

HEADING HOME

**A Regional Plan
To Make Homelessness
Rare, Brief, & Nonrepeating**

South Central Housing Network
September 2014

Dedication & Thanks

This plan is dedicated to the children, youth, and adults in our region who struggle with homelessness and to the many dedicated and caring individuals who offer their time and effort to help them.

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I. Overview

With the goal of coordinating the efforts of Region 10 of the Indiana Balance of State Continuum of Care's efforts to accomplish maximum impact, the South Central Housing Network presents *Heading Home: A Regional Plan to Make Homelessness Rare, Brief, and Nonrepeating (the Plan)*.

II. Purpose & Goals

**The main purpose of the Plan
is to make homelessness
rare, brief, and nonrepeating.**

Goal #1: To make homelessness rare, invest in strategies that prevent homelessness.

Goal #2: To make homelessness brief, invest in strategies that rapidly move homeless individuals and families into homes.

Goal #3: To make homelessness nonrepeating, invest in supportive services that improve the likelihood of long-term housing stability.

III. Action Planning

The following action plan links goals with strategies and action steps to accomplish these goals.

Goal #1: To make homelessness rare, invest in strategies that prevent homelessness.

Strategy: Initiate practices that will assist households in preventing their homelessness.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Township Trustees, Public Housing Authorities, Indiana Legal Services, Linton Cooperative, Monroe County United Ministries, Shalom Community Center, St. Vincent de Paul, and Lawrence Interfaith Endeavor (LIFE), Representatives from the Pro Bono District(s) and Court System(s).

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Expand and coordinate financial assistance and housing stability services for households struggling to pay rent and utility bills.

Action Step #2: Create a task group (in conjunction with goal #2, strategy #6, action step #2) the homeless prevention action step #2 to help identify legal issues that are barriers to stable housing & determine ways to increase access to mediation and legal services for those at risk of homelessness.

Action Step #3: Convene the Bloomington, Bedford, Linton, Bloomfield, and Jasonville Public Housing Authorities to strategize on eviction prevention strategies, such as eliminating the One Strike Policy

Action Step #4: Explore how other communities expand affordable housing and seek to integrate the solutions that fit local needs.

Goal #2: To make homelessness brief, invest in strategies that rapidly move homeless individuals and families into homes.

Strategy #1: Shift from a housing readiness to a housing first approach, rapidly re-housing those who have fallen into homelessness.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Township Trustees, Public Housing Authorities, Homeless Services Providers, Housing Providers, Child Protective Services

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Assess short- and medium-term rental assistance options.

Action Step #2: Where needed, enhance collaboration amongst groups providing this resource.

Action Step #3: Assess rapid re-housing needs in the region.

Action Step #4: Utilize existing rental assistance and apply for additional rapid rehousing dollars to serve households who require this intervention.

Action Step #5: Build support by informing community leaders/partners on the principles and benefits of Housing First and Rapid Re-housing.

Strategy #2: Identify the most vulnerable households and adopt a "whatever it takes" approach to house these households.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Homeless Services Providers, Housing Providers, Community Mental Health Centers, Child Protective Services

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Utilize the common assessment to identify the most vulnerable households in the region, and prioritize resources for these households.

Action Step #2: Apply to the Permanent Supportive Housing Institute to create a new integrated housing development to include affordable and permanent supportive housing.

Action Step #3: Apply for long-term rental assistance for scattered site, single site and/or integrated permanent supportive housing options.

Strategy#3: Work with Public Housing Authorities to expand opportunities for households experiencing homelessness.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Public Housing Authorities, Homelessness Services Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Examine current Housing Authority policy regarding people experiencing homeless.

Action Step #2: Encourage policies that prioritize housing people without homes.

Strategy #4: Use Transitional Housing strategically to focus on survivors of domestic violence, those with substance use disorders, and unaccompanied youth.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Transitional Housing Providers, Homeless Service Providers, Housing Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Advocate with the Balance of State Continuum of Care Board and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide ongoing support for the transitional housing of these targeted populations.

Action Step #2: Assess impact on those not in these targeted populations and expand rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing, or other applicable programs to compensate.

Strategy #5: Facilitate access for those who have housing or employment resources outside the region.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Homeless Services Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Ensure coordinated assessment tool includes family, housing, and employment resources determination.

Action Step #2: Build financial supports for transportation assistance for those with housing or employment opportunities outside the region.

Strategy #6: Provide mediation and legal services for those who are homeless due to conflict (except domestic violence) or other legal concerns.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Indiana Legal Services, IU Maurer School of Law, Homeless Services Providers, Community Justice & Mediation Center, Catholic Charities, Catholic Worker

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Ensure coordinated assessment tool includes assessment of

need for mediation or other legal assistance.

Action Step #2: Create a task group (in conjunction with the homeless prevention action step #2) to help identify mediation and legal issues that are barriers to obtaining housing & determine ways to increase access to mediation and legal services for people who have become homeless.

Goal #3: To make homelessness nonrepeating, invest in supportive services that improve the likelihood of long-term housing stability.

Strategy #1: Develop a case management network to actively support those who are formerly homeless/recently housed to build skills for long-term housing stability.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Housing Providers, Homeless Services Providers, Community Mental Health Centers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Track formerly homeless individuals as they move into housing.

Action Step #2: Provide ongoing supportive services until housing stability is achieved.

Action Step #3: Emphasize partnerships with and the redirection of already existing services.

Strategy #2: Enhance opportunities to obtain and maintain employment or income for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Work One, Businesses, Non-profit Leaders, Education Representatives, Consumers, Homeless Services Providers, Supportive Employment Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Develop a Success Cabinet under the structure of Work One to explore opportunities to connect people to jobs and the supports they require to maintain employment.

Action Step #2: Co-locate employment services in order to increase access for people with limited access to transportation to supportive employment opportunities.

Action Step #3: Expand case management and legal support for individuals applying for Social Security Disability.

Action Step #4: Connect people receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to the federal Ticket to Work program.

Action Step #5: Build resources for basic employment services, including certification programs and work-related clothing.

Strategy #3: Expand Healthcare Access.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: IU Health, Centerstone, Volunteers in Medicine, Health Clinics, Homeless Services Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step#1: Expand the on-site presence at shelters to include social service, health care, and mental health professionals to serve individuals and families.

Action Step #2: Set a goal for new enrollees of people experiencing homelessness in Medicaid or its alternative and track progress.

Action Step #3: Engage the IU Health System to expand community-based health services, in connection with housing programs and households at risk of homelessness.

Action Step #4: Explore means for Community Mental Health Centers and other street outreach programs to improve health care access.

Action Step #5: Expand financial resources to help people obtain prescribed medication.

Strategy #4: Create a detox center for individuals experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness and facing addiction to alcohol or drugs.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: IU Health, Centerstone, Volunteers in Medicine, Amethyst House, Homeless Services Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step#1: Explore and obtain resources to create a peer driven detox center.

Action Step #2: Ensure that services target people experiencing homelessness with the greatest vulnerability.

Action Step #3: Connect detox with recovery-based sheltering, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing.

To coordinate goals 1, 2 & 3, solidify a coordinated approach to connect households to housing assistance and related supportive services.

Strategy #1: Coordinate access for all households experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness in Region 10.

Lead Entity: TBD

Key Participants: Homeless Services Providers, Transitional Housing Providers, Permanent Supportive Housing Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: Identify participating agencies for coordinated access and create a coordinating task group of invested groups.

Action Step #2: Work with IHADA as they develop the coordinated access tool.

Action Step #3: Implement the state-wide assessment tool for coordinated access, using a decentralized assessment approach.

Action Step #4: Form accountability committee to evaluate outcomes and report to Indiana Balance of State Continuum of Care Board.

Strategy #2: Expand outreach to difficult-to-reach populations, including those involved with the criminal justice system.

Lead Entity: Outreach Task Force

Key Participants: Judges, Police, Health Providers, Housing Providers, Homeless Services Providers

Timeframe: TBD

Action Step #1: In Bloomington, create a Community Outreach Task Force, an integrated team of Police and homeless service providers, to identify those experiencing homelessness and frequently encountering the police to link to housing, healthcare, and services

Action Step #2: Find gaps in access to essential services and implement means of outreach to affected populations.

IV. Implementation

1. **Create a Coordinating Council.** The Council will provide oversight and be accountable for the implementation of the Plan, reporting to the South Central Housing Network. Tasks include the determination and oversight of the lead entities, the development of priorities, timelines, costs, and early wins, the establishment of the Consumer Advisory Council, and engagement with the media. Membership will be determined and recruited by the Board of the South Central Housing Network. This committee will also be responsible for prioritizing strategies and action items, reviewing outcomes, promoting the Plan to the larger community, and annually re-evaluating the Plan. Membership will be determined and recruited by the Board of the South Central Housing Network and should include widespread community representation. Members could include formerly homeless individuals, the police chief, business leaders, faith community leaders, neighborhood leaders, the Sheriff, other elected officials, and leaders involved in community revitalization.
2. **Consider how to stage each of the action areas and strategies.** Assign priorities and timelines and establish costs for the implementation of the plan.
3. **Determine lead entities to take on strategies and action steps.** Repurpose existing committees and/or add time-limited task groups. Lead entities will report to the Coordinating Council and be responsible for the implementation of the strategy and/or action steps they are assigned, including fundraising (in consultation with the Coordinating Council). Once a committee or task group has done its work, it shall be disbanded or repurposed.
4. **Create a Consumer Advisory Council.** Homeless and formerly homeless people should have a say in the plan's implementation.
5. **Create early wins to build engagement and show success.**
6. **Engage elected officials and community leaders.** Promote the Plan through public events, press releases, ribbon cutting ceremonies, communication tools and materials to keep local leaders updated on the progress and outcomes of the Plan on a regular basis.
7. **Match and Leverage Resources.** As the community seeks to fundraise for support for the Plan and its action steps, explore strategic connections between public and private funds and/or invest in pilot projects that position SCHN for more competitive awards.

V. Timeline

The following timeline offers benchmarks for advancing the adopted goals and strategies.

Timeframe	Task
August 2014	Finalize plan.
Fall 2014	Form Coordinating Council.
	Agree upon priority strategies that the South Central Housing Network (SCHN) will adopt for the next several years.
	Develop funding matrix for priority strategies.
	Build timeline for accomplishment of strategies.
	Select one or two opportunities for early wins: advancements that can be accomplished and celebrated within one year
	Establish lead entities for and begin to advance each of the strategies.
	Adopt the state-wide assessment tool and obtain training.
	Hold an event and/or offer a press release to share goals and invite partners and community members to be involved or sign up to receive updates.
Spring 2015	Implement Coordinated Assessment.
	Wrap up the one or two activities slated as early wins, and work on a strategy to share these wins with the community at large in order to maintain momentum.
	All strategies should be attached to a process (committee, task force, Coordinating Council, SCHN meetings at large) that advances action steps.
Summer 2015	Review and revise plan.