



DENTON COUNTY
HOMELESSNESS
LEADERSHIP TEAM

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

United Way of Denton County, Inc.

2018-2021 Strategic Plan

A Collective Impact Initiative of:



Vision

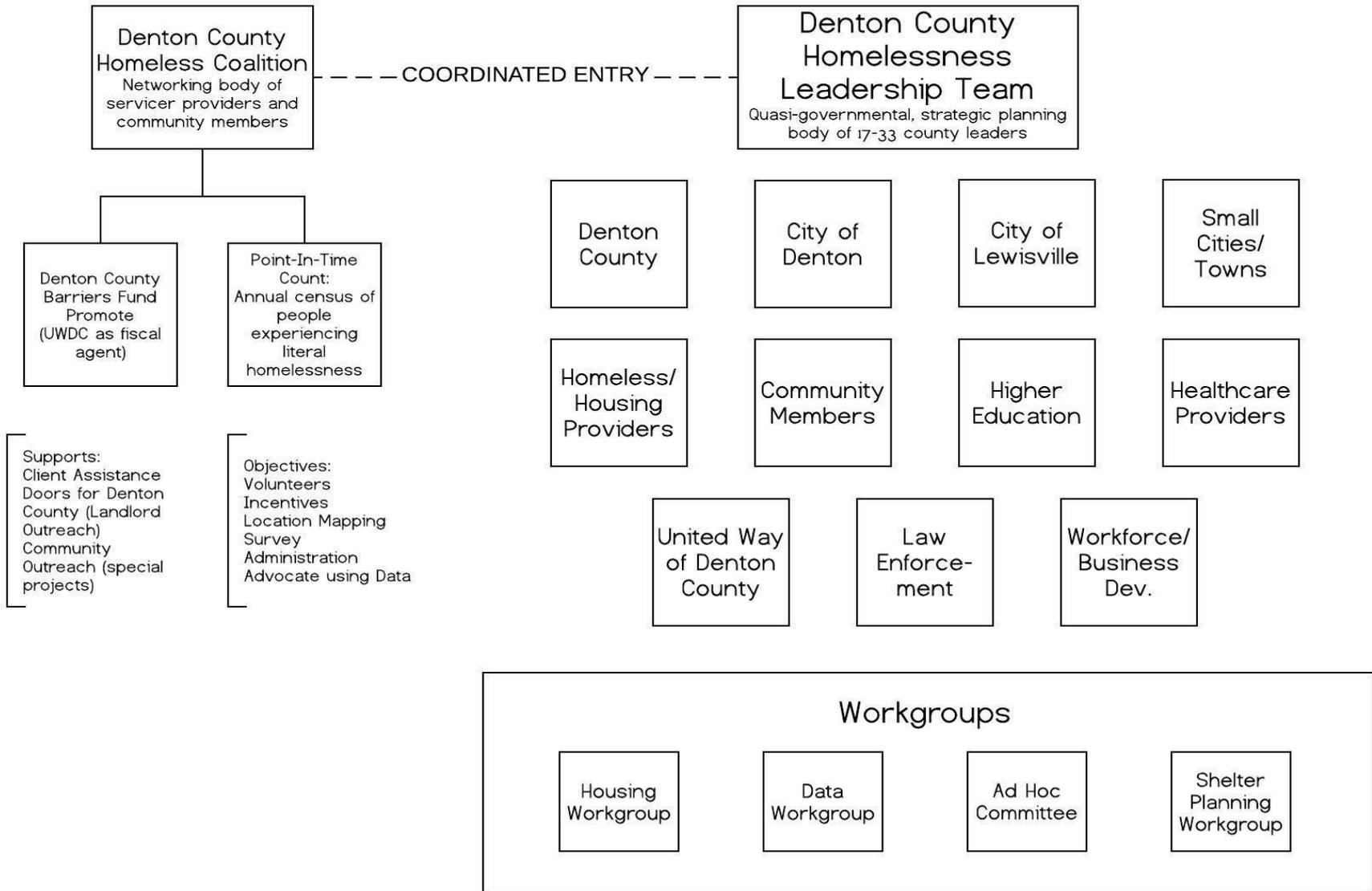
Every person in Denton County has a place to call home that is safe, affordable, accessible and supported by community resources.

Mission

The Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team fosters an effective and coordinated system of homelessness prevention and intervention, resulting in homelessness that is rare, brief and nonrecurring through:

- Community Awareness & Connection
- Data-driven, evidenced-based, fiscally responsible recommendations
- Innovative solutions around affordable housing, access to primary and behavioral health care services, adequate incomes and coordinated services
- Mobilizing, advocating and empowering public-private community-wide collaboration

Denton County Housing Crisis Response System Planning Entities



DENTON COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS



CATEGORY 1: Chronic/Literal

Literal: People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided.

Chronic: An unaccompanied literal homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years

*A disabling condition is defined as ""a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, a serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions.

CATEGORY 2: At-Risk

People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled-up situation, within 14 days.

- May include *Cost Burdened Families*: Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. An estimated 12 million renter and homeowner households now pay more than 50 percent of their annual incomes for housing. A family with one full-time worker earning the minimum wage cannot afford the local fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment anywhere in the United States.

CATEGORY 3: Youth (and other statuses)

Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state.

CATEGORY 4: Domestic Violence

People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Accurate, high quality data is important when measuring community efforts toward ending homelessness. Performance measurements help communities understand if elements of a Housing Crisis Response System are working effectively together to achieve their goals of preventing and ending homelessness.

The implementation of a Coordinated Entry System will assist Denton County's Housing Crisis Response System in collecting information and data about people experiencing homelessness in the community. Consistent monitoring of the following performance measures will assist in identifying gaps in homeless and housing services and where to channel collective impact efforts.

Number – Reduce number of people experiencing homelessness

Length – Reduce the length of time households are enrolled in emergency shelter and transitional housing experiencing homelessness.

First Time Homeless – Reduce the number of persons who become homeless for the first time

Recidivism – Reduce the number of people who return to homelessness after receiving permanent housing

Barriers – Increase access to housing through a variety of successful housing placement options

Income – Increase income of homeless adults being served

Outreach – Identify vulnerable populations

Standards of Excellence

The Standards of Excellence (Standards) are a set of performance goals and quality standards for outreach and engagement, emergency and temporary housing, and supportive housing programs. The Standards are a tool for providers and organizations, and are intended to build on strengths and push our community towards real goals. The four primary components of the Standards are:

- Goals & Indicators – Markers and metrics of programs that make measurable progress
- Operating Standards – Hallmark of high quality programs
- Suggested Practices – Strategies for continuous improvement
- System Recommendations – Opportunities for effective change

Completed Progress

2017-2018

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

✓ Identify Unmet Housing Need

- Develop Housing Crisis Response System
 - Develop Housing Priority List & Prioritization Standards
- Determine level of housing need
 - Clearly define percentages of diversified types of housing to serve literal homeless
- Identify available housing resources and types of housing
 - Develop comprehensive supportive housing inventory
- Expand housing and rental availability databases
 - Identify occupancy rates; rental rates

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

✓ Expand Housing Capacity

- Develop replicable supportive housing program protocol
 - Generate Program Overview
 - Add 2 units of supportive housing (2/10)
- Network with private landlords
 - Research landlord risk mitigation funds
 - Develop landlord outreach model

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

✓ Foster Housing Stability

- Identify and reduce barriers to access
 - Collaborate with Denton County Homeless Coalition to establish a Barriers Fund
- Support case management capacity of local agencies
 - Assess case management capacity of local agencies and make recommendations for funding
 - Secured funding for Housing Navigator to liaise between nonprofits and landlords and support housing search and placement
- Collaboration between agencies to create seamless transition to maintain long term housing stability
 - Assess Availability/accessibility of wrap-around services
 - Assess capacity of local agencies to provide diversionary services
 - Establish county-wide case conferencing to prioritize and house families

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

✓ Influence Public Policy

- Advocate and support on-going housing initiatives at all levels of government (City/County, State & Federal)
 - Network and communicate advocacy goals at various levels of government

✓ Seek Funding

- Make funding recommendations to address needs that result from strategic objectives
 - Secured funding for Housing Navigator to liaise between nonprofits and landlords and support housing search and placement

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

✓ Implement Coordinated Entry (CE)

- Define Denton County CE Process
 - Develop CE Policies and Procedures Document for Denton County and corresponding protocol training materials
 - Develop Logic Model to track inputs, outputs and outcomes throughout CE Implementation
 - Define and develop prioritization standards
 - Identify roles of agencies throughout CE process
- Identify phases of CE Implementation
- Address capacity issues and barriers to implementation
 - Track use of system and tools throughout Denton County
- Assess equipment and personnel needs for implementation and maintenance

Completed Progress: Increase Access to Housing

2017-2018

- ✓ Determine Housing Need
 - Utilize local data to identify gaps in needed housing and services by DCHLT homeless definition category
- ✓ Develop and Maintain Data Dashboard
 - Identify data sources
 - Establish master template for consistent reporting of data from multiple data sources
- ✓ Seek Funding
 - Secured funding from City of Denton to support HMIS licenses at various agencies
 - Secured funding from City of Denton to support dedicated position to oversee HMIS and Coordinated Entry implementation and maintenance

2018-2022 DCHLT Strategic Goals



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 35% of households enrolled in emergency shelter exit to temporary or transitional housing ○ 40% of households enrolled in emergency shelter exit to permanent housing ○ 70% of shelter stayers recommend shelter to someone else in need ● Standards for Supportive Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 75% of households enrolled in a supportive housing program (Rapid Re-Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Homeless Prevention or other) maintain housing 3 months after program exit ○ 35% of households enrolled in a supportive housing program increase income by program exit (through earned income or non-cash benefits) ○ 85% of households exit supportive housing programs to permanent housing destination ○ 85% of those who complete supportive housing programs would recommend the agency to someone else in need ● Research coordinated entry processes for 'at-risk' populations ● Begin tracking number of requests for homeless prevention services in Denton County ● Administer twice yearly surveys to households who have exited local homeless prevention and intervention programs to obtain feedback on their experience 	<p>X X X X X X I/P X X</p>
<p>Data Workgroup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain the Coordinated Entry Housing Priority List in collaboration with community partners to ensure there is a real-time list of people experiencing homelessness with their housing needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support at a minimum, monthly Case Conferencing and ongoing maintenance of the Master HPL ● Measure housing navigation referrals through Coordinated Entry; Goal to achieve 100% referrals from CE (and if participant denies CE, the HMIS record) to housing navigation 	<p>I/P X</p>
<p>Ad Hoc Affordable Housing Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research and propose workforce housing solutions ● Utilize data to increase diverse stock of supportive/affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish baseline number of affordable housing units in Denton County ● Engage local experts and stakeholders ● Increase number of affordable housing units by 10% ● Explore ways to incentivize affordable housing at a local level ● Support inclusion of affordable housing development strategies in city-specific housing plans 	<p>X I/P X I/P X</p>

Status Key: X – To Be Done; I/P – In Progress; C - Completed

2018-2022 DCHLT Strategic Goals

<p>Shelter Planning Workgroup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess current environment and determine direction for the future of Emergency Shelter services for people experiencing homelessness in Denton County Increase access to shelter and temporary housing solutions for sheltered and unsheltered populations in Denton County. Implement Standards of Excellence across Denton County homeless prevention and intervention programs Prioritize client satisfaction and obtain feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Denton County shelter and transitional/temporary housing inventory Develop and administer customer service survey to Denton County's sheltered and unsheltered population Identify opportunities to reduce barriers to shelter and collaboratively develop a quick-action shelter improvement plan for public consumption and shelter adaptation Develop plans for housing-focused case management across shelter and outreach programs Standards for Outreach & Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% coverage of Denton County service area; track # of total engagements made and # of unique engagements 90% of households engaged through outreach are assessed for housing through Coordinated Entry 50% of households eligible are successfully assisted in collecting all housing documents within 30 days 70% of households engaged through outreach are placed in temporary, transitional or permanent housing Standards for Emergency Shelter/Temporary Housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of households engaged through shelter are assessed for housing through Coordinated Entry Measure households diverted from homelessness 50% of households enrolled in emergency shelter exited within 120 days (exits include diversion, extended stay or other housing) 35% of households enrolled in emergency shelter exit to temporary or transitional housing 40% of households enrolled in emergency shelter exit to permanent housing 70% of shelter stayers recommend shelter to someone else in need 	<p>C I/P X X X X X X X X X X X</p>
<p>Backbone Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate and support on-going efforts to increase access to housing at all levels of government Seek funding to support objectives Support maintenance and expansion of Coordinated Entry in Denton County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network and communicate advocacy goals at various levels of government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City/County – Chambers of commerce, city government committees, North Central Texas Council of Governments State – Denton County Delegates in Texas Legislature Federal – Denton County Delegates in Federal Government Increase Barriers Fund resources in collaboration with the Denton County Homeless Coalition and other community partners Develop online Coordinated Entry toolkit for easy access to tools and information for housing providers and the general public 	<p>X I/P X</p>

Status Key: X – To Be Done; I/P – In Progress; C - Completed

2. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF HOMELESSNESS DATA MANAGEMENT

Workgroup	Strategies	Metrics	Status
<p>Data Workgroup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain master Housing Priority List that accurately reflects the number of people experiencing homelessness at any given time in a community Develop web-based dashboard of comprehensive Denton County Homelessness Data Support ongoing implementation of Coordinated Entry System as a part of Denton County’s Housing Crisis Response System to collect information and data about people experiencing homelessness Increase the number of agencies using HMIS and Coordinated Entry Improve the data quality of HMIS users through data entry support, training, and data reporting Identify cost offsets of housing chronically homeless individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly HPL Dashboard report tracking # intakes, #CE Assessments, # CE Referrals, #Inflow, #Active, and #Outflow Maintain a consistent number of licenses and agencies reporting to HMIS Provide at least 1,500 hours of data quality training, assistance, and HPL support with HMIS License holders Develop average individual cost of chronic homelessness specific to Denton County Utilize Denton Supportive Housing Pilot and other community data to conduct cross-sector cost analysis of chronically homeless, justice-involved individuals with high system utilization rates 	<p>I/P</p> <p>I/P</p> <p>I/P</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
<p>Housing Workgroup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor community-wide System Performance Measures to assist in identifying gaps in both homeless and housing services and to determine where to channel collective impact efforts and community resources in Denton County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum these measures must track progress toward these System Performance Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number – Reduce number of people experiencing homelessness Goal: Reduce by 5% annually Length – Reduce the length of time households are enrolled in emergency shelter and transitional housing experiencing homelessness. Goal: Reduce by 30 days annually toward the overall goal to reduce the length of homelessness to 90 days or less First Time Homeless – Reduce the number of persons who become homeless for the first time. Goal: Reduce by 5% annually Recidivism – Reduce the number of people who return to homelessness after receiving permanent housing. Goal: Total returns to homelessness to be less than 25% Barriers – Increase access to housing through a variety of successful housing placement options. Goal: Increase housing placement by 10% annually Income – Increase income of homeless adults being served. Goal: 37% of the people enrolled in housing assistance programs will increase their income Outreach – Identify vulnerable populations in Denton County. Goals: To have street outreach to 75% coverage of Denton County and 90% of those people engaged through Street Outreach will be assessed through CE and entered into HMIS 	<p>I/P</p>

2018-2022 DCHLT Strategic Goals

<p>Shelter Planning Workgroup</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect quantitative and qualitative data to assess needs of Denton County's sheltered and unsheltered homeless population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct surveys of Denton County's sheltered and unsheltered homeless population 	<p>I/P</p>
<p>Backbone Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate and support on-going efforts to improve homeless data management at all levels of government Seek funding to supportive objectives Collaborate with Denton County Homeless Coalition to conduct annual Point-In-Time Homeless census counts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to seek funding to support HMIS licenses, Coordinated Entry and cross-sector cost analysis efforts Produce comprehensive annual report on homelessness data Measure trending data of homelessness based on HMIS and Point-In-Time data 	<p>I/P X X</p>

2018-2022 DCHLT Strategic Goals



3. END VETERAN HOMELESSNESS IN DENTON COUNTY BY 2020

Workgroup	Strategies	Metrics	Status
Data Workgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all Veterans experiencing homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage Housing Priority List to accurately reflect total number of Veterans households experiencing homelessness 	I/P
Housing Workgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop resources, plans, partnerships and system capacity to identify and address housing and service needs of Veterans entering, returning to or at risk of homelessness Provide service-intensive transitional housing only in limited instances Develop capacity to assist Veterans to swiftly move into permanent housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shelter immediately to any Veteran experiencing unsheltered homelessness who wants it Establish Veteran-specific outreach and Front Door access for Coordinated Entry All Veterans experiencing homelessness assessed for housing through Coordinated Entry Update Denton County Coordinated Entry Eligibility Matrix and Coordinated Entry advertisement to reflect Veteran-specific access and housing options Prioritize Veteran households for available housing assistance resources in case conferencing Cross reference VA list to determine HUD-VASH eligibility Prioritize Veteran households for Housing Navigation through Doors for Denton County Reduce returns to homelessness for Veterans Identify and increase coordination of wrap-around services to ensure long-term housing stability 	<p>X</p> <p>I/P</p> <p>I/P</p> <p>I/P</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>
Shelter Planning Workgroup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shelter immediately to any Veteran experiencing unsheltered homelessness who wants it Ensure accurate referrals from shelter and outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Coordinated Entry tools and provide training to shelter and outreach staff to ensure awareness of and referrals to available Veteran housing opportunities 	X

Status Key: X – To Be Done; I/P – In Progress; C - Completed

HOUSING TERMS



Organizational Structure

Balance of State (BoS) – Texas’s largest CoC. The Texas Balance of State CoC is made up of all service providers, advocates, local government officials, and citizens who work to eliminate homelessness in over 213 counties in Texas outside of most major metropolitan cities. DCHC is a member. Texas Homeless Network (THN) serves as the CoC lead agency, HMIS administrator and the applicant for the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Program for the Balance of State.

Continuum of Care (CoC) – CoC’s are authorized by HUD, CoC’s are designed to promote communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness. CoC’s apply to HUD and are awarded CoC grants that then provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, state, and local governments to end homelessness.

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – One of the many things offered by HUD are grants and programs related to the topic of homelessness.

Grants – Local Grants related to Homelessness (not all inclusive):

- COD – City of Denton Human Services Grant
- ESG – Emergency Solution Grant
- EFSP – Emergency Food and Shelter Program
- SHP – Supportive Housing Grant
- CoC – Continuum of Care Grants

Programs – List of some homeless program types (not all inclusive):

Affordable Housing – Defined as paying 30% or less than an individual’s income for housing.

Coordinated Entry – Process used in communities to streamline access, assessment, and referral process for housing and other services across agencies in a community. In a coordinated system, each system entry point (‘Front Door’) uses the

same assessment/intake tool and makes decisions on which programs families are referred based on a comprehensive understanding of each program's specific requirements, target population, and available beds and services.

Emergency Shelter – Shelter provided to address the immediate needs of homeless persons living on the street by providing temporary housing.

Diversion – Diversion is a strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.

Housing Inventory Count (HIC) – The Housing Inventory Count (HIC) is a point-in-time inventory of provider programs within a Continuum of Care that provide beds and units dedicated to serve persons who are homeless, categorized by five Program Types: Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Rapid Re-housing; Safe Haven; and Permanent Supportive Housing.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – HMIS tracks the data regarding the homeless and services provided.

Homelessness Prevention (HP) – Short- and/or medium-term rental assistance provided to prevent an individual or family from moving into an emergency shelter or another place not fit for human habitation.

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) – Formerly known as Section 8 Vouchers; federally funded housing voucher for low-income individuals and families; administered locally by the Denton Housing Authority

Housing Crisis Response System (HCRS) – An effective HCRS identifies all people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness across the community, prevents homelessness whenever possible, provides immediate access through coordinated entry to shelter and crisis services without barriers to entry, as stable housing and supports are being secured, and quickly connects people who experience homelessness to housing assistance and/or services tailored to the unique strengths and needs of households and which enable them to achieve and maintain permanent housing.

Housing First – Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service

participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.

Housing Priority List (HPL) – List of individuals and families who have been assessed using the VI-SPDAT in HMIS and are waiting to be connected to a permanent housing solution

Low-Barrier – Housing solutions that requires a minimum number of expectations of the people who wish to be placed there.

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count – A count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. Continuums of Care also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other year (odd numbered years). Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – Housing for people who need long-term housing assistance with supportive services to stay housed.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) – Housing relocation and stabilization services and assistance provided to help a homeless individual or family move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) – Monthly benefit for people who are living with a disability

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – Monthly benefit program for people with little income who are also living with a disability

Supportive Housing (SH) and Transitional Housing (TH) – Housing that is provided with case management designed to help client achieve self-sufficiency and exit the program over a determined amount of time

Street Outreach. Essential services and outreach provided to unsheltered homeless people on the street

Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) – Combination of Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance and individualized case management services for Veterans experiencing homelessness

VI-SPDAT – The VI-SPDAT is a pre-screening, or triage tool that is designed to be used by all providers within a community to quickly assess the health and social needs of homeless persons and match them with the most appropriate support and housing interventions that are available

Wrap-Around Services. Community based, client centered approach to provide other supportive services as available and as needed for clients to maintain housing stability. Wrap-Around Services might include: Health Care, Child Care, Substance Use Treatment, Mental Health Care, Education, Employment, Legal Services, Counseling, Transportation, etc.