordinated Community Response to Youth Homelessness](#)

Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness A Coordinated Community Response



In *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, we set a national goal to prevent and end youth homelessness in 2020. To get there, it will take all of us—government, non-profits, business, and philanthropy—to make sure every community has the capacity to achieve the goal.

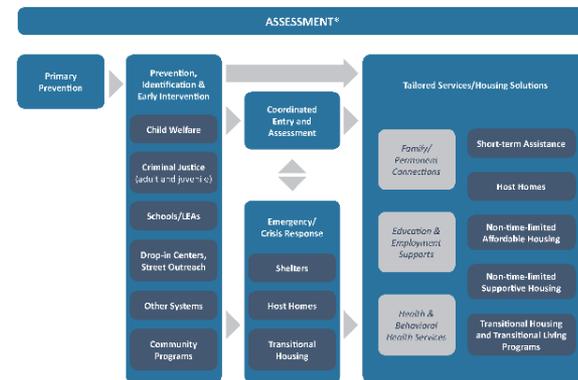
Our understanding of the scope and dynamics of youth homelessness is growing. While we continue to learn more every day, we must act now to build the comprehensive and coordinated response that young people need to end their homelessness forever.

This document provides a preliminary vision for such a response. It draws upon what we know works to end homelessness for other populations, along with strategies that support the unique needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults under 25.

We hope you'll use this document to advance discussions in your communities and build upon the work already underway. To receive additional tools and resources that will be developed to support the implementation of this response, [sign up for our newsletter](#).

Our Preliminary Vision for a Community Response

The Interagency Working Group on Ending Youth Homelessness has developed a shared vision for the community response that will be necessary to prevent and end youth homelessness, illustrated here and described in more detail below.



Interagency Working Group on Ending Youth Homelessness

Co-Chairs:
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Members:
Department of Education
Department of Justice
Social Security Administration
Department of Labor



Purpose of Criteria and Benchmarks

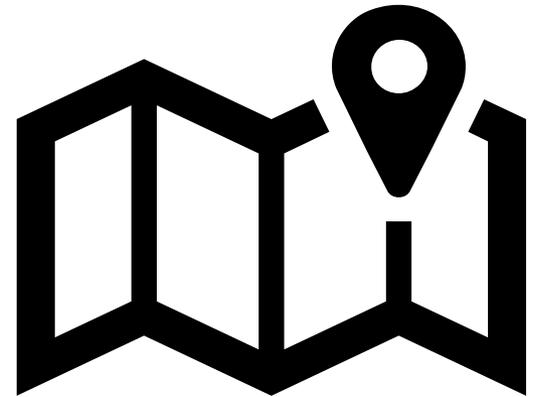
- **Work together**
 - Provide a complete picture and an ongoing assessment of a community's response to homelessness.
- **Criteria**
 - Essential elements of the community's response to homelessness.
- **Benchmarks**
 - Important indicators of whether and how effectively system is working.



Criteria

NOTE: These criteria, and the accompanying benchmarks, apply to all youth and young adults under the age of 25 who are unaccompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or caretaker, and who meet any [federal definition](#) of homelessness.

1. The community identifies all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.



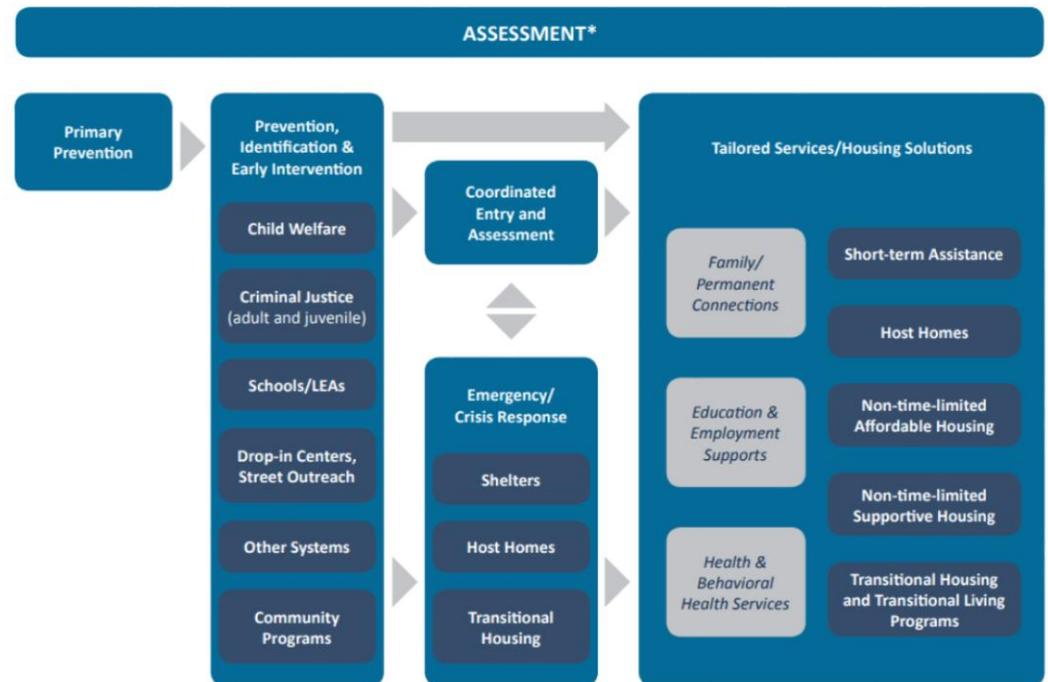


Criteria Cont'd...

2. The community uses **prevention and diversion strategies whenever possible**, and otherwise provides **immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing and services** to any youth who needs and wants it.

Our Preliminary Vision for a Community Response

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**Throughout the provision of services, assessment will be ongoing.*

[Read more about the Coordinated Community Response](#)



Criteria Cont'd...

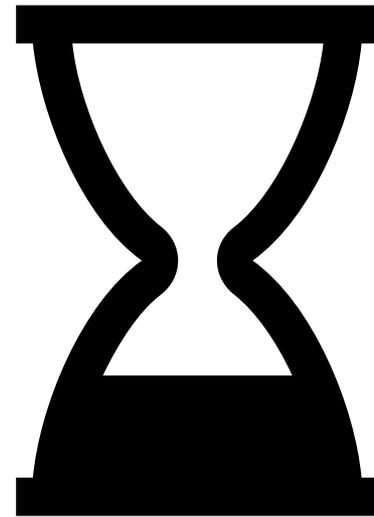
3. The community uses **coordinated entry processes to effectively link all youth experiencing homelessness to housing and services solutions that are tailored to their needs.**





Criteria Cont'd...

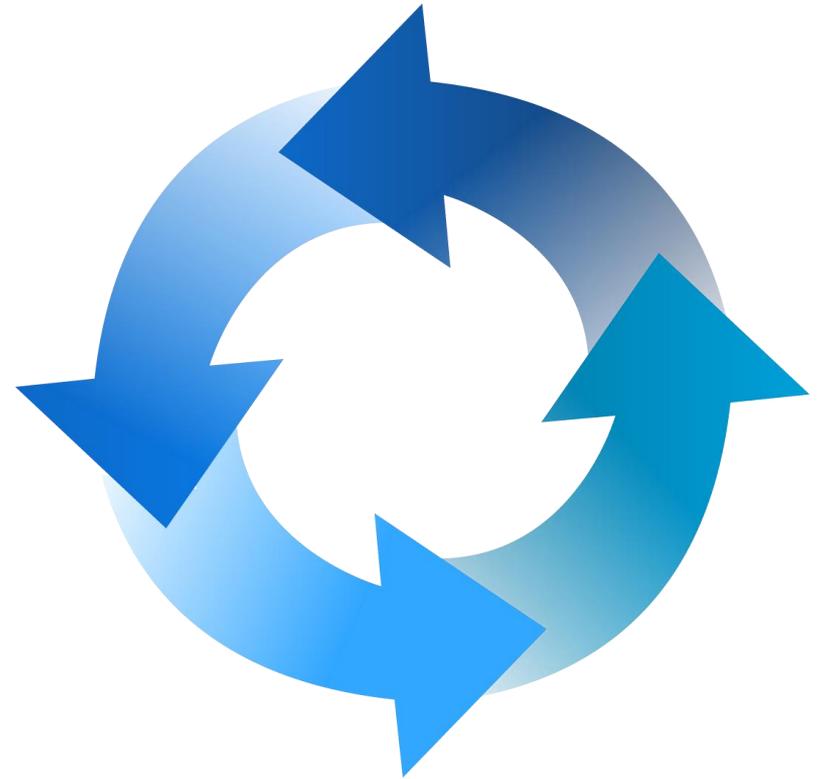
4. The community acts with urgency to **swiftly assist youth to move into permanent or non-time-limited housing options** with appropriate services and supports.





Criteria Cont'd...

5. The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to **continue to prevent and quickly end future experiences** of homelessness among youth.





Questions to Assess Guidance

- Intended to help communities begin to assess their progress towards achieving the criteria.
- Should be completed with key stakeholders.
- Can help identify strengths and gaps in your local youth-serving system.

Version 2, February 2018



Assessing Whether Your Community Has Achieved the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and its member agencies have adopted [specific criteria and benchmarks for ending youth¹ homelessness](#), in order to guide communities as they take action to achieve the goal through a [coordinated community response](#). The following questions can help you begin to assess your community's progress. As we develop a process for communities who seek federal confirmation of their achievements, our interagency review team will also ask for documentation that addresses these questions.

Please consult with one of your local federal representatives for guidance prior to submitting your responses.

- Your [HUD Field Office or Regional Office](#)
- Your [USICH Regional Coordinator](#)
- Your [Runaway and Homeless Youth Regional Program Manager](#)

As we continue to refine the criteria and benchmarks over time, we will refine these questions as needed. Revised guidance will be posted to the [Youth Criteria and Benchmarks webpage](#) on the USICH website.

Questions that Assess Whether Your Community Has Achieved the Criteria

- 1. Has your community identified all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness?**
 - a. Has your community literally identified every unaccompanied youth who is unsheltered, in shelter, or in transitional housing settings or other residential programs for youth experiencing homelessness?
 - b. Can you describe how your community coordinates a comprehensive set of strategies, spanning schools, the child welfare system, including child protective services, the justice system, drop-in centers, hotlines and 2-1-1, and other youth-serving agencies and programs to identify unaccompanied youth who are doubled up or couch-surfing and considered to be experiencing homelessness under any federal definition?
 - c. Does your community use coordinated, comprehensive outreach, in-reach, multiple data sources, and other methods to identify and enumerate all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, spanning the community's entire geographical area?



Benchmarks

Benchmark A: There are few youth experiencing homelessness at any given time.

Benchmark B: Youth experiencing homelessness are swiftly connected to safe and stable housing opportunities and to permanent housing options.



Benchmark A: There are few youth experiencing homelessness at any given time.



Benchmark A: Indicator 1

The community's census of youth experiencing homelessness includes all unaccompanied youth under 25 that meet any federal definition of homelessness, including youth identified by local education agencies and runaway and homeless youth programs.



Benchmark A: Indicator 2

No unaccompanied youth are experiencing unsheltered homelessness.



Benchmark A: Indicator 3

No unaccompanied youth seeking emergency shelter are turned away unless they can be successfully diverted to another safe living environment of their choosing.



Benchmark A: Indicator 4

All youth identified as experiencing homelessness, including those who are doubled up (based on the federal definition), are offered connections to appropriate services on an ongoing basis to support sustainable exits from homelessness.



Benchmark A: Indicator 5

The number of unaccompanied youth currently experiencing sheltered homelessness (including emergency shelter, basic center program, and time-limited or temporary housing) demonstrates the community's capacity to address emerging needs through exits to permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing destinations, including reunification with family.



Indicator 5 Cont'd...

Specifically, the number of unaccompanied youth experiencing sheltered homelessness is:

- **Less than or equal to twice** the monthly average number of unaccompanied youth newly identified as experiencing sheltered homelessness, **AND**
- **Less than or equal to twice** the monthly average number of unaccompanied youth exiting sheltered homelessness to permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing destinations.



Indicator 5 Example

There are currently **100** unaccompanied youth experiencing sheltered homelessness in Community A.

90-Day Measurement Period: 1/1/2018-3/31/2018					
Newly Identified during 90-day period	174	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 100 IS LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 116	Exits to permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing destinations during same 90-day period	90	<input type="checkbox"/> 100 IS NOT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 60
Newly Identified: Monthly Average	58		Exits: Monthly Average	30	
Newly Identified: Monthly Average x 2	116		Exits: Monthly Average x 2	60	

Community A has **not** met Indicator #5 for Benchmark A.



Benchmark A: Indicator 6

The community's census of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness is not increasing over time.



Indicator 6 Cont'd...

Specifically:

- **For unaccompanied youth ages 18-24:** the average number exiting to permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing from sheltered or unsheltered homelessness each month is greater than or equal to the average number newly identified as experiencing sheltered homelessness (including emergency shelter and time-limited safe and stable housing), **AND...**



Indicator 6 Cont'd...

- **For unaccompanied youth under 18:** the average number exiting to safe and stable housing (including transitional housing or transitional living programs) from sheltered or unsheltered homelessness each month is greater than or equal to the average number newly identified as experiencing sheltered homelessness (including emergency shelter).



Benchmark B: Youth experiencing homelessness are swiftly connected to safe and stable housing opportunities and to permanent housing options.



Benchmark B: Indicator 1

Unaccompanied youth identified as experiencing unsheltered or sheltered homelessness (including emergency shelter or basic center programs) exit to permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing within a community-wide average of 30 days, and no longer than 90 days from the point of identification.



Indicator 1 Cont'd...

- a) It is expected that an initial offer of assistance to access permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing shall be made immediately upon assessment of the need for such assistance. There shall be periodic recurring offers of assistance to the youth, and youth shall receive assistance to access permanent or non-time-limited safe and stable housing as soon as they express a desire for it.



Indicator 1 Cont'd...

- b) In the case of those youth who have chosen to first enter a time-limited safe and stable housing program (including transitional housing or transitional living programs) or to access another residential placement, this calculation begins when the youth requests assistance in attaining permanent housing to exit the program or accepts an offer as described in (a) above.



Benchmark B, Indicator 1

Example #1

July 1, 2018:

Young person A is identified and accepts an offer of Rapid Re-Housing

July 1-20, 2018:

Young Person stays in Host Home while awaiting permanent housing placement

July 21, 2018:

Young Person A moves into permanent housing

In this case, include the length of time from **Identification to Permanent Housing (July 1-21, or 21 days)**.



Benchmark B, Indicator 1 Example #2

July 1, 2018:

Young Person A is identified. An offer of assistance is made and young person A initially refuses the offer.

July 18, 2018:

Young Person A chooses to enter Transitional Living Program

September 26, 2018:

Young Person A requests assistance in obtaining permanent housing.

October 15, 2018:

Young Person A exits to permanent housing.

In this case, include **July 1-18 (18 days)**, and **September 26-October 15 (20 days)**, for a total of 38 days from identification to permanent housing.



Additional Resources

- www.usich.gov/goals/youth
- [Framework to End Youth Homelessness](#)
- [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness: A Coordinated Community Response](#)
- [Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness and Questions to Assess Your Community's Progress](#)
- [Using a Housing First Philosophy When Serving Youth](#)
- [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook Series: System Planning](#)
- [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook Series: Promising Program Models](#)
- [Coordinated Entry Policy Brief](#)
- [Youth Specific FAQs for Coordinated Entry](#)



Thank you!

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