

Ohio Statewide Homelessness Study

PURPOSE

The Ohio Development Services Agency's Office of Community Development has contracted with the **Corporation for Supportive Housing** and **Barbara Poppe and Associates** to conduct a comprehensive statewide study that describes the extent and nature of homelessness in Ohio, including the demographic, geographic, and economic conditions which affect homelessness, and examines the statewide delivery system of programs and services to populations at imminent risk or experiencing homelessness.

BACKGROUND

Ohio's Housing and Homeless Collaborative (the Collaborative) is an interagency working group that creates a comprehensive approach to address housing and homelessness in Ohio, utilizing public and private resources. The Collaborative also creates a forum for coordinating funding priorities and strategies, as well as engages local housing and homelessness interest groups. The Collaborative, co- chaired by Development and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, has expanded its membership beyond the original state agencies to now include stakeholders and mental health consumers.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services received a Cooperative Agreement to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI) grant in which Ohio will develop a statewide plan to ensure sustained partnerships across public health and housing systems that will result in short- and long-term strategies to support individuals who experience chronic homelessness and veterans who experience homelessness. In coordination with this effort, the Collaborative endorsed the creation of an Ohio plan to end homelessness that would include specific areas of interest focused on a means to prevent and minimize homelessness within the constraints of available or likely expanded resources as well as ending homelessness with the resources needed for such.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The outcome of this study is intended to answer the following main questions:

- What is the current state of homelessness in Ohio by type, target population, and geographic area?
- What resources are currently available in Ohio to provide housing and other assistance to persons experiencing or imminently at-risk of homelessness?
- What gaps exist that prevent persons experiencing homelessness from receiving housing and services?
- Are there specific regional and/or statewide issues and challenges that create barriers to housing and services?
- What can be done to prevent and minimize homelessness in Ohio in the next 10 years within the constraints of existing or reasonably attainable resources?

SCOPE OF WORK

Phase 1: May-September 2016

- Current State Analysis:
 - Trends on numbers of people experiencing homelessness (HUD, ED)
- Current Inventory Analysis:

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- Number of beds dedicated to serving homeless persons by type and target population, including current utilization levels and functional capacity
- State agencies and programs available to serve persons experiencing homelessness
- State and federal funding sources, with amount of available funding identified, including impact of the National Housing Trust Fund
- Affordable housing inventory:
 - A list of affordable housing resources throughout the state, aided by Ohio Housing Finance Agency and public housing agency data
- Definitions:
 - Common industry-wide definitions
 - Agency-specific definitions
 - Identification of where terms and definitions differ among programs, funders, and agencies
- National Trends & Best Practices:
 - Identification of current national trends and best practices in the area of homelessness and housing
 - Identification of recent studies/reports that are having a significant impact on the way in which communities are addressing homelessness
 - Analysis of how these national trends and practices relate specifically to the homeless environment in Ohio
- Cost Benefit Analysis Overview:
 - Identify significant evidence-based studies analyzing both the immediate and long-term cost of homelessness, including comparisons between the cost of subsidized housing versus homelessness. Provide examples that include the impact of access to healthcare, addiction and substance use treatment, and education. The overview will discuss how the analysis relates to homelessness in urban and rural Ohio.
- Regional Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities:
 - Identification of issues and challenges that currently exist at the local level (and are specific to that area) which affect the ability to provide housing and services to persons experiencing homelessness (i.e., lack of employment opportunities, economically depressed areas, etc.)
 - Identification of opportunities that exist at the local level which might assist in preventing and minimizing homelessness for that community (i.e., major employer moving into area, new housing units under construction, area providers with exceptional service coordination, etc.)

Phase 2: to be determined

- Gaps Analysis
 - Gaps in available beds and services
 - Gaps in available funding
 - Gaps being created by shifting priorities at the funder/resource level or by local communities
- Recommendations for Reducing Risk and Actual Homelessness:
 - Based on the research conducted during Phase 1, identify specific measures that can be taken to prevent and reduce the risk of imminent homelessness in Ohio.

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- Recommendations are expected to address the unique and varied populations and geography of the state.

Critical factors that are necessary to reduce homelessness

Fully operational **local system** that:

- has a goal to make homelessness rare, brief, and one time;
- focuses on **housing solutions** like rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing and Housing First practices;
- **uses data** to track progress and monitor performance;
- **invests only in proven solutions** to homelessness; and
- **directs sufficient resources** from the public and private sector to right-size the system and programs to be sufficient to match the community's unique needs.

Project Activities and Timeline

May

- Steering Committee meeting
- Compilation of available data

June

- Three (3) Community Dialogues
- Data analysis

July

- Population focus groups (youth, families, unsheltered/chronic)
- Data analysis continues
- Community Dialogues summary available

August

- Steering Committee meeting
- Draft report available

September

- Final report issued