

Reaching Home

2022 Legislative Agenda



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Homelessness is solvable.

Connecticut can make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time by investing in what works: housing, supportive services, and the people and infrastructure that support our most vulnerable residents.

Fund the State's Homeless Response System

Invest in Funding the Front Lines

COVID-19 further illuminated the systematic underfunding of the front line nonprofit organizations that provide shelter operations and services, homeless outreach, diversion services, rapid-rehousing case management, housing navigation, supportive housing operations and housing case management. Reaching Home is encouraged by the legislature's decision to increase nonprofit provider funding in both FY22 & 23; however, a significant funding gap remains among homeless and housing services organizations. Connecticut must address this funding gap by:

1. Supporting the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance long-term plan to restore at least \$461 million to community nonprofits, which includes housing and homeless service organizations.
2. Provide an additional \$13.34 million in FY 23 to provide homeless and housing service organizations funding for adequate wages, benefits, and professional development for front line workers, increasing rent and utility costs, and better access to technology via:
 - \$7.47 million increase in DOH Housing/Homeless Services line
 - \$169K increase in DOH Municipal Housing/Homeless Services line
 - \$436K increase in DOH Homeless Youth line
 - \$5.26 million increase in DMHAS Housing Supports/Services line

Invest in Connecticut's Coordinated Access Networks

Provide an additional \$2.3 million in DOH's Housing/Homeless Services line to provide critical staff infrastructure support to Coordinated Access Networks (CANs) and 2-1-1. CANs provide streamlined access to the homeless services system at the regional level. 2-1-1 serves as the statewide single point of entry to CANs.

REACHING HOME

Reaching Home is a collective impact campaign which works to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut by making it **rare, brief, and one-time**.

Our consensus legislative agenda is developed by more than 200 partners representing a wide variety of systems and sectors.

Reaching Home acknowledges the historic and ongoing role of systemic racism in creating and perpetuating experiences of homelessness in Connecticut.

The investments and policies outlined in our agenda work to actively remove barriers to housing opportunity and advance more equitable outcomes for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.



Expand Housing Resources

- **Increase Investment in Rental Assistance**

Increase DOH Housing/Homeless Services line by at least \$20 million in FY23 to expand the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), including \$2 million to provide rental assistance to 200 scattered-site supportive housing units for highly vulnerable individuals and families.

Invest in Supportive Services for the State's Most Vulnerable Residents

- **Increase Investment in Targeted Services**

Increase DMHAS Housing Supports and Service line by \$2.25 million in FY23 to expand supportive services to 300 scattered site and development units for highly vulnerable individuals and families with persistent obstacles to maintaining housing stability.

- **Create an Eviction Prevention Partnership**

Provide an additional \$2.5 million in DOH's Housing/Homeless Services line to establish and implement a proven eviction prevention model that leverages Right to Counsel legal services and couples them with high-quality social work to address vulnerable renter's needs.

These investments are in addition to the **crucial preservation** of existing FY23 allocations which directly impact homelessness in CT, including:

- **Department of Housing**

- \$2.935 million Homeless Youth line
- \$85.323 million Housing/Homeless Services line
- \$637K Municipal Housing/Homeless Services line
- \$100 million bond authorization for the Affordable Housing FLEX Fund and \$50 million bond authorization for the state Housing Trust Fund

- **Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services**

- \$23.404 Housing Supports and Services line

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Collective impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration.

Partnership for Strong Communities serves as the backbone organization responsible for supporting the operation, management, and logistics of both Reaching Home and the HOMEConnecticut Campaign, which works to address Connecticut's affordable housing shortage.

Collectively, Reaching Home and HomeConnecticut drive policy change to ensure everyone in Connecticut has a safe, stable home that is affordable to them in an equitable community of their choice where they can thrive.

