

Updated DuPage County Plan to End Homelessness 2008

In reviewing the evaluation findings and recommendations the Leadership Committee of the DuPage Continuum of Care has agreed to the following goals, components and next steps for the DuPage County Plan to End Homelessness.

Global Goals of the DuPage County Homeless System and Plan to End Homelessness:

1. Prevent homelessness (*close the front door to the system*).
2. Reduce length of time people spend homeless (*open back door out of the system*).
3. Have adequate amounts and types of affordable housing for people to move in to (*build the infrastructure*).
4. Have adequate services in place to support efforts to attain and maintain housing (*build the infrastructure*).
5. Maximize homeless persons' incomes by enrolling them in mainstream benefit programs and linking to employment program opportunities.
6. Operate a robust and accurate information management system in order to document needs and measure progress towards meeting system goals.

Components of Updated Plan to End Homelessness:

Fundamental Homeless System Service Delivery Components

1. **Homeless Prevention:** assist persons at risk to maintain their housing through emergency assistance and eviction prevention
2. **Outreach & Engagement:** conduct outreach to shorten homelessness, and community outreach to build awareness and support
3. **Housing:** generate long-term housing solutions (supply, vouchers, models) and a way to navigate the system in order to re-house everyone in a timely way
4. **Employment/ Other Income:** provide access to mainstream benefits, employment and other income
5. **Services:** provide and link to case management, mental health, substance use, and health care services to shorten homelessness and increase housing stability

Key Homeless System Foundation & Resources

6. **Needs Assessment Data:** utilize the Homeless Management Information System (CMIS), and the homeless count to influence system decisions
7. **Funding:** seek funding from the HUD Continuum of Care, Illinois Dept. of Human Services Homeless Prevention and ESG funds, DuPage County Community Development Block Grant Funds and others

8. **Systems Change:** promote discharge planning and housing advocacy to prevent homelessness and shorten the length of time people spend homeless

Key Next Steps

1. **Homeless Prevention:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on funding, systems improvements and education to prevent homelessness. Specific next steps include:
 - Policy and advocacy work with DuPage Housing Action Coalition
 - Annually update best practices manual
 - Explore flexible funding
 - Establish a staff/client ratio to work toward
 - Create an early warning system, with the eviction court process for example
 - Streamline case processing methods
2. **Outreach & Engagement:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on street outreach, low demand housing, and mental health services. Some specific next steps include:
 - Identify funds to support system navigators
 - Explore how to translate Safe Haven model into effective suburban model
 - Launch Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams, if funding can be secured
 - Build on street count to link with services
 - Hold more Open Door Days
 - Conduct outreach to new partners
3. **Housing:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on increasing affordable and appropriate housing supply. Some specific next steps include:
 - Set new numeric goal for new units
 - Connect providers with funders
 - Measure percentage of total need met by current permanent supportive housing
 - Bring housing developers to the Continuum of Care (CoC)
 - Continue the CoC and DuPage Housing Action Coalition (DHAC) collaboration
 - Collaborate with landlords and employers on housing and transportation options
 - Look for additional funding options for rental assistance
 - Explore alternative forms of housing (family, co-op, 55+)
4. **Employment/Other Income:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on enrollment in mainstream benefits and linking with employment training and programs. Some specific next steps include:
 - Continue to provide mainstream benefits trainings and explore ways to lower the cost
 - Track outcomes following mainstream benefits trainings to document progress
 - Increase capacity to screen for benefits
 - Explore homeless employment models and expand training opportunities
 - Expand homeless employment program opportunities
 - Investigate linkages with townships' general assistance programs
5. **Services:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on funding to expand case management, mental health, and substance use services. Some specific next steps include:
 - Expand/develop capacity of mental health and substance use treatment services to meet growing need
 - Survey CoC agencies on mental health needs over time to identify unmet needs
 - Seek funding for supportive services
 - Use the Homeless Management Information System to track length of stay and services accessed

- Work with Department of Child and Family Services on transitional services for youth
6. **Needs Assessment Data:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on Homeless Management Information System (CMIS) system support, quality control, addressing vendor issues, and examining system expansions. Some specific next steps include:
- Utilize custom reports
 - Explore export function and alerts for missing data
 - Create a checklist for data entry, Countywide User's Manual, Best Practices Manual
 - Add a Problem/resolution component to CMIS Users Group meetings
 - Monitor and support end-user data entry, user trainings
 - Continue to improve the Point-in-Time Street Count
 - Measure and report on unmet needs
 - Assess level of resources needed for maximized operations
 - Hire a full-time system administrator for CMIS
7. **Funding:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on bringing in federal, state, local, and private funds into the CoC. Some specific next steps include:
- Continue to successfully submit the SuperNOFA
 - Each committee will identify funding priorities
 - Offer training sessions to providers on who funds what services
 - Hold a "fundings fair" to bring funders and providers together
 - Measure utilization of funding for homeless prevention services by geography
 - Track unmet need to inform funding requests
 - Gather follow-up data to highlight successful programs and need for funding
 - Raise awareness on who is homeless in DuPage
 - Participate in the Funders Collaborative
8. **Systems Change:** Moving forward the primary focus of the work will be on discharge planning, advocacy with mainstream providers, and housing advocacy. Some specific next steps include:
- Establish partnership to create a mental health resource guide
 - Work with townships regarding general assistance
 - Provide continuing education to hospital staff
 - Participate in creation of the Mental Health Leadership Council's "Air Traffic Control System"
 - DuPage Housing Action Coalition will conduct advocacy training for the CoC and provide legislative updates
 - Continue discharge planning Memoranda of Understanding and determine ways to monitor implementation
 - Work with townships on access to services and on occupancy codes