

Homelessness in Connecticut 2021



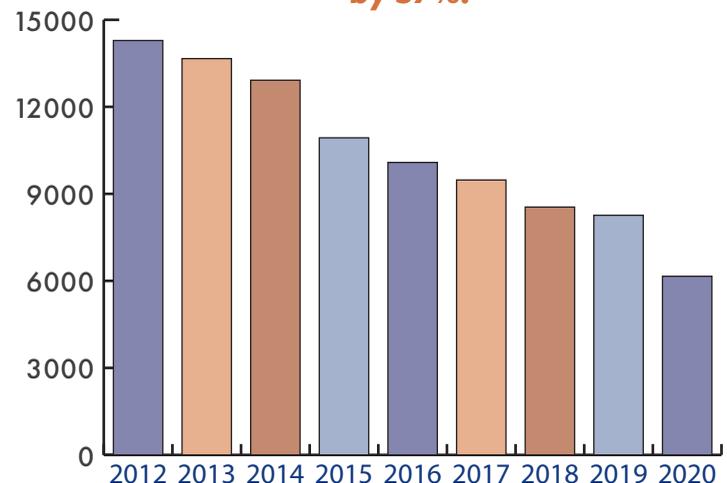
THE PROBLEM | THE PROGRESS | THE RESOURCES | THE SOLUTION

Page 1 | January 2021

The coronavirus pandemic swept through the state, creating uncertainty and a need for rapid response and changes in the homelessness system. It also highlighted the racial disparities that exists for those experiencing homelessness, and the need for more affordable housing options to keep people safe.

Our service system has maintained a track record of success, not only in continuing to move people into permanent housing placements, but also in keeping individuals and families safe from the virus and off the streets. **We know that sustained investment is necessary in continuing our progress in reducing and preventing homelessness.**

Since 2012, the number of people utilizing Connecticut's shelter system has decreased by 57%.



Who experiences homelessness in Connecticut?

6,159

individuals used CT's shelter system last year

398 children under the age of 5 were served in emergency shelter.

87% were children of color.

Over 7,800

estimated # of youth under 25 experiencing homelessness

When people with disabilities are connected to affordable housing with supportive services, **costs to other systems are decreased by up to 70 percent.**

Children who experience homelessness have increased health risks, developmental delays, child welfare involvement, and behavioral health issues to name a few of the long-term, high cost consequences. Targeting support to highly vulnerable and high risk individuals, families, and children results in significant reductions in the social and economic hardships created by homelessness and racial inequities. **These crises are costly but solvable with leadership and coordination across federal, state, and local levels.**

In Connecticut, partners have come together across systems and sectors to create a **coordinated homelessness response system** known as Coordinated Access Networks (or CANs). State policymakers have protected the most vital housing resources. Together, we've successfully reduced homelessness among several populations.

However, **new homelessness is happening every day.** It is not a static problem. It will take consistent, sustained investment to maintain our progress and realize cost savings.

73,680

calls to 2-1-1 for housing assistance were made through Connecticut's CAN system last year



PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

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Page 2 | January 2021

Continuing Connecticut's National Leadership on Homelessness

With the will, commitment and focus, policymakers can continue to partner with the Reaching Home Campaign to be the first state to make homelessness rare, brief, and a one-time occurrence.

Our experience, best and promising practices, along with creative problem-solving and available resources to respond to the health crisis have all served to provide the basis for a road map to solving this complex social problem.

By targeting support to high need/high risk individuals, families, and children -- we can realize significant reductions in the social and economic hardships created by homelessness and racial inequities.

The goal of the Reaching Home Campaign is to make homelessness in Connecticut rare, brief, and one-time by 2023. To achieve this goal, we must:

- Ensure identification of all people experiencing homelessness, no unsheltered homelessness, and that people don't enter homelessness in the first place. This requires comprehensive, coordinated approaches for **homelessness prevention, outreach and diversion** across the **housing, criminal justice, child welfare, education, workforce, early childhood, health care, and mental health systems.**
- Greatly reduce the length of time people stay in homelessness, and continue to increase the number of people exiting homelessness into stable housing. This requires the resources and **capacity to triage** and connect people to **permanent housing options** quickly.
- Strengthen supports to individuals and families that help them maintain housing stability by **fostering income growth, and positive health and employment outcomes**, so that they don't ever have to return to homelessness again.
- Ensure meaningful partnership with **people who have experienced homelessness**, with a focus on **racial equity**, in all work and strategy development related to ending homelessness.

Visit www.pschousing.org to learn more and add your support.

Racial Disparities, Homelessness, and COVID-19

In Connecticut, African Americans make up 38% of homeless population but only 10% of the overall population. Hispanics make up 24% of homeless population and only 14% of the overall population.

Both groups have a higher incidence of COVID-19 cases and fatalities when compared to the general population.

Housing instability puts people at risk for COVID-19, further deepening the existing racial disparities within public health.



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