

Legislative Priorities

1. Protect Vital Homeless System Resources:

- Department of Housing (DOH) Housing/Homeless Services Line currently at \$85.5M
- DOH Homeless Youth Line currently at \$2.3M
- Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Housing Supports and Services Line currently at \$23M

2. Specify Funding for Coordinated Access Networks and 2-1-1

Provide \$2.3M annually 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.

3. New Capital Investments for the Development of Affordable Housing and Supportive Housing at DOH

Continue new bonding authorizations of \$100M per year for the Affordable Housing FLEX Fund; and \$50M per year for the State Housing Trust Fund. Access to equitable and permanent affordable and supportive housing is critical to the stabilization of individuals and families, and state economic growth.

4. Dedicated Federal Match for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

Provide \$410,000 towards the annualized \$650,000 federal match needed in DOH's Housing and Homeless Services Line to leverage \$6.5M in federal dollars toward resolving youth homelessness.

5. Amend State Statutes to Remove Barriers to Obtaining Identity Documents for Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Lack of access to identity documents, such as birth certificates and state issued ID's, as well as their associated fees are a significant barrier for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Many young people are unable to obtain employment, participate in workforce development programs, and access housing. They also have difficulties in accessing healthcare and other benefits.

Reaching Home is the campaign to prevent and end homelessness in Connecticut. With more than 200 partners representing a variety of systems and sectors, Reaching Home is working to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time by 2023.

Legislative Priorities (Continued)

6. New Targeted Investments for Housing and Services to Support Highly Vulnerable Individuals and Families

- Individuals and families with persistent obstacles to maintaining housing stability need the combination of rental assistance and supportive services:
 - **\$2M in DOH's Housing/Homeless Services Line** to provide rental assistance to 200 scattered-site supportive housing units.
 - **\$2.25M in DMHAS's Housing Supports and Services Line** to provide supportive services to 300 scattered-site and development units.
- **\$375,000 in DMHAS's Housing Supports and Services Line** to provide outreach services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- **\$3M in DMHAS's Discharge and Diversion Services Line** to support successful community integration for people exiting CVH and other psychiatric institutions.

7. Increase Funding to Support Nonprofit Agencies with a Focus on Those Entities Working to End Homelessness

Support the CT Nonprofit Community Alliance proposal to restore \$461M over five years, beginning with \$128M (net cost of \$67M after federal reimbursements) for fiscal year 2022 to protect community nonprofits and increase Medicaid rates to cover the true cost of care.

The Reaching Home Campaign

acknowledges the historic and ongoing role of systemic racism in creating disproportionality in representation of Black, indigenous, and people of color in homelessness. The policies outlined in this agenda work to actively remove barriers to services and housing opportunities for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in order to advance more equitable outcomes.

Where We Are

Connecticut is a national leader in the effort to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time. **Shelter usage in the state has decreased by 57 percent since 2012** – but we still have far too many individuals, families, youth, and young adults experiencing housing crises.

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.

We can build upon our success to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for everyone in Connecticut. Contact us at ReachingHome@PSCHousing.org to learn more.