

# PALM BEACH COUNTY HOUSING INITIATIVE



## **Leading the Way Home** **TEN-YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS** **IN PALM BEACH COUNTY**

*Sponsored by The Homeless Coalition of Palm Beach County*

## PALM BEACH COUNTY HOUSING INITIATIVE

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2008, the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Palm Beach County (*Ten-year Plan*) was adopted. The objective of the *Ten-year Plan* was to create a local homeless response system that would eliminate homelessness in ten years. In order to meet this objective, a comprehensive set of goals and action steps were developed to address current gaps in services. Key among them was to “develop regionally located Homeless Resource Centers (HRC) throughout the County”. In July 2012, the Senator Philip D. Lewis Center (Lewis Center) opened, serving as the County’s first HRC. Since opening, over 6,767 people have been assisted. A major focus of both the *Ten-Year Plan* and the needs of persons exiting the Lewis Center is permanent housing. As such, a Homeless Housing Plan is an essential tool that will serve as an adjunct to the Community’s *Ten-Year Plan*.

### **Statement of Need:**

Homelessness is a problem that impacts hundreds of residents of Palm Beach County on a daily basis. It presents social service demands, health care burdens and policy dilemmas. Homelessness is the absence of a fixed permanent residence. When everyone in Palm Beach County has a place to call home, the work will be complete. The goal of this plan is to address: the current and future anticipated levels of need, types of homeless housing, funding strategies, leadership models, concrete goals, and a definitive action plan identifying strategies, responsible parties and timelines. The most widely accepted definition of homelessness comes from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Homeless individuals are defined by HUD as, “People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided”. There are however, other definitions utilized by varying entities. As an example, the McKinney-Vento Education Act broadens the definition of homelessness as related to children, to include households who are living in doubled up situations (two families to a dwelling).

**Palm Beach County is the largest County in the State of Florida in total area. It is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the State in terms of population, with 1.398 Million residents calling Palm Beach County their home. 6767 homeless men, women and children experience homelessness each year.**

**Why are people homeless?** According to the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, the leading cause of homelessness is insufficient income and lack of affordable housing. Other reasons for homelessness relate to mental health, substance abuse, developmental disabilities, domestic violence, loss of employment, underemployment, and physical health issues.

**There is a Solution** ---Homelessness is a condition, that of being without a home. While the issue is complex, the underlying solution is simple.... **Housing combined with focused support services.**



**What types of Housing are typically offered to end a person's homelessness?**

**Interim Housing** - Short term emergency housing for homeless individuals and families (1-90 days).

**Affordable Housing** - Rental Apartments or homes that are affordable for people with low income. Estimates show that 30% of the people in the homeless service system could move directly to Affordable Housing. According to the "Out of Reach Report", published by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a household in Palm Beach County needs to earn \$23.85 an hour, or the equivalent of three full time minimum wage jobs to afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment in Palm Beach County.

**Permanent Supportive Housing** - A combination of affordable housing and support services provided to individuals and families who have disabilities such as mental illness, substance abuse, or physical health issues and require support services to maintain their housing. The rent is paid by a subsidy with the tenant contributing no more than 30% of their income.



**Rapid Re-Housing** - Services and rental assistance is provided on a time-limited basis to assist a homeless individual or family to move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing, minimizing the time they spend being homeless. The tenant pays an increasing portion of their rent over time, until the point at which they assume responsibility for the entire rent payment. This type of assistance works well for people who need some level of assistance to regain their independence.

## METHODOLOGY

Information for the development of the Homeless Housing Plan for Palm Beach County began with a survey circulated to over 200 community stakeholders, with 61 (30.5%) of the surveys submitted utilizing Survey Monkey.

- 69% of respondents felt the focus on the development/creation of homeless housing should be on scattered site housing;
- 31% of respondents thought that the focus should be on locating affordable housing with vacancies should be a priority;

Research was conducted into the current homeless system including interviews with key stakeholders and research into Best Practices related to housing options. Analysis of data focused on identifying Unmet Needs of the current homeless housing system along with the needs of specific sub-populations. Research also focused on the identification of Federal, State and local public and private resources that can be utilized in the creation of homeless housing and the provision of supportive services.

### PBC Data Analysis and Unmet Need

A variety of data sources were reviewed to determine Unmet Needs. This data includes the Total Number of Homeless people served in a one-year period, the Homeless Point-In-Time Count data submitted to HUD, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data and persons served by the Lewis Center in a one-year period.

Based on Palm Beach County's **2017 Point-In-Time** data gathered for the evening of January 25, 2017, there were:

- A total of 1,607 homeless persons meeting HUD's homeless definition
- 1,081 were unsheltered persons living on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation, with 26 (2.4%) being people in families
- 526 persons were residing in emergency or transitional housing, including hotels utilized for the purposes of emergency housing, with 300 (57%) being people in families
- A total of 252 persons experiencing chronic homelessness
- 65 (4%) of people experiencing homelessness were veterans
- 149 (9.2%) of people experiencing homelessness had severe mental illness
- 149 (9.2%) of people experiencing homelessness had substance abuse issues
- 34 (2.1%) of people experiencing homelessness had HIV/AIDS
- 267 (16.6%) of people experiencing homelessness had domestic violence issues
- 143 persons were utilizing a domestic violence shelter on the night of the count

The total number of persons served as documented in HMIS by the Homeless Continuum of Care for the period covering **January 1, 2016-December 31, 2016** was 4821. This number reflects a duplicated count as those served receive services through a continuum of services i.e. street outreach, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing.

As per Palm Beach County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016, there were 4821 people receiving homeless services. In addition, there were 538 people provided domestic violence services, whose data was not maintained in HMIS. Thus, the total population served based on this data was there were 4,821 people receiving homeless services. The HMIS data also includes demographics on people in permanent supportive housing (672) and permanent housing (1137) for a total of 1809 people housed, who therefore are no longer considered to be homeless. Subtracting the 1809 housed people from the total, provides a baseline of **3,012** people served over the year who were homeless in emergency or transitional housing or receiving some supportive service and in need of permanent housing.

### Statistical information utilized to calculate unmet needs

Of the 4,821 homeless and housed persons served, there were 722 families served, with 1,580 children, for a total of 2,530 people in families. As such, 52% of the total population of homeless people were in families and 48% were individuals. During the period analyzed, 2,291 were individuals in households and 722 were family households. This represents a total of 3,013 households served over a one-year period. There were 439 households (672 people) in permanent supportive housing and 521 households (1,137 persons) in permanent housing (represented in HMIS), by subtracting the 690 households housed, it leaves an unmet need of 2,053 homeless households who were served over a one-year period.

### Demographic Information of the 4,821 served (following is detail on those reported through the HMIS)

55% were male

45% were female

1,133 people experienced chronic homelessness

1,485 people experienced serious and persistent mental illness

724 people reported physical disabilities

75 people experienced HIV/AIDS

298 people reported developmental disabilities

947 people experienced alcohol abuse

913 experienced drug abuse

364 veterans were served; of these, 73 people were chronically homeless, which represents 20% of the veteran population. The non-veteran population experiencing chronic homelessness is 34%.

1,161 people who are not veterans are non-disabled



1,794 people who are not veterans have disabilities

61% of people who are not-veterans are disabled

67 people who are veterans are non-disabled

297 people who are veterans are disabled

82% of people who are veterans are disabled

### **Calculations/Extrapolations**

Of the total population served, 45% have disabilities. Extrapolating the 45% to the total of 3,013 households served, the need for permanent supportive housing is 1,356 households. It should be further noted that 1,133 homeless people experienced chronic homelessness. Based on the Point-in-Time data, 265 people residing in permanent supportive housing experienced chronic homelessness [not including Veteran's Administration Supportive Housing (VASH), as that data is not maintained in HMIS]. Chronic homelessness is defined as a person, single or in a family unit, who has experienced homelessness for one year or more, or had four homeless episodes in one year, and who has a disabling condition such as mental illness, substance abuse, physical disability or HIV/AIDS.

Of the 1,356 households in need of permanent supportive housing, there are 252 chronically unsheltered homeless people or in emergency housing who are in need of housing. Research shows that Housing First is the most appropriate housing model for serving people experiencing chronic homelessness.

### **Permanent Supportive Housing Goals**

According to a recent housing study conducted by CSH, 2,163 units of permanent supportive housing is needed for the following sub-populations: chronic homeless individuals, families, youth, seniors, developmentally disabled, criminal justice (re-entry) and those needing intensive behavioral health services.

Of the remaining 1,260 individual households not requiring permanent supportive housing, we can assume that each of them requires permanent housing. Based on current performance statistics, annual data indicates that 23% of persons are placed into rental units, 22% of persons placed moved in with family and friends.

### **Annual Goals- Individuals**

- 276 individuals will to be re-united with family or live with friends
- 162 individuals placed in affordable rental units

### **Permanent Housing - Families**

Of the remaining 397 families not requiring permanent supportive housing, there is an assumption that each of them requires permanent housing. Based on current performance

statistics, present annual data indicates that 26% of families will be reunited with family or living with friends and 49% are placed into rapid re-housing.

### **Annual Goals - Families**

- 102 families will be reunited with family or living with friends
- 193 families will secure affordable rental units with some short-term level of subsidy, or at a minimum, a security deposit



**Presently, there are 281 beds for individuals and 75 units for families of Permanent Supportive Housing in the Palm Beach Homeless Continuum of Care.**

**In 2016, a total of 280 individuals and 241 families were served in Rapid Re-Housing Program.**

**GOALS AND ACTIONS**  
**by**  
**Retooling Ten Year Plan Through Collective Impact**

**GOAL #1 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT-** Units created through the construction of new buildings or the rehabilitation of existing buildings = 250 Units/Year

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	STATUS
<p><b>Fund a Housing Manager based at a local entity, to work with Realtors and others to identify properties; link developers to funders to finance projects; track, report, and troubleshoot on the progress of developments; more specifically:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain a current database of available funding sources, track dates of availability of funds/ Request for Proposals (RFPs), etc. which can be utilized for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of homeless housing and distribute to developers/homeless provider agencies.</b></li> <li>• <b>Work with local Realtors, Countywide to locate vacant sites and properties in need of rehabilitation that are suitable for permanent housing (e.g. properly zoned, close to public transportation, schools, etc.).</b></li> <li>• <b>Establish partnerships with Department of Economic Sustainability (DES) and Palm Beach Housing Finance (PBC FH) to include</b></li> </ul>	<p>Community Services Department (CSD)</p> <p>Department of Housing and Economic Stability (DHES)</p>	<p>October 2017</p>	

<p>requirements to utilize Coordinated Entry when filling a “set-aside” unit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with tax credit developers to ensure compliance with “set-aside” units and Coordinated Entry.</li> <li>• Maintain a report on projects under development including current status and any barriers that need to be addressed. The project report shall be shared with the Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) to outline any barriers toward development.</li> </ul>			
<p>Offer workshops for providers wishing to become developers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A “Developing Supportive Housing for Special Needs and Extremely Low Income Households” Workshop is designed for organizations that provide housing and/or supportive services to special needs and extremely low income households, and local government housing staff that provides the funding. The focus of the training is to build the development capacity of organizations that are interested in learning more about the development process and how to structure financing strategies to serve the housing needs of this difficult to serve population. This workshop should focus on the rental development process, as well as the financing structure of successful deals. The workshop should include a review of rental assistance and supportive housing funds in light of the challenges of operating housing at below market rates. Participants should also be introduced to the various financing that is available from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.</li> </ul>	<p>DHES CoC HAB Florida Housing Coalition</p>	<p>Completed in June 2016 &amp; will be conducted Annually</p>	

<p>Work with developers to link with funding resources including DHES, PBCHF, Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC), HOME, for gap funding, tax credit applications and pre-development loans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate Affordable Housing developers on multiple state and local resources as well as private foundations who focus on capital projects.</li> </ul>	<p>Housing Manager  CSD</p>	<p>December 2017  Ongoing</p>	
<p>Partner with DES to target a set aside of 10%/Year of HOME funds to support the development of units designated for homeless and/or extremely low income.</p>	<p>DES  CSD</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

**GOAL # 2 IDENTIFICATION OF RENTAL UNITS = 3,000 Units/Year**

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	STATUS
<p>Utilize Housing Specialist(s) to perform the functions listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the availability of rental units in the community by establishing and maintaining relationships with landlords willing to rent to homeless individuals and families.</li> <li>Work with local realtors County-wide to gather available rental properties</li> <li>Maintain current listings of affordable rental properties that have</li> </ul>	<p>HCPBC CSD  Foundations   CSD</p>		

<p>passed inspections and are legally zoned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize the SMART Landlord campaign to create relationships with landlords with available units.</li> </ul>			
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**GOAL # 3 RAPID RE-HOUSING = 2,700 rent deposits/subsidies/Year**

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	STATUS
<p><b>Create and fund/fundraise a pool of \$500,000 for security deposits and first Month’s rent for rapid re-housing participants:</b></p> <p><b>As a subset, establish a high-risk security pool for landlords willing to rent but in need of additional assurances/funds for persons with special needs, challenging criminal background checks, etc.</b></p>	HCPBC	Ongoing Annually	
<p><b>Mobilize the Faith Based community to mentor and sponsor a family out of homelessness.</b></p> <p><b>Organize one weekend where all faith-based communities mobilize to raise funds to support one family through their place of worship with rapid re-housing or a housing voucher for \$1200 (single) - \$2400 (family). This will provide for security deposits, start up utility deposits and first month’s rent. Mobilize the Faith community to mentor and sponsor a family out of homelessness.</b></p>	HCPBC HAB DCS		

**GOAL # 4 PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING = 1,854 beds in Year One and 488 per year**

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	STATUS
<p><b>Develop relationships with Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) to provide supportive services to housing residents in Permanent Supportive Housing. Licensed Clinical Social Workers can provide services linked to the client's Medical Conditions and bill the service to the FQHC</b></p>	<p>HHA HAB Health Care District FQHCs</p>		
<p><b>Establish set-aside of rentals subsidies from Public Housing Authorities within Palm Beach County for Section 8 and Project Based Vouchers</b></p>	<p>PHAs HAB CoC HUD HCPBC</p>		
<p><b>Expand Social Security SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) program to assist individuals in the homeless system obtain benefits necessary for housing and services.</b></p>	<p>SEFLBHN, Lord's Place, Jerome Golden Center, Division of Human Services</p>		

<b>Work in conjunction with the FUSE Program to identify homeless individuals and families who are high utilizers of costly emergency systems—including emergency room, jails, detox centers, mental health crisis services.</b>	Criminal Justice Commission, SEFLBHN, CoC		
<b>Identify Assisted Living Facility Beds that will work with homeless disabled adults on SSA with mental health issues.</b>	Health Care District, CoC, HAB		
<b>Apply to HUD for one new project per year via the Annual NOFA process when new projects are permitted.</b>	CoC  HUD		

**GOAL # 5 PUBLIC EDUCATION, FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT = 25 Meetings and \$1,000,000 Dollars raised**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
<b>A Public Education campaign targeting Ending Homelessness for Chronic Homeless, Veterans, and youth through housing in collaboration with the Collective Impact to End Homelessness.</b>	HCPBC, CoC,  CSD	October 2018	
<b>Empower Faces of Homelessness Speaker’s Bureau to attend Faith, Business, and other civic meetings to tell their story and educate them</b>	HCPBC		

about the Ten-Year Plan Housing Initiative.			
Fundraise a total of \$500,000 for Rapid Re-Housing subsidies.	HCPBC		
Fundraise a total of \$500,000 for housing subsidies.	HCPBC		

**GOAL # 6 EMPLOYMENT CAMPAIGN = 500 jobs per year**

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	STATUS
Partner and Coordinate with Training and Employment programs for job training for homeless people.	Lord's Place, Goodwill, Career Source, Palm Beach State College, Community Action Program, West & South Tech		