CA HCD ESG-CV Training Series: Homelessness 101
Learning Objectives

1. Trainees will be able to describe key causes of homelessness, definitions of homelessness, and evidence-based strategies to address homelessness
2. Trainees will gain a threshold understanding of various evidence-based interventions within the homelessness response system
3. Trainees will be able to describe and explain the current landscape of key homeless system of care partners
4. Trainees will be able to describe and explain federal and state performance benchmarks
5. Trainees will be able to meaningfully engage with people experiencing homelessness to improve the local system
Questions to Answer

- What causes homelessness?
- How do we define homelessness?
- How do we address homelessness?
- Who are key homeless system of care partners?
- How do we measure success?
- How do we engage people experiencing homelessness to improve our work?
What Causes Homelessness?

- Housing Costs > Income to Pay for Housing
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Poverty

- Also consider
  - Racial inequities
  - Health and healthcare access
  - Mental and behavioral health issues
  - IPV
  - Systems involvement (child welfare, justice system, etc.)
  - Family conflict

- BUT…
Definitions of Homelessness

The HUD definition:

1. Literally homeless
2. Imminently homeless (< 2 weeks)
3. Other definitions (> 2 weeks)
4. Unsafe situations

The McKinney-Vento Act has TWO definitions?!
WHY????

ELIGIBILITY, not definitions…
Understanding HUD Eligibility

Simple Chart for Determining Eligibility for HUD Homeless Assistance Programs

*Do Not Use This Chart Without the Accompanying Appendix*

**Category 4**
Housed or homeless; immediate danger

- ESG ES
- CoC RRH
- CoC TH & TH-RRH

**Category 1**
Currently on streets or in shelter

- ESG ES
- CoC & ESG RRH
- CoC TH & TH-RRH

**Category 2**
Imminently on streets or in shelter

- ESG ES
- CoC TH & TH-RRH

**Category 3**
Families & youth, tenously housed, at risk of Category 1 or 2

- > 2 weeks with no other options or supports
- AND additional barriers to stability

**Others at Risk of Homelessness**

- ESG Prevention Funding

**KEY**
- CoC = Continuum of Care
- ESG = Emergency Solutions Grants
- ES = Emergency Shelter
- TH = Transitional Housing
- RRH = Rapid Re-Housing
- TH-RRH = TH-RRH Joint Component

This chart captures the general framework described in current federal regulations to determine eligibility for the current HUD homeless assistance interventions. It does not address the issue of chronic homelessness or eligibility for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). It also does not address additional eligibility requirements that may be imposed for particular interventions in annual funding announcements or as a result of local prioritization decisions. For more information on these issues and other less common eligibility issues, please see Appendix 1.*
Who is not eligible for most HUD assistance? (Category 3)

- Couch surfing longer than 2 weeks
- Doubled up longer than 2 weeks
- Sober living homes
- Motels paid for by client longer than 2 weeks

Note: Requirements for funding/definitions for homelessness vary by funding stream. Always verify!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>McKinney-Vento Education</strong></th>
<th><strong>Runaway &amp; Homeless Youth Act</strong></th>
<th><strong>Department of Veteran Affairs</strong></th>
<th><strong>State of California</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Homeless children &amp; youth means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (no matter how long they can stay)</td>
<td>• Youth not more than 21 years of age...for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who have no other safe alternative living arrangement (no matter how long they can stay)</td>
<td>• McKinney-Vento Act HUD homeless definition</td>
<td>• McKinney-Vento Act HUD homeless definition (CA WIC Sec. 8255)</td>
</tr>
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Chronic Homelessness Definition

Simplified definition of chronic homelessness:

- Disability
- Lives in a place not meant for human habitation or emergency shelter
- Has been homeless for at least 12 months, or four times in the past three years totaling 12 months

Small group, high vulnerability, and high public costs if not addressed
Strategies & Partners
Strategies to Address Homelessness

Housing ends homelessness!

- **Housing First**
  - Housing as a tool
  - Rapid connection to housing
  - Services are available & optional
  - Housing is not contingent on participation in services

- **Permanent Housing**
  - Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

**HOUSED PEOPLE ARE NOT HOMELESS**
Strategies to Address Homelessness

- Crisis response system
  - Efficient, effective, accessible, and FAST
  - Systemic approach, community-wide coordination and performance measures
  - “Right-sized” temporary interventions
    - Low-barrier, housing-focused shelter
    - Transitional housing for specific populations
  - Diversion whenever safe and possible
  - Prevention (carefully targeted)
## Evidence on PSH, RRH, and Housing First strategies

| A variety of studies have shown that between 75% & 91% remained housed a year after being rapidly re-housed. | A Housing First program could cost up to $23,000 less per consumer per year than a shelter program. | Low-barrier shelters serve and house more people. | Communities have been able to reduce shelter admissions by as much as 50% after instituting system-wide assisted rapid resolution strategies. |

- **PSH** has a long-term retention rate of up to 98%.

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**Housing First Fact Sheet** (NAEH)

**Data Visualization: The Evidence on Housing First** (NAEH)
Evidence on PSH, RRH, and Housing First strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RRH is effective and cost-effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RRH is as or more effective than TH at a significantly lower cost.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Around 80% of participants in SSVF do not return to homelessness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increasing RRH resources improves &quot;flow&quot; off the streets and out of shelter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing provides the foundation from which people can address other issues they want to focus on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NCHAV - Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) (US Dept, of Veteran Affairs)
Rapid Re-housing’s Role in Responding to Homelessness: What the Evidence Says (Urban Institute)
Rapid Re-Housing (NAEH)
Think of 3 partners in ending homelessness.
Partners in Ending Homelessness

- Continuums of Care (CoCs)
- Healthcare System
  - Housing is healthcare!
  - Mental and behavioral health supports
- Criminal Justice
  - Crisis response, criminalization of homelessness
  - Re-entry from jails and prisons
- Tribal nations
- Community organizations, especially those led by and for BIPOC
- People who have experienced homelessness
Partners in Ending Homelessness

- Healthcare System
- Mental & behavioral health
- Child Welfare
- Criminal Justice
- Police
- Service providers
- Anti-poverty agencies
- Community organizations
- BIPOC-led organizations
- People who have experienced homelessness
- State of California
- Veterans Administration
- Disability rights organizations
- HUD
- Local government
- Continuum of Care
- Domestic violence providers
- LGBTQ+ organizations
- Homeless coalitions
- Landlords
- Tribal nations
- Legal system
- Substance use programs
- Libraries
- Housing providers
- Universities
- Public housing authorities
- Workforce development
- Affordable housing developers
- Shelter providers
- Faith-based organizations
- Health departments
- Schools
Partnering with PWLE

- New Term: People With Lived Experience (PWLE)
- Nothing about us without us!
- Training and support
- Racial equity
- Meaningful and productive engagement
Performance & Benchmarks
Performance Benchmarks

HUD System Performance Measures

- First time homeless
- Number Homeless
- Length of time
- Income
- Retention
- Returns
State of CA Key Measures

Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in CA

- Number of Californians experiencing sheltered & unsheltered homelessness at a point in time
- Number of Continuums of Care in CA reporting increases versus decreased in number
- Number of people spending time in emergency shelter & transitional housing in CA annually
- Number of Californians experiencing homelessness for the first time each year
State of CA Key Measures

Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in CA

- Number of Californians successfully exiting homelessness each year
- Number of Californians returning to homelessness each year
- Number of children & youth experiencing homelessness at some point during the school year in CA
- Comparison of California's performance across these measures & data points to national & regional trends
Thank you for listening