

Homelessness in Connecticut 2020



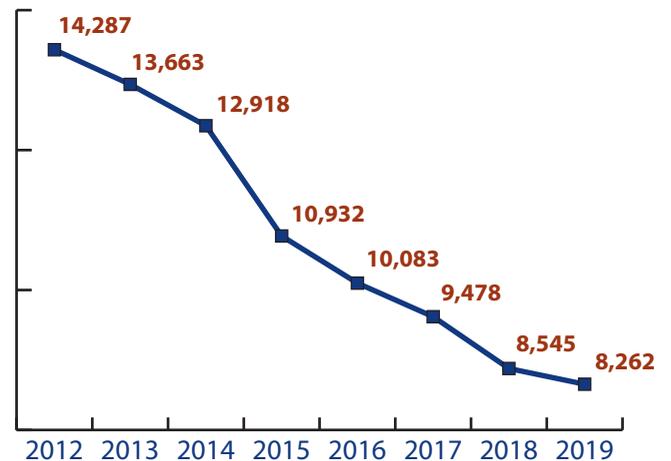
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Connecticut is a national leader in the effort to make homelessness rare, brief and one-time – but we still have far too many young children, families, youth and individuals in crisis and becoming homeless daily.

Our service system has a track record of success. We need sustained investment in order to continue our progress in reducing and preventing homelessness. **Ensuring that everyone has a safe, affordable home is not just the right thing to do, it saves millions in state funding for generations.**

Since 2012, the number of people utilizing Connecticut's shelter system has decreased by 42%.¹



Who experiences homelessness in Connecticut?

8,262
individuals used CT's shelter system last year¹

526 children under the age of 5 were served in emergency shelter. **90%** were children of color.³

Over 5,000
estimated # of youth under 25 experiencing homelessness²

8,262 people utilized the shelter system in Connecticut last year.¹ 526 were under the age of 5.³ An untold number of youth are experiencing homelessness with estimates over 5,000.² **The result is extreme levels of stress and trauma, especially for children, and increased use of public systems.**

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. **This crisis is 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.

72,072

calls to 2-1-1 for housing assistance were made through Connecticut's CAN system last year³



PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

I: 227 LAWRENCE ST, HARTFORD CT 06106 * e: INFO@PSCHOUSING.ORG * p: 860.244.0066 * w: WWW.PSCHOUSING.ORG

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Making Homelessness Rare, Brief, and One-Time by 2023

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.

Utilizing a data projection tool built from our statewide By Name List of people experiencing homelessness, we have concrete estimates for what resources are necessary to reach this shared goal. Our experience, best and promising practices, and new resource projections provide the basis for a road map to solving this complex social problem.

By targeting support to a relatively small population of high need/high risk individuals, families, and children – we can realize significant reductions in the social and economic costs created by homelessness.

When people with disabilities are connected to permanent, affordable housing with support services, system costs are decreased by up to 70 percent.⁵

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.

The Reaching Home Campaign is guided by a statewide Coordinating Committee and staffed by the Partnership for Strong Communities.

Data projections by the Reaching Home Campaign estimate that Connecticut can reach functional zero on homelessness **with the resources to permanently house the following populations over the next four years:**

506 families

1,174 youth

and **4,745** individuals⁴

Sources:

1. Connecticut Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) - Federal Fiscal Year 2019

2. 2019 Connecticut Youth Count

3. Emergency Shelter Dashboard - ctcandata.org

4. Connecticut By-Name List (BNL) Data Projection Tool - Federal Fiscal Year 2019

5. Connecticut Supportive Housing Demonstration Project Program Evaluation Report