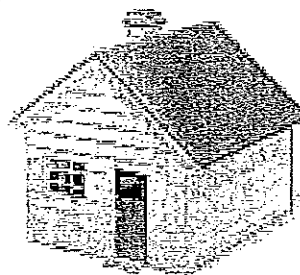


Steps Toward Ending Homelessness



2012 Update of:

Kentucky's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness



Steps Toward Ending Homelessness in Kentucky—2012 Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Since the creation of the state's ten-year plan to end homelessness in 2005, Kentucky has made great strides toward addressing the multifaceted issues of homelessness in the state. Nationally, changes have occurred that support and enhance the state's efforts. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) created a new definition of homelessness to expand access, increased its emphasis on outcome data to better indicate effectiveness, and increased emphasis on chronic homelessness and precariously housed persons through more focused Point-in-Time counts. In Kentucky, state partners have focused efforts through increased local planning efforts and increased planning responsibility of Continuum of Care groups.

The update of the plan to end homelessness summarizes key accomplishments toward the state's work to end homelessness. Specifically, the Kentucky Interagency Council on Homelessness adopted the federal strategic plan to end homelessness, *Opening Doors*, supported by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, whose vision states:

- No one should experience homelessness; and
- No one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

Progress to Date

No one group or organization can make significant progress toward such visions on their own. The Kentucky Interagency Council on Homelessness would like to thank all of its partners as together we have moved forward over the past several years. Agencies of state government, Kentucky Housing Corporation, the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky, the Louisville Coalition for the Homeless and numerous local and regional social service agencies serving our homeless and low income citizens have been vital to our efforts. This report lists just a few of the many successful programs that we celebrate. We thank all of the homeless shelters, domestic violence agencies, mental health centers and nonprofits who serve our neighbors every day. We have accomplished much and together, we can achieve the goals and strategies listed if we remain focused, not only on the needs of our society but also on the resources that we can access.

Gaps and Barriers

In Kentucky, there continues to be an insufficient supply of all types of safe, decent and affordable housing. Adequate funding for supportive services is critical to help find stable housing. There is a need for improved discharge planning for those aging out of foster care, persons exiting correctional institutions and persons with serious mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders leaving state facilities.

The Strategy

To address the gaps and barriers, the state must continue to create more housing for the homeless and locate additional sources of funding. Kentucky must work to provide more supportive services. Prevention strategies for discharge planning, alternatives to incarceration and emergency assistance, as well as the coordination of these services, must occur to prevent the ongoing issues of homelessness. Following are the goals:

- Align Kentucky's goals with the Opening Doors Across America goals;
- Formalize a CoC Governance Structure for the Balance of State which will develop roles and responsibilities for HMIS, CoC and ESG leaders and will establish an external service provider group to help KHC guide CoC policies;
- Develop effective discharge planning across state institutions;
- Develop a regional coordinated or centralized intake and assessment approach so the needs of the homeless can be met with the most appropriate resources;
- Place greater emphasis of ESG efforts on rapid re-housing and prevention and less emphasis on shelter operations;
- Increase accountability of agencies receiving federal homeless program funds to produce more permanent housing outcomes, meet their program performance benchmarks and operate programs in full compliance with regulations;
- Expand performance measures in HMIS including specified standard indicators; and
- Measure the progress of each region/agency to determine their success by reviewing critical data points.

Review of Progress to Date

- Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) program in Balance of State; \$12,157,352 disbursed to 43 agencies. As of 3/31/12 served 20,324 persons; 15,710 under homeless prevention and 4,813 under homeless assistance. Great success, for example, in northern Kentucky 92% of families exiting the program with identified permanent rental housing with no ongoing subsidy. Based on a 90 day follow up survey, 90% remain stably housed. In Louisville, the HPRP program served 2,996 individuals: 2,599 in prevention efforts and 397 in rapid re-housing services.
- Emergency Shelter Grants in the Balance of State averaged 46 projects receiving approximately \$1,300,000 each year. ESG funding in Louisville increased from \$522,171 in 2009 to \$690,650 in 2011.
- New Emergency Solutions Grants program beginning in 2012 will focus on street outreach, emergency shelter, homeless prevention, rapid re-housing (housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and medium-term rental assistance) and data collection through HMIS.
- Recovery Kentucky opened 10 centers across the state, each designed to house 1,000 men or women in a peer mentor program to end their addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. The Hope Center in Lexington and The Healing Place in Louisville were the model programs for this effort. Plans are currently underway to build four additional centers beginning in 2012.
- Scholar House is a program which offers single parents who are working toward post-secondary education the opportunity to have housing, on-site child development facilities and other support services. Programs are active in five locations across the state (Lexington, Louisville, Owensboro, Bowling Green, and Paducah) with plans for Pikeville and Northern Kentucky in the near future.
- Safe Havens was a program which provided housing vouchers to homeless individuals and families. The program also provided case management services as an aid to move the participants to permanent housing. The program issued over 2750 vouchers, of which almost 2300 leased into a unit and over 1050 moved to permanent housing choice vouchers through KHC and other Public Housing Authorities statewide.
- Chafee Room and Board serves young adults who have aged out of foster care with the state. In cooperation with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, KHC issues temporary housing vouchers and other support is given to provide assistance as these young adults move toward independence and prevent homelessness. In the first two years of the program, almost 200 young adults moved into housing.
- Money Follows the Person/Kentucky Transitions is a program in cooperation between KHC and the Department of Medicaid Services that moves persons who are elderly and/or those who are physically disabled from nursing facilities to their own homes. Modifications to the homes are provided so that the needs of the residents are met.
- Olmstead Housing Initiative provides housing and supportive services to people with a diagnosis of severe mental illness. As these persons move out of

institutional settings, their risk for chronic homelessness is very high. Since 2009, forty-five individuals have been served.

- Point-in-Time Count in the Balance of State provides an annual count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons. The count has declined from 3,174 in 2009 to 2,834 in 2011. The decrease can be attributed to the success of such programs as the HPRP program and the Samaritan housing program which targets chronically homeless persons with a disabling condition. The Point-in-Time Count has received support from many partners including the Department of Community Based Services, the Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as many local agencies which serve homeless persons. The count in Louisville was 2,682 in 2008, declined to 1,515 in 2009 and increased to 1,628 in 2011. All data is stored in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for analysis and reporting to HUD.
- Homeless Pilot Prevention Project is designed to offer institutional discharge planning to persons exiting state operated prisons, mental health facilities and the foster care system. One of the goals of the program was to prevent 88% of the clients from becoming homeless. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services began enrolling clients in 2006. 315 persons were served from 2006-2010. Of those served, over 94% remained in housing or returned to the institution. Only 6% became homeless.
- The Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky is the state's AmeriCorps program agency. AmeriCorps offers opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups. Since 2009, 152 members were placed in over 30 housing nonprofits in an effort to combat homelessness. They assisted 15,624 individuals maintain their current housing; placed 3,676 homeless individuals into safe, healthy, and affordable housing; and built, rehabilitated and weatherized 286 homes.
- The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) was established for the purpose of stabilizing communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment. Through the purchase and redevelopment of foreclosed and abandoned homes and residential properties, the goal of the program is being realized. \$144,000 was provided to Welcome House of Northern Kentucky to create 8 permanent housing rental units for formerly homeless persons. All have been leased. The Russell County Fiscal Court was provided around \$1,100,000 to convert a foreclosed motel into an emergency shelter. The Hope Center in Lexington was given \$1,600,000 for construction of 44 permanent rental housing units for women in recovery from substance abuse so that they would not drift back into homelessness.
- The Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH) provides supportive housing vouchers to veterans who are at risk of homelessness. From 2008-2011, Kentucky has been awarded 430 vouchers administered by Housing Authorities for use in Louisville, Lexington, Newport, Covington and the Fort Knox area. In March, 2012 an additional 100 vouchers in the amount of \$480,459 was provided; 50 vouchers each to Louisville and Lexington.
- The Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF) provides funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs for homelessness prevention services and case management to veterans and their families. Volunteers of America in Kentucky received \$784,000 in 2011 to offer services in the Louisville, Lexington

and Ashland areas. Benefits include vocational and rehabilitation counseling, job training and educational assistance, health care services, transportation, legal assistance, child care and other services.

- The Veterans Affairs Per Diem program provided the Pennyroyal Mental Health/Mental Retardation agency in Hopkinsville funding to construct a 50 bed facility for homeless veterans.
- Several agencies in the Bowling Green area, under the leadership of Barren River Area Safe Space (BRASS), developed a user friendly, comprehensive manual of homelessness services entitled "Under the Bridge, Region 2 Resource Manual". An accompanying book, the "Rights of the Homeless in Kentucky – A Primer of Homeless Rights" focuses on federal and state 'homeless rights', including access to fair housing, appropriate education, voting rights and the right to an ID without a permanent address. Both of these resources are included on the KICH website under the resource tab.
- Daniel Pitino Shelter in Owensboro received an Affordable Housing Trust Fund grant in the amount of \$197,000 to construct two 3-bedroom homes for households transitioning out of local homeless shelters.
- Kentucky River Foothills has developed a four-plex in Estill County utilizing SHP permanent funds to serve homeless, disabled individuals in their area.
- Clark County's first homeless shelter opened its doors in October 2011.
- Kentucky Domestic Violence Association completed construction of KDVA Homes, a 48 unit scattered site supportive housing project for domestic violence survivors to prevent homelessness. Six units are in Morehead, twelve in Paducah, eight in Murray and twenty two in Louisville. Other services provided by KDVA include Individual Development Accounts (IDA), a program to develop economic security, prevent homelessness and maintain independence. 256 participants have used their funds to buy homes (115), fund post-secondary education (111) or start a small business (30). In addition, 2,197 persons participated in financial education classes, 1,691 used credit coaching services, 139 opened bank accounts and 151 opened new IDAs.
- A number of Housing First Initiatives were developed in Louisville, providing permanent housing to chronically homeless individuals. Phoenix Health Center, St John Center and the Society of St Vincent de Paul initially partnered on this collaboration. Wellspring, Seven Counties and the Louisville Metro Department of Community Services and Revitalization were added later. Three different projects were funded providing housing to 123 participants. The success of the programs include housing stability, employment and/or increase in income and a decrease in emergency room visits and arrests. A new project for 46 additional participants is in the planning stages in 2012.
- The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a database that tracks and analyses the number of participants in homeless services and the type of assistance they have been provided. It has been the goal of KICH, KHC and HUD in increase the utilization of HMIS in order to have accurate data on the effectiveness of the efforts of agencies around the state as well as to assist in the definition of successful outcomes. In order for these goals to be realized, participant in HMIS and accurate data recording is required. In all areas except Jefferson County, since 2009, clients added to HMIS have more than doubled from 95,082 to 191,422 (an increase of 96,340). Description of services provided have also doubled from 107,634 to 232,852 (an increase of 125,218 entries). As a

sign of the effectiveness of these services, participant exits from programs have also more than doubled from 93,229 to 207,646 (an increase of 114,417).

- Since 2009, KHC has received Balance of State Continuum of Care funding for a total of 93 permanent supportive housing units targeted to homeless persons and families with disabilities.
- The Continuum of Care funding for Shelter plus Care and Supported Housing in Louisville increased from \$7,013,619 in 2009 to \$7,965,172 in 2010.