

Safe & Sound

Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Dane County, WI

2016-2020

DRAFT



**Homeless Services
Consortium**

DANE COUNTY / MADISON, WI

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HOMELESS SERVICES CONSORTIUM (HSC)

VISION STATEMENT

All households in Dane County should have the opportunity to secure and maintain safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Guiding Principles

1. Everyone deserves an equal opportunity to housing free of discrimination.
2. Homelessness is defined by the people who experience it. People who have lived experiences of homelessness have an integral role in the design of solutions to prevent and end homelessness.
3. The community will continue to explore creative solutions to ending homelessness beyond those objectives highlighted in this plan.
4. There has to be shared ownership and responsibility for preventing and ending homelessness across all Dane County groups including, but not limited to, business, faith communities, funders, government, homeless and formerly homeless individuals, and social service providers.
5. Community volunteers are recognized as an essential part of preventing and ending homelessness.
6. The Homeless Services Consortium (HSC) is a partnership of agencies, funders, advocates, and people who have experienced homelessness. Its success at preventing and ending homelessness is dependent upon a commitment to the strategies and results in this plan.

INTRODUCTION

All Persons.

Adults. Families, Unaccompanied Youth. Children. Young Adults. Elderly. Disabled. Veterans. Queer. Immigrants. Abuse survivors. The faces of homelessness are as varied as the persons who experience homelessness. Although we believe homelessness is defined by those that experience it, we also know that it does not define them. This belief is key to partnering with persons and families experiencing homelessness in a way that is empowering and dignifying. We care about all persons experiencing homelessness, but the presence of homelessness among unaccompanied youth and youth adults in Dane County is of special attention in this community plan. We can do more to learn about their experiences and find ways to prevent or end their homelessness and exposure to predatory behaviors. Our efforts to prevent and end homelessness in Dane County must include the voices of those who experience homelessness in its many forms.

4 Goals.

Prevent. Support. End. Advocate. This plan presents four goals in the simplest language to provide a clear purpose for community action. The goals are to prevent homelessness, support those experiencing homelessness with a pathway to permanent housing, end homelessness by increasing access to permanent housing, and advocating for increased community, political, and financial resources to prevent and end homelessness in Dane County. Each goal is supported by specific objectives and action items informed by our collective expertise and best practices. They will be achieved by the coordination of three specific strategies.

3 Strategies.

Collaborate. Connect. Evaluate. These strategies are woven throughout all of the goals and objectives of this plan to increase the effectiveness of each organization involved. Collaboration will include the coming together of HSC, its member organizations, persons with lived experiences of homelessness and other community members to develop shared goals and coordinate action to accomplish this community plan. In addition to strengthening connections between Dane County's many community organizations, the plan will create and strengthen connections between persons experiencing homelessness and the services that can help prevent or end their homelessness. Measuring and evaluating the results of HSC action is also important. This plan includes objectives to collect accurate, current, and useful data that can inform our practice. This quantitative and qualitative data will also be shared with funders, local and state political leaders and the Dane County community to celebrate successes and refocus future dollars and efforts on preventing and ending homelessness.

1 Result.

No person experiencing homelessness in Dane County. Ending homelessness and developing strong supports to prevent future homelessness is a priority for the Dane County Community. The goals, objectives, and strategies presented in this community plan will achieve this result. This plan was developed by the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC)--a network of funders, providers, faith-based, and grassroots organizations that have committed to play a role in ending homelessness in our community. Its success will depend on more than just HSC members. *(Not finished)*

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PLAN AT A *GLANCE*

All Persons. *4* Goals. *3* Strategies. *1* Result.

Prevent homelessness in Madison and Dane County

- Evaluate and change prevention services and dollars to maximize their use for those with the greatest needs
- Prevent homelessness among unaccompanied youth, ages 13-17 through reunification strategies, conflict resolution, and other services
- Work with state agencies and institutions such as the foster care system and jails to prevent discharge of persons into homelessness
- Identify barriers and improve access to tenant services such as rental assistance, legal aid, as well as mental health and substance abuse counseling that can prevent homelessness
- Improve connections to affordable housing and jobs for those at risk of homelessness

Support people experiencing homelessness with a pathway to permanent housing

- Implement and track diversion as a part of an empowering approach to preventing a household's homelessness in a manner that ensures safety and is empowering to the person or family being assisted
- Improve outreach and access to help for those at risk or experiencing homelessness through street outreach teams, improved screening criteria, and coordinated intake of persons and families
- Support the creation of a day center as a homelessness resource
- Improve collaboration among mainstream providers, faith-based, and grassroots organizations to address both crisis needs and housing stability efforts
- Provide services that address underlying factors of homelessness and housing instability including mental health, peer support, education, job

training, and jobs for persons in supportive or transitional housing

- Organize service teams to provide housing stabilization services for people experiencing homelessness to help them move quickly back into permanent housing
- Increase rates of placement from shelter to permanent housing by 10% each year

End homelessness in Madison and Dane County

- Engage landlords to access new units of existing housing for single adults and families and support their transitions into permanent housing
- Realign the funding structures for rapid re-housing to provide more financial flexibility to move individuals and families in shelter back into housing
- Align and prioritize capital, operating, and service funding packages for the development of new permanent supportive housing
- End veteran homelessness as part of the national Zero: 2016 Initiative

Advocate and collaborate with local, state, and national partners

- Improve data collection on people being served by HSC member organizations and make annual adjustments in the projected need for each objective
- Form a common annual advocacy agenda to focus HSC efforts
- Increase community resources and will to prevent and end homelessness by revitalizing the Community Oversight Group to report on progress toward plan goals regularly and widely in the community
- Collaborate with state and national partners and organizations to support increased services, rights, and funding for preventing and ending homelessness

The Plan

Goal 1 Prevent Homelessness in Madison and Dane County

The most effective step to ending homelessness is preventing it. The causes of homelessness can vary as widely as the persons who experience it and include both individual and social origins. HSC will work with public and private institutions such as schools, foster care, hospitals, and prisons to prevent homelessness from ineffective discharges and/or among unaccompanied youth. We can also take steps as a community to identify barriers and improve access to services that may prevent homelessness among individuals and families, including tenant services, mental health counseling, substance abuse counseling, financial planning, job training, and job placement. To that end, HSC organizations will partner with those most at risk of becoming homeless before they lose stable housing. This collaborative work will be informed by recommendations from agencies and organizations that provide the services and by the voices of persons with lived experiences of homelessness. This community plan includes the following specific objectives towards the goal of preventing homelessness in Madison and Dane County:

Objective 1: Prevent homelessness among unaccompanied youth.

Objective 2: Prevent persons being discharged into homelessness from institutions.

Objective 3: Identify barriers and improve access to tenant services to prevent homelessness

Objective 4: Identify barriers and improve access to services addressing mental health and substance abuse issues

Objective 5: Identify barriers and improve connections to affordable housing and jobs

Action Plan

Objective 1.1: Prevent homelessness among unaccompanied youth.

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmark(s)	Deadline
Youth and Young Adult (YYA) organizations will explore reunification, conflict management, and other services to provide recommendations for HSC	YYA organizations	N/A	2016
Youth and Young Adult (YYA) organizations and MMSD will collaborate to identify barriers and improve access to services for youth at risk of homelessness	YYA organizations, MMSD	N/A	Ongoing

Objective 1.2: Prevent persons being discharged into homelessness from institutions.

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmark(s)	Deadline
Ensure that all youth leaving foster care in Dane County have a confirmed plan for safe and stable housing	Dane County Human Services	2017 - Procedures in place for every youth	Ongoing
Ensure that procedures are followed for the discharge of all persons from short-term or long-term incarceration in Dane County into safe and stable housing	Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Madison Police Department, Dane County Sheriff's Office	N/A	Ongoing
Ensure that procedures are followed for the discharge of all persons from hospitals and treatment facilities in Dane County into safe and stable housing	Hospitals, Clinics, Madison Area Urban Ministry	N/A	Ongoing

Objective 1.3: Identify barriers and improve access to tenant services to prevent homelessness

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Conduct a focus group or survey of persons with lived experience of homelessness to identify barriers to tenant services and recommend ways to improve access to these services		N/A	2016
Evaluate how prevention dollars are being spent and develop ways to ensure that the funds are reaching those with the most need	Mainstream providers, Faith-based organizations, Grassroots organizations	N/A	2016
Advocate for increased funds for tenant assistance services (e.g. legal aid, mediation, prevention education, etc.)			Ongoing
Train case managers and member organizations about eviction prevention strategies, legal remedies for eviction notices, and educate about fair housing and reasonable accommodation laws			2016
Incorporate eviction prevention best practices in local government contracts and require documentation of efforts to prevent eviction	HSC Funders		
Establish consensus eviction protocols and decrease the number of evictions by non-profit, affordable and subsidized housing by 20% annually			

[Objective to evaluate and add a prevention section and incorporate recommended changes to housing policy in the written standards]			2017
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Objective 1.4: Identify barriers and improve access to services addressing mental health and substance abuse issues

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Conduct a focus group or survey of persons with lived experience of homelessness to identify barriers to mental health and substance abuse services and recommend ways to improve access to these services		N/A	2017
[Objective to decrease wait time when clients are ready for service]			
[Objective to Increase connection between housing and healthcare - H2]			
[Objective to encourage all housing programs move toward a harm reduction model and evaluate other policies that ban persons from services or housing]			

Objective 1.5: Identify barriers and improve connections to affordable housing, jobs, and other benefits

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Conduct a focus group or survey of persons with lived experience of homelessness to identify barriers to finding affordable housing and jobs and recommend ways to improve access to these resources		N/A	2017
[Objective to increase access to public benefits (SSI, W2, SSDI etc.)]			
[Objective to increase access to employment and training programs and family supporting employment]			

Goal 2 Support persons and families experiencing homelessness with a clear pathway to permanent housing

Objective 1: Implement and track diversion as a part of an empowering approach to ending a person or family’s homelessness

Objective 2: Improve collaboration among mainstream providers, faith-based, and grassroots organizations

Objective 3: Improve outreach and access to supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness

Objective 4: Provide supportive services that address underlying factors of homelessness and housing instability

Objective 5: Increase rates of placement from shelter to permanent housing

Action Plan

Objective 2.1: Implement and track diversion as a part of an empowering approach to ending a person or family’s homelessness

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Identify resources and pay for training for all organizations that are doing or want to do diversion	United Way City of Madison, Dane County	_ % of case managers will receive Ed Boyte Training by Winter/Spring 2017	Ongoing
All Agencies receiving training for diversion will track success of households served in HMIS	Data Committee and agencies	CoC agencies All agencies that use service point Everyone else	July 2017 Jan 2018 Jan.2019
Divert 35% of households that contact any organization that helps people experiencing homelessness into safe and legal living conditions		10% - 2017 15% - 2018 25% - 2019 35% - 2020	2020
Ensure that no more than 7% of households served with diversion resources do not experience homelessness again over the course of two years			2020

Objective 2.2: Improve collaboration among mainstream providers, faith-based, and grassroots organizations

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Map the current services and resources provided by faith-based and grassroots organizations	Faith-based organizations Grassroots organizations		2016
Faith-based and grassroots organizations will establish partnerships, align efforts, and collaborate with other in-network organizations that address daily and nightly survival needs	Faith-based organizations Grassroots organizations		Ongoing
Mainstream providers will engage with faith-based and grassroots organizations to establish partnerships around common efforts focused on coordinated entry and housing stability	Mainstream providers, Faith-based organizations Grassroots organizations		Ongoing
[Objective that all HSC member organizations will use VI SPDAT]			

Objective 2.3: Improve outreach and access to supportive and transitional housing for those experiencing homelessness

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
[Objective to coordinate street outreach teams to improve awareness and access to supportive housing services in Dane County]			
Increase local funding outreach services to 13-24 year olds to a minimum of \$100,000 annually	City of Madison Dane County		
Increase transitional housing beds designated for 18-24 years in Dane County to 24			
All HSC-funded providers will review, reduce, and standardize their screening criteria to increase access and reduce barriers to housing and services			
[Objective to explore the creation of a day center or other options as an accessible public resource for persons experiencing homelessness]			

Objective 2.4: Provide supportive services that address underlying factors of homelessness and housing instability

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Funders and mainstream providers will engage mental health agencies to partner in service delivery and/or training to support housing case managers	HSC Funders, Mainstream Providers		
HSC member organizations will hire persons with lived experiences of homelessness as a peer support			
Supportive housing providers will hire people with education and training in behavioral health and evidence-based practices to serve people with the greatest needs	Supportive Housing Providers		
Mainstream and supportive housing providers will connect homeless adults and young adults with jobs, job training, and continuing education opportunities			

Objective 2.5: Increase rates of placement from shelter and transitional housing to permanent housing

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Organize service teams to provide housing stabilization services for people as soon as they move into shelter to help them move back into permanent housing			
Align funding for a housing stabilization teams	HSC Funders		
Prioritize 100% of HSC and partner-funded housing for people coming off the coordinated entry list in order of greatest need			2016
Increase rates of placement from shelter to permanent housing by 10% each year			

Goal 3 End Homelessness in Madison and Dane County

- Objective 1: Engage landlords to access new units of existing housing**
- Objective 2: Realign funding structures for rapid re-housing to provide more flexibility to move individuals and families in shelter back into housing**
- Objective 3: Align and prioritize capital, operating, and service funding packages for the development of new permanent supportive housing**
- Objective 4: End veteran homelessness as part of the federal Zero: 2106 Initiative**

Action Plan

Objective 3.1: Engage landlords to access new units of existing housing

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Conduct a landlord-outreach campaign to establish commitments for 185 new units of existing housing in the private market for people experiencing homelessness		60 new units - 2016 125 new units - 2017	2017
Organize housing locators to engage and support landlords who participate in ending homelessness			
HSC funders will fund supportive housing services according to written standards that align with best practices for staff-to-client ratio and overnight coverage	HSC Funders		

Objective 3.2: Realign funding structures for rapid re-housing to provide more flexibility to move individuals and families in shelter back into housing

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Fund 50 new slots of rapid re-housing assistance for single adults		50 new slots - 2016	2016
Fund 50 new slots of rapid re-housing assistance for families		50 new slots - 2016	2016
Fund 20 new slots of rapid re-housing assistance for young adults, 18-24		20 new slots - 2016	2016

Objective 3.3: Align and prioritize capital, operating, and service funding packages for the development of new permanent supportive housing

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Fund 160 new units of permanent supportive housing for single adults	HSC Funders	2016 - 20 units 2017 - 50 units 2018 - 80 units 2019 - 120 units 2020 - 160 units	2020
Fund 40 new units of permanent supportive housing for families	HSC Funders	2016 - 5 units 2017 - 10 units 2018 - 20 units 2019 - 30 units 2020 - 40 units	2020

Objective 3.4: End veteran homelessness as part of the federal Zero: 2106 Initiative

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Establish a certified by-name list of veterans who need housing		N/A	2016
Reach and maintain functional zero in veteran homelessness			2016

Goal 4 Advocate and collaborate with local, state, and national partners

Objective 1: Improve data collection on people being served by HSC member organizations

Objective 2: Increase community resources and will to prevent and end homelessness

Objective 3: Increase local political will to prevent and end homelessness

Objective 4: Collaborate with state and national partners and organizations

Action Plan

Objective 4.1: Improve data collection on people being served by HSC member organizations

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
All HSC member organizations will be encouraged to use HMIS			
[Objective to review and improve data annually]			
Conduct an annual system analysis to review outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and make adjustments in the projected need for each objective			

Objective 4.2: Increase community resources and will to prevent and end homelessness

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Revitalize the Community Oversight Group to report on progress toward plan goals regularly and widely in the community			
Form a common annual advocacy agenda that prioritizes no more than three key items			
Host a public education forum about the specific needs and experiences of young people in Dane County who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness and predatory behavior	YYA Providers		2016
Host a public education forum about the specific needs and experiences of elderly			2017

people in Dane County who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness			
[Objective to increase neighborhood supports where homeless families are moving]			

Objective 4.3: Increase local political will to prevent and end homelessness

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline

Objective 4.4: Collaborate with state and national partners and organizations

Strategy	Partner(s)	Benchmarks	Deadline
Encourage and fund providers, funders, and those with lived experiences of homelessness to regularly attend local, state, and national conferences			
Work with state legislators and the WI Department of Children and Families to expand rights for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, ages 16-17.	HSC Board of Directors HSC Legislative Committee YYA Organizations		Ongoing
Work with state legislators and the WI Department of Children and Families to increase the state’s budget allocation to support services for runaway and homeless youth by \$1 million annually	YYA Organizations		
Work with the Wisconsin Coalition Against Homelessness to align efforts with statewide advocacy			