

COVID-19 and Connecticut's Homeless Response System



Safe, affordable, permanent housing is the solution to homelessness

People experiencing homelessness in Connecticut are among the highest risk for infection and death from COVID-19. Connecticut's homeless response system took urgent and critical actions to prevent the spread of the virus and save lives.

State leaders, nonprofit organizations, and providers have been working throughout the pandemic to keep people and communities safe by creating temporary housing options, rapidly connecting households to permanent housing, and working to end the experience of homelessness in our state.

In immediate response to the public health emergency declaration, regional homeless service provider organizations worked with the state Department of Housing to decompress shelter capacity and reduce the risk of spread. **The state secured hotel contracts across Connecticut and moved over 830 households from shelter to safer temporary living conditions.**

Once significant numbers of households were moved from streets and shelters to safe, temporary accommodations, the focus broadened from prevention of acute COVID-19 spread to the goal that no one returns to homelessness.

Testing Success



Testing data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) shows that, from April 2020 to January 2021, only 69 positive tests were identified statewide.

A Model of Success: The 1,000 Homes Effort

At the outset of the pandemic, providers led the creation of a Reaching Home COVID-19 Response Taskforce and the [1,000 Homes effort](#), moving over 1,000 households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing in just four months.

1,000 Homes

An effort to house 1,000 people experiencing homelessness in Connecticut in 120 days

From March 2020 to January 2021, 2,992 households successfully exited homelessness to housing, including 525 from temporary hotel accommodations.



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A way forward on homelessness after COVID-19

People of color, particularly Black and Native American communities, are disproportionately impacted by both the experience of homelessness, and infection and mortality from COVID-19. **Connecticut's response to homelessness, during the pandemic and beyond, must continue to work to improve outcomes for those who have been historically marginalized.**

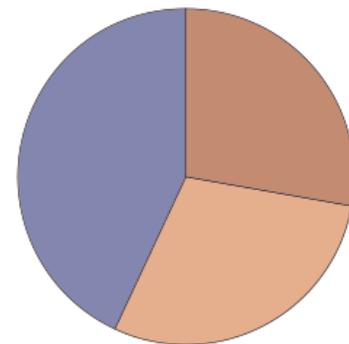
With the onset of winter and a second COVID-19 infection spike, the homeless response system has been doubling down to ensure mitigation of the virus by rapidly connecting households to housing and planning for widespread vaccine distribution.

The public health crisis highlighted what we already knew—the experience of homelessness is unacceptable. The homeless system's response to the pandemic has shown what we know is possible—our goal is within reach if we preserve existing funding and make the additional capital and service investments necessary to end homelessness.

When Connecticut residents have access to safe and stable housing, their economic and health outcomes improve. This is true under any circumstance, but COVID-19 has shown that ensuring access to permanent housing is imperative—and possible.

Funding Assistance

The pandemic brought an influx of over \$70.8M in federal resources to the homeless response system.



Learn more about how the Partnership for Strong Communities and our partners are working together to [prevent and end homelessness](#) and [expand housing affordability](#).

