



FLORIDA'S COUNCIL  
ON HOMELESSNESS

# ANNUAL REPORT

SUBMITTED  
**JUNE 2024**

# Table of Contents

- 1 Cover Letter..... iii
- 2 Executive Summary ..... 1
- 3 Introduction..... 3
- 4 Current State of Homelessness ..... 4
  - 4.1 Housing Costs and Homelessness..... 4
  - 4.2 State and National Homelessness Trends ..... 6
  - 4.3 Funding for Homelessness Initiatives ..... 10
    - 4.3.1 Continuum of Care Success Stories..... 12
- 5 Comprehensive 2024 Policy Recommendations..... 14
  - 5.1 Recommendation 1: Expand investment in creation and preservation of housing affordable to Extremely Low-Income households..... 14
  - 5.2 Recommendation 2: Continue state support for local Continuums of Care by funding the Challenge and Staffing Grants..... 14
  - 5.3 Recommendation 3: Adopt the recommendations of the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup’s 2023 Action Plan ..... 16
  - 5.4 Recommendation 4: Prioritize funding to providers that implement evidence-based and best-practices models..... 17
  - 5.5 Recommendation 5: Amend the current State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) statute to allow local jurisdictions to allocate resources toward areas of greatest need ..... 19
- 6 Conclusion..... 21
- 7 Appendices..... 22
  - 7.1 Appendix I: Point in Time Data..... 22
  - 7.2 Appendix II: Unsheltered Homelessness..... 30
  - 7.3 Appendix III: Sheltered Homelessness ..... 32
  - 7.4 Appendix IV: Homelessness Among Families ..... 33
  - 7.5 Appendix V: Homelessness Among Special Populations ..... 34
    - 7.5.1 Students and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth ..... 34
    - 7.5.2 Veterans ..... 42
    - 7.5.3 Seniors ..... 43
  - 7.6 Appendix VI: System Performance Measures ..... 45
  - 7.7 Appendix VII: Leveraging Resources to Address Housing and Homelessness ..... 47
  - 7.8 Appendix VIII: Evictions and Foreclosures Filed in Florida ..... 48
  - 7.9 Appendix IX: CoC Operation in Florida..... 50

2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

7.10 Appendix X: CoC Funding..... 51

7.11 Appendix XI: Designated CoC Lead Agency Map..... 52

7.12 Appendix XII: Council Members ..... 53

7.13 Appendix XIII: Defining Homelessness..... 54

7.14 Appendix XIV: Glossary..... 56

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Average Rent Costs in Florida as of March 2024 ..... 5

Figure 2: Statewide 2024 Sheltered Homelessness by Type..... 8

Figure 3: Snapshot of Homelessness in Florida..... 9

Figure 4: Unsheltered Homelessness (2019-2024) ..... 30

Figure 5: Year-Round Shelter Beds Available (2014-2023)..... 31

Figure 6: Sheltered Homelessness (2019-2024)..... 32

Figure 7: Homelessness Among Families (2022-2024) ..... 33

Figure 8: Total Homeless Students by School Year..... 34

Figure 9: Districts with the Largest Homeless Student Population (Total Number) ..... 35

Figure 10: Districts with the Largest Homeless Student Population (% of Students)..... 35

Figure 11: Living Situations for Homeless Students (2022-2023)..... 36

Figure 12: Unaccompanied Homeless Youth by School Year ..... 37

Figure 13: Homelessness Among Veterans (2019-2024)..... 42

Figure 14: Age Distribution of the 2024 Homeless Population..... 43

Figure 15: Homelessness Among Seniors (2023-2024) ..... 44

Figure 16: Number of Persons First Time Homeless 2018-2023..... 46

Figure 17: Successful Exits to PH and Rate of Return to Homelessness from 2018-2023..... 46

Figure 18: Eviction Filings and Rate (2019-2023)..... 48

Figure 19: Foreclosure and Eviction Filings (2019-2023)..... 49

## List of Tables

Table 1: System Performance Measures (SPMs) - Florida Vs. National Averages in 2022..... 7

Table 2: Statewide 2024 Point in Time (PIT) Data..... 8

Table 3: Summary of State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) Program Requirements ..... 20

Table 4: Point in Time Counts by CoC (2019-2024)..... 23

Table 5: Point in Time Counts by County (2019-2024)..... 24

Table 6: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homelessness by CoC for 2024 ..... 26

Table 7: Chronic Homelessness by CoC (2019-2024)..... 27

Table 8: Homelessness Among Veterans by CoC (2019-2024)..... 28

Table 9: Family Homelessness by CoC (2019-2024)..... 29

Table 10: Department of Education Homeless Student Count (2022-2023)..... 38

Table 11: Homeless Student Count by District (2018-2023)..... 40

Table 12: System Performance Measures from 2018-2023 ..... 45

Table 13: Eviction Filings and Rate (2019-2023)..... 48

## Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AHAR	Annual Homelessness Assessment Report
AMI	Area Median Income
CoC	Continuum of Care
CRF	Coronavirus Relief Fund
DCF	Florida Department of Children and Families
DOE	Florida Department of Education
ELI	Extremely Low Income
ES	Emergency Shelter
ESG-CV	Emergency Solutions Grant Coronavirus-related
ESG-RUSH	Emergency Solutions Grants Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing
FDOH	Florida Department of Health
HEARTH	Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act
HIC	Housing Inventory Count
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LHAP	Local Housing Assistance Plan
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MVA	McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
OPH	Other Permanent Housing
PIT	Point in Time
PH	Permanent Housing
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
RRH	Rapid Re-Housing
SH	Safe Haven
SHIP	State Housing Initiative Partnership
SPM	System Performance Measures
SSVF	Supportive Services for Veteran Families
TH	Transitional Housing
USICH	United States Interagency Council on Homelessness
VASH	Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing

## 1 Cover Letter



### Florida's Council on Homelessness

June 30, 2024  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis,

On behalf of the Florida Council on Homelessness, its members and state agency partners, I submit the "Council on Homelessness 2024 Report" for your consideration.

In accordance with state law, the Council has prepared recommendations for reducing homelessness in our state. We have also provided data concerning the extent of homelessness and the characteristics of the men, women and children who do not have home.

Per the annual Point in Time count, over the past ten years, Florida experienced a 13% reduction in the rate of Floridians experiencing "literal homelessness" (35,900 individuals in 2015 to 31,462 in 2024); at the same time Florida's population increased 13% (20.22 million to 22.9 million).

However, unfortunately, since COVID we have seen an increase in the number of people without a home in our state. The primary driver for this increase is the cost of housing. In only three years, Florida's median rent increased 30% (\$1,187 in December 2020 to \$1,545 in December 2023). This cost increase is making housing unaffordable for many working families, persons with a disability and seniors. After draining their savings and social networks, the result is homelessness.

Florida's prior successes at reducing the rate of homelessness demonstrate it is not an intractable issue. We need to continue implementing best practices and appropriate resources to create housing all Floridians can afford. This is why the Council strongly encourages the State to appropriate more funding to the development of affordable rental housing, focusing on creating housing for Extremely Low-Income, homeless and special needs households.

If you would like any additional information regarding this report or homelessness in Florida, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shannon Nazworth".

Shannon Nazworth  
Chairperson for the Council on Homelessness

## 2 Executive Summary

Pursuant to section 420.622(9), Florida Statutes, the Council submits its annual report to the Governor and Legislature, providing the current landscape of homelessness in Florida and offering recommended actions to address the challenge.

Over the past decades, Florida has consistently exceeded national trends in the reduction of the number of persons experiencing homelessness. Since 2015, Florida's communities have reduced the number of persons experiencing homelessness by 13% while the state simultaneously saw a 13% increase in population. But, unfortunately, recent Point in Time (PIT) data reflect annual increases in homelessness. The prime driver is the dramatic increase in the cost of housing experienced throughout the state.

2014 Point in Time (PIT) and System Performance Measure (SPM) data indicate progress as well as challenges in the effort to prevent and end homelessness in Florida. On the one hand, the State continues to outperform national averages across most SPMs. On the other hand, preliminary PIT data indicates the overall number of individuals experiencing homelessness increased 2% over the past year, including a 9% increase in unsheltered homelessness. Returns to homelessness also increased since 2023, indicating ongoing challenges for those facing chronic housing instability. Rent increases have begun to slow after multiple years of aggressive growth, which is providing some relief to renters. However, those with extremely low incomes (i.e., below 30% of Area Median Income, AMI) remain among the most vulnerable to becoming homeless due to a shortage of available affordable housing and other factors.

Florida's response to homelessness is built on a foundation of effective partnerships. State funding for the Challenge and Staffing Grants have been instrumental in leveraging federal matching funds and advancing local Continuum of Care (CoC) efforts to reduce homelessness and drive positive outcomes. The impact of this funding at the system level is visible through the state's strong performance across the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) measures. At the individual level, the CoC success stories highlighted in this report further reinforce the human impact of services and supports to prevent or address homelessness and the associated health and economic consequences of homelessness.

The increased funding from the Florida Legislature for Florida's homelessness initiatives has significantly enhanced the state's capacity to address and mitigate homelessness. The Challenge and Staffing Grants, supported by state funds, have been crucial in leveraging federal matching funds and bolstering the efforts of local Continuums of Care (CoCs). This financial support has enabled comprehensive housing activities, including rental and utility assistance, rapid rehousing, and homelessness prevention, ensuring vulnerable populations receive necessary services. Additionally, the targeted federal funding through ESG-RUSH and ESG-CV has provided vital assistance in disaster-affected areas and during the COVID-19 pandemic, however these funding sources are soon ending. These combined efforts underscore the importance of sustained and increased funding to maintain and expand successful programs, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Florida.



## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

Since Point-in-Time data tracking began in 2007, Florida has made significant strides in reducing homelessness, thanks to increased funding, the implementation of best practices and strategic initiatives instituted over the years. According to the 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR to Congress), Florida has seen a decline of 36%, or 17,313 individuals, in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, the largest decline in the nation. Further highlighting this performance, over the same period Florida has seen a population increase of approximately 4.3 million, or about 23.5%. This progress in reducing homelessness can be attributed to the effective use of state and federal funds which has enabled local Continuums of Care (CoCs) to provide essential housing and support services. These efforts have not only improved housing stability for thousands of individuals and families but have also demonstrated the critical role of sustained investment in homelessness prevention and intervention programs. As a result, Florida continues to build on its accomplishments, striving to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

The Council's recommendations in this report are focused on leaning into successful strategies, implementing improvements based on lessons learned from existing legislation (e.g., the State Housing Initiative Partnership, SHIP), and deploying evidence-based practices for responding to persistent and emerging challenges. Ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses affordable housing along with services and supports that enable people to resolve underlying health, behavioral health, educational, and career challenges. With these factors in mind, the Council offers the following policy recommendations:

### 2024 Policy Recommendations Summary

**Recommendation 1:** Expand investment in creation and preservation of housing affordable to Extremely Low-Income households.

**Recommendation 2:** Continue state support for local Continuums of Care by funding the Challenge and Staffing Grants.

**Recommendation 3:** Adopt the recommendations of the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup's 2023 Action Plan.

**Recommendation 4:** Prioritize funding to providers that implement evidence-based and best-practices models.

**Recommendation 5:** Amend the current State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) statute to allow local jurisdictions to allocate resources toward areas of greatest need.

## 3 Introduction

The State of Florida’s interagency Council on Homelessness (Council), created in 2001, is dedicated to supporting implementation of nationally recognized best practices to reduce, prevent, and end homelessness in the state. The Council unites leadership across statewide systems to convene stakeholder meetings, develop policy, and issue recommendations.<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to section 420.622(9), Florida Statutes, the Council submits its annual report to the Governor and Legislature, providing the current landscape of homelessness in Florida and offering recommended actions to address the challenge. The annual report brings together information obtained through the Council’s quarterly meetings, stakeholder engagement, best practice research, and data collection and analysis.

This report was developed in coordination with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office on Homelessness (Office), which plays a significant role in fulfilling the statutory requirements set by the Legislature in furtherance of the State’s efforts to prevent and end homelessness. In addition to working with the Council to construct the annual report, the Office is responsible for statewide coordination, policy development and implementation, and grant management. The Office serves as the single point of contact in state government for the 27 Continuum of Care (CoC) organizations, as well as other agencies, organizations, and stakeholders directly serving the homeless population. The Office runs four dedicated grant programs to distribute state and federal funds to the CoCs, and in Fiscal Year 24-25 the amount of grant funding managed by the Office increased to more than \$35 million (a 470% increase over the previous year).

The 2024 Annual Homelessness Report is comprised of an overview of the current state of homelessness, associated policy recommendations, and additional supporting data in the Appendices, including Florida’s preliminary Point in Time (PIT) Count data. The recommendations in this report are presented for consideration of the Legislature and Governor. The Council’s recommendations represent an evidence-based approach to addressing the critical issue of homelessness in order to support the State’s efforts to reduce homelessness and improve outcomes for those experiencing housing insecurity.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix XII for more information on the Council on Homelessness membership.

## 4 Current State of Homelessness

The current state of homelessness in Florida reflects the net impact of the factors contributing to homelessness and the solutions (e.g., policies, legislation, and funding) brought to bear to address the challenge. The information in this section is based on the Council’s analysis of data on subpopulations and trends and is offered to provide insights into the nature and extent of homelessness in the state. These observations and insights provide the basis for the recommended solutions in Section 5.

### 4.1 Housing Costs and Homelessness

The link between increasing housing costs and increasing rates of homelessness has been well established.<sup>2</sup> According to the 2020 Government Accountability Office Report on Homelessness, for every \$100 monthly median rent increases there is a 9% increase in homelessness.<sup>3</sup> Following a period of rapid growth in rents in 2022 and 2023 that contributed to increased homelessness, rental markets nationwide have begun to stabilize.<sup>4</sup>

According to rental data compiled for nine cities throughout Florida and summarized in Figure 1, the average monthly rent in March 2024 was \$2,115, an increase of 0.95% over the previous year (below the national average change of +3.57%).<sup>5</sup> While this stabilization has provided some measure of relief to renters, Florida continues to face housing affordability challenges driven at least in part by population growth that has outpaced increases in affordable housing supply.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [How Housing Costs Drive Levels of Homelessness](#), The Pew Charitable Trusts. Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

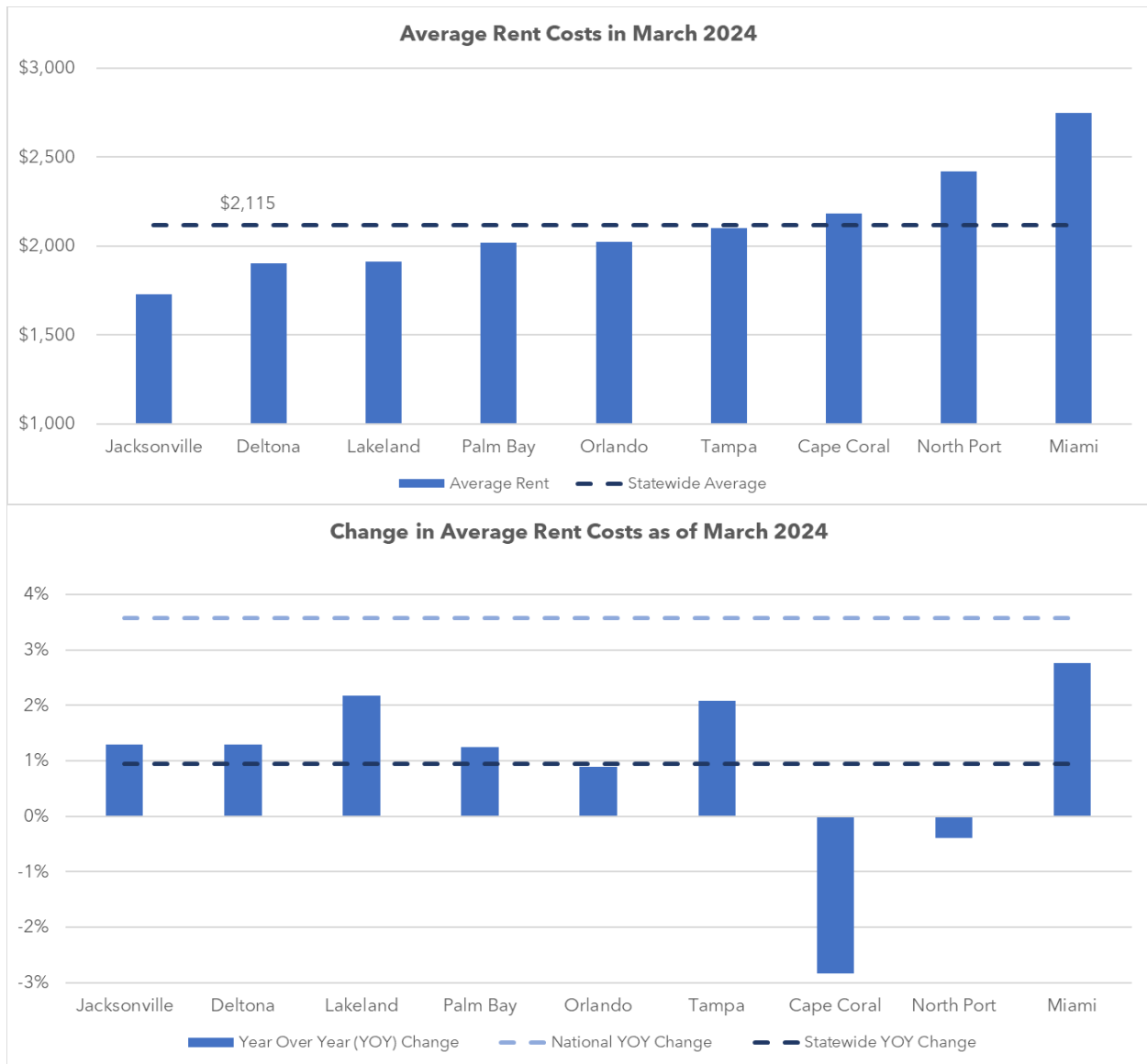
<sup>3</sup> [Homelessness: Better HUD Oversight of Data Collection Could Improve Estimates of Homeless Population \(GAO-20-433\)](#), Government Accountability Office (GAO). Released August 13, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> [America’s Rental Housing](#), Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

<sup>5</sup> [Waller, Weeks and Johnson Rental Index \(March 2024 Data\)](#), Florida Atlantic University College of Business. Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

<sup>6</sup> [Shimberg Center for Housing Studies 2023 Annual Report](#), University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies (Shimberg Center). Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT



**FIGURE 1: AVERAGE RENT COSTS IN FLORIDA AS OF MARCH 2024**

The workforce in Florida includes a wide range in income levels. According to data compiled by the University of Florida Shimberg Center for Housing Studies (Shimberg Center), renters at all income levels participate in the workforce, including extremely-low and low-income households (up to 30% and 60% of Area Median Income, AMI, respectively).<sup>7</sup> Despite these households' active participation in the labor market, the effect of higher rents and lower wages is that extremely low- and low-income renters are cost-burdened, placing these households at increased risk of falling behind in rental payments and becoming homeless.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [Florida Rental Market Study Winter 2024 Update](#), Shimberg Center. Last accessed on May 23, 2024.

<sup>8</sup> Definitions of "cost-burdened" vary. In the above-referenced report, the [Shimberg Center](#) defines cost-burdened households as those paying more than 40% of income for gross rent (i.e., rent plus utilities).

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

The increase in housing costs also significantly impact those on fixed income, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.<sup>9</sup> In Florida and nationally, there has been an increase in the number of elderly and persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness.<sup>10, 11</sup>

## 4.2 State and National Homelessness Trends

Evaluating performance requires simultaneously monitoring year-over-year changes, longer-term trends, benchmarking through comparisons with peer states, and consideration of wider factors and drivers. On balance, Florida's investments in reducing homelessness have shown a positive impact across multiple measures and time scales. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, between 2007 and 2023 Florida led the nation and had the largest absolute decrease in homelessness of any state despite growth in the state's overall population.<sup>12, 13</sup> When adjusted for the population increase, the decline in homelessness in Florida over this time period was -47%. Florida also outperformed the national average for most HUD System Performance Measures (SPMs) in the 2023 reporting year as shown in Table 1.<sup>14</sup>

### Homelessness Trends in Florida

Over the last 16 years, Florida led the nation with the largest absolute decrease in homelessness of any state.

During this time period from 2007 to 2023, homelessness decreased from 48,069 individuals in 2007 to 30,756 in 2023, a reduction of 17,313 or -36%.<sup>1</sup>

This decrease occurred despite growth in the state's overall population.<sup>2</sup> When adjusted for the population increase, the decline in homelessness in Florida over this time period was -47%.

#### Sources:

1. 2023 AHAR, HUD. Last accessed May 22, 2024.
2. Population and Demographic Data - Florida Products, Office of Economic and Demographic Research. Last accessed May 22, 2024.

<sup>9</sup> [Shimberg Center for Housing Studies 2023 Annual Report](#), Shimberg Center. Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

<sup>10</sup> [Addressing Homelessness Among Older Adults](#), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). Published October 30, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> [Homelessness in America: Focus on Chronic Homelessness Among People with Disabilities](#), United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Published August 2018.

<sup>12</sup> [The 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report \(AHAR\) to Congress](#), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Last accessed May 22, 2024.

<sup>13</sup> [Population and Demographic Data - Florida Products](#), Office of Economic and Demographic Research. Last accessed May 22, 2024.

<sup>14</sup> [CoC Performance Profile Reports](#), HUD Exchange. Last accessed on May 16, 2024. Refer to Appendix VI for more information on System Performance Measures (SPMs).

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 1: SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASURES (SPMs) - FLORIDA VS. NATIONAL AVERAGES IN 2022**

SPM	Florida	National
SPM1: Length of Time Homeless	128 days	158 days
SPM 2: Returns to Homelessness	8.3% 6 Months	7.3%
	12.7% 12 Months	11.0%
	19.3% 24 Months	16.5%
SPM 3: Total HMIS Count	3% increase over 2021	17.5% increase
SPM 5: First Time Homeless	4.9% increase	26.0% increase
SPM7: Successful Exits to Permanent Housing	45.9% SO	32.4%
	43.5 % ES, TH, SH, RRH	33.9%
	95.6% PH (not RRH)	96.2%

**Abbreviations:**

HMIS = Homeless Management Information System

SO = Street Outreach

ES = Emergency Shelter

TH = Transitional Housing

SH = Safe Haven

RRH = Rapid Re-Housing

PH = Permanent Housing

Along with the successes, the 2023 HUD AHAR and SPMs also indicated areas of opportunity. While Florida had the largest overall decrease in homelessness over the entire period from 2007 to 2023, the state also had the largest absolute increase in homelessness for the most recent reported year, between 2022 and 2023.<sup>15</sup> Florida was also behind the national average with respect to Returns to Homelessness (SPM 2).<sup>16</sup> Reducing overall homelessness and returns to homelessness requires a multifaceted approach that includes affordable housing with appropriate supports, additional resources and intentionality around diversion and homeless prevention programs, and systematic follow-up with households that have exited the homeless system of care and have moved into permanent housing.

The recommendations in this report were formulated to address these needs while maintaining the progress made through past successful policies and programs.

### Preliminary 2024 Point in Time (PIT) Count Data

The preliminary 2024 PIT data submitted by CoCs indicate that the total number of people experiencing homelessness increased by 2.3% statewide over the past year.<sup>17</sup> However, the increase was not uniform between sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. The sheltered count decreased - 5.18% while the unsheltered count increased 9.67% as shown in Table 2. The majority of the sheltered population were located in emergency shelters and transitional housing (70%) and 29%, respectively), with the remaining 1% of the sheltered population in safe haven, as shown in Figure 2.

While the Office and Council are actively investigating the causes for these changes, potential drivers include:

- Insufficient shelter capacity.
- Ongoing impacts of hurricane damage in storm-affected areas.

<sup>15</sup> [The 2023 AHAR to Congress](#), HUD. Released December 2023.

<sup>16</sup> [CoC Performance Profile Reports](#), HUD Exchange. Last accessed on May 16, 2024.

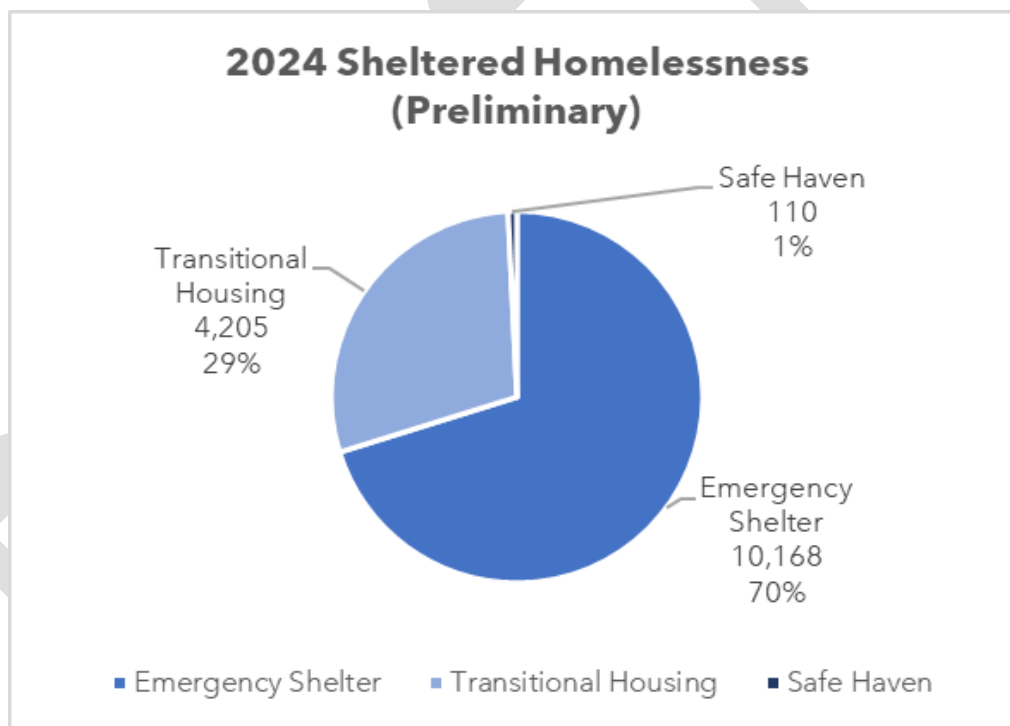
<sup>17</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation. The 2024 sheltered count was not available for CoC FL-517 (Hendry, Hardee, Highlands Counties). CoC FL-601 (Ft Lauderdale/Broward County) did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2024.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

- Voluntary exits from shelters.
- Incomplete data due to reduced participation in PIT counts.
- Increased rents that outpace wage increases.
- Limited rental units dedicated to households at the lowest income levels.

**TABLE 2: STATEWIDE 2024 POINT IN TIME (PIT) DATA**

PIT Count (Preliminary)	2023	2024	% Change
Total Sheltered	15,274	14,483	-5.18%
Total Unsheltered	15,482	16,979	9.67%
Total Persons	30,756	31,462	2.30%

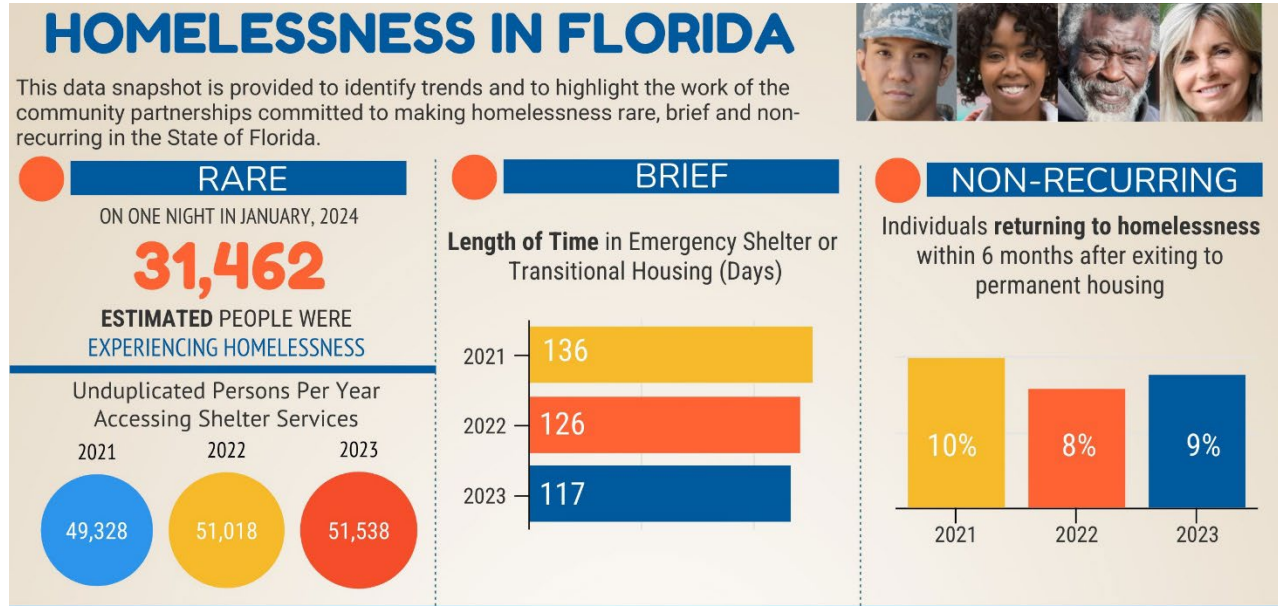


**FIGURE 2: STATEWIDE 2024 SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS BY TYPE**

The PIT data categories enable a thorough analysis of subpopulations that can be used to guide policy and recommendations. Figure 3 provides a snapshot of homelessness in the state based on the preliminary 2024 PIT data and SPMs; additional information is included in Appendices I through VI.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

FIGURE 3: SNAPSHOT OF HOMELESSNESS IN FLORIDA



## WHO IS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

**4,801**

Children- under the age of 18 are living in a place not meant for human habitation or in shelter

**8,372**

Adults - 55 and over are homeless in Florida on any given night.

**16,979**

**UNSHELTERED**

Unsheltered is living outside, in a car, in a park or other place not meant for human habitation. 54% of the total population experiencing homelessness in Florida are unsheltered.

\*2024 PIT Count

## SPECIAL POPULATIONS

CoC Partnerships include mental health, substance abuse & health care service providers - these partners provide an opportunity for supportive services to be provided in home, rather than in long-term care, jails or in-patient care, reducing the cost for the State and communities.

**27%** Persons experiencing homelessness in Florida are 55 and over.

**17%** Persons experiencing homelessness in Florida have a severe mental illness.

**13%** Persons experiencing homelessness in Florida have a substance use disorder.

\* These are not mutually exclusive. Homelessness exacerbates health related issues, especially for the elderly.

**20%**

Are **CHRONICALLY** Homeless (Long Time Homeless & Disabled)

**6.9%**

Are **VETERANS**

**6.8%**

Are **Fleeing Domestic Violence**

2024 CoC Point in Time Counts with Demographic Information | 2023 HUD System Performance Measures



### 4.3 Funding for Homelessness Initiatives

The state has made strides over the past several years in providing funding for affordable housing, including protecting Housing Trust Fund appropriations. Furthermore, state and federal appropriations have enabled state agencies, CoCs, and local organizations to administer programs and services to address the pressing issues faced by those experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless, including ELI households, persons with special needs, and those recovering from natural disasters. The funding sources discussed in this section have been instrumental to the state's strong performance across multiple HUD measures, and the Council recognizes the importance of continuing to build upon past successes.

#### **Challenge Grant**

The Office on Homelessness distributes the state-funded Challenge Grant to Florida's CoCs, which are passed on to residents experiencing homelessness and local homeless service organizations. The Legislature has recently increased its investment in this grant program going from \$3,181,500 in FY 2021-22, \$20,016,822 in FY 2022-23, and \$30,016,822 in FY 2024-25. These funds are critical to the homeless services in Florida, particularly with the exit of federal ESG-CV funding, and provides funding for:

- Housing Activities (Rental and Utility Assistance, Rapid Rehousing, Prevention, Shelter Operations, Case Management)
- Program Activities (Case Management)
- Service Activities (Street Outreach, Transportation, Case Management)

#### **Staffing Grant**

The state-funded Staffing Grant is distributed by the Office on to Florida's CoCs to assist CoCs in continued operation by providing funds for staff. This grant program has similarly seen increased investment by the Legislature, going from \$3,000,000 in FY 2021-22 to \$5,205,055.80 in FY 2022-23. As CoCs are nonprofit primarily grant-funded organizations, this operational support is vital to ensure CoCs can provide homelessness services to Florida's homeless residents and local homelessness groups. The Staffing Grant specifically provides staffing funds to ensure the transparent and open operation of the CoC, an effective CoC plan exists, and ensures utilization of the Homeless Management Information System.

#### **ESG**

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding from HUD has significantly bolstered the state's efforts to combat homelessness. The substantial increases in state-funded programs like the Challenge Grant and Staffing Grant, along with targeted federal funding through ESG-RUSH and ESG-CV, ensure comprehensive support for housing activities, outreach, and operational capabilities of Continuums of Care (CoCs). These funds are crucial for providing rental and utility assistance, rapid rehousing, and other supportive services to individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness, particularly in the wake of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic. The ESG grant is annually passed-through the Office to Florida's CoCs and provides:

- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelter Support
- Homelessness Prevention (Housing Activities, Relocation, Stabilization Services)
- Rapid Rehousing
- Homeless Management Information System cost support

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

## **ESG-RUSH**

In February 2024, DCF was awarded \$3,839,805 in Emergency Solutions Grants Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (ESG-RUSH) funding from HUD to respond to the needs of individuals impacted by Hurricane Ian. This funding was in addition to the \$3,000,000 awarded in 2022. RUSH funding enables communities to provide outreach, emergency shelter, rapid re-housing, and standard ESG grant assistance to people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness in a disaster-affected area.

## **ESG-CV**

Another source of HUD funding to the State of Florida is the federal Emergency Solutions Grant Coronavirus-related (ESG-CV). This funding is used for homeless-related housing interventions, outreach, shelters, and other activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus (i.e., COVID-19). A total of \$5,934,974.12 was allocated to the State and awarded to the CoCs and their provider agencies in the state from July 1, 2023, through the funding expiration date of June 30, 2024.

## **TANF**

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Homelessness Prevention Grant aims to prevent homelessness and maintain stable housing for eligible families through case management, emergency financial assistance (such as rent, mortgage, and utility payments), family monitoring for at least twelve months post-assistance, and comprehensive case file management to track eligibility and outcomes. This grant program ensures families at risk receive necessary support to avoid homelessness, including financial aid and ongoing monitoring to sustain housing stability. For the last several decades, a regular sum of \$852,507 has been split off from the main DCF TANF award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to distribute to the 27 Florida Continuums of Care.

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### 4.3.1 Continuum of Care Success Stories

The funding directed toward homelessness initiatives are often investments in outcomes rather than outputs. These targeted investments support interventions to keep individuals and families in their homes, as well as return those experiencing homelessness to stable housing. The following stories illustrate the range of supports made possible through state and federal funding to meet the diverse needs of the population served by Florida's CoCs.

**Resiliently Maintaining Self-Sufficiency and Stable Housing:** A 35-year-old single mother survived a domestic violence incident and was forced to relocate in an attempt to flee for safety. While she was able to begin renting at a new property, she fell behind on payments as she was diagnosed with cancer, leaving her unable to work for some time. She was sustainably employed when she presented to Homeless Leadership Alliance of Pinellas for assistance, but she had a large rental arrears balance. With the DCF Challenge funding, we were able to pay an amount much higher than we typically would have been able to, and the client was able to remain stably housed with her 5-year-old son.

**Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness:** On September 20, 2023, HUD awarded Miami-Dade County more than \$8 million as part of a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YDHP). This award to Miami-Dade County, through its Homeless Trust, was the second highest award in the nation for this program. During the first six months of FY 2023-2024, the Homeless Trust, together with the Youth Voice Action Council (YVAC), developed a Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) to prevent and end youth homelessness. The CCP is a precursor to funding new projects targeted to the unique needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults. New projects will include Rapid Rehousing (Joint Component Transition and Support Services Only), offering peer supported housing navigation and stability services, as well as Coordinated Entry Access Points.

**Transition from Homelessness to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** Before John (not his real name) was successfully housed in a PSH program in Orlando, he spent years living on the streets and in shelters. John has aphasia, which is a developmental disorder of speech and language, as well as substance use disorder. Since gaining a home and supportive services, John has been flourishing. He has been free of substances since he moved into PSH in 2022. John worked closely with his case manager to obtain a job near his home; he has been working at the same job for more than a year and has performed so well that his employer wants him to work full-time. He maintains a well-kept apartment, where he has been able to pursue hobbies, such as collecting and showcasing his Star Wars memorabilia.

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<sup>18</sup> Permanent supportive housing is a long-term housing solution that combines affordable housing with supportive services like healthcare and counseling, aimed at helping formerly homeless individuals maintain stability and independence. It is designed to address chronic homelessness by providing stable living conditions alongside necessary resources for personal and social well-being.

### Spotlight on Best Practices in Alachua County

In 2019, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners reaffirmed their commitment to evidence-based approaches such as Housing First, and increased County funding for social services including Rapid Rehousing and PSH. The County's homeless services case management programs are part of the Keys to Home CoC's Coordinated Entry System. CoC staff work collaboratively with outreach and shelter staff in connecting with referred clients as well as discussing cases for service needs and possible interventions.

Stori (not his real name) was one of over 60 individuals who found stability through the County's PSH program since its launch in mid-2020. Stori had been experiencing homelessness since age 16 and had faced a life of abuses and rejections. Considering these past experiences, he was initially hesitant about the offer of housing through Alachua County's PSH program. However, after 11 years of being unhoused, Stori's homelessness came to an end.

The PSH program offers more than housing only, and provides essential services such as mental health support, advocacy for benefits, and basic needs assistance. Individuals referred to PSH level services often face complex challenges such as mental health issues, substance abuse, and chronic health conditions, necessitating tailored interventions. PSH participants also typically have little to no income. The transition into permanent housing can be difficult, but with the support of the PSH program, participants are able to gradually begin to gain confidence and re-establish hope.

Despite initial setbacks, such as relapses, many individuals find support and encouragement from case managers, with nearly 90% staying housed after six months. Rising rental costs and scarcity of affordable housing options also remain as persistent challenges. Yet, for individuals like Stori, the program represents more than a place to live – it signifies hope in the face of adversity, offering a path towards stability and self-worth. Stori continues to work with his case manager for support and ongoing assistance. Stori is building his strength and is actively using art as a source of inspiration to work through his trauma and pain to chart a new path forward.

# 5 Comprehensive 2024 Policy Recommendations

Drawing upon data and best practices, the Council presents the following set of recommendations for consideration by the Legislature and Governor. These recommendations are based on the Council members' collective insights, knowledge, and experience with the complex web of factors contributing to homelessness in Florida and offer best practices and evidence-based approaches to address this critical issue. The Council believes the recommendations in this report will further the State's efforts to reduce and eliminate homelessness and improve outcomes for those experiencing housing insecurity.

## 5.1 Recommendation 1: Expand investment in creation and preservation of housing affordable to Extremely Low-Income households.

At its root, homelessness is a housing issue. While certain demographic factors – such as having a disability, living in poverty, or having a behavioral health disorder – increase a household's vulnerability, the cause of their homelessness is the lack of an affordable place to live. Extremely Low-Income (ELI) households, or those earning 30% or less of the AMI, are especially vulnerable to housing instability. Among ELI renter households in Florida, 475,892 (87%) are cost burdened and 78% spend more than half their income for housing.<sup>19</sup> This situation presents a serious risk for a significant increase in homelessness. The Council's recommendation for the best way to address this issue is to **increase the supply of affordable housing for ELI households.**

The overlapping vulnerabilities of being ELI and elderly is a particular concern for Florida. A tangible solution includes legislative appropriations to assist in the creation and preservation of affordable housing, the Council recommends that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) continue its efforts to include housing affordable to ELI households in its general development projects. In addition to investing in new affordable housing units, the Council recognizes the importance of affordable housing preservation and access. Therefore, the Council further recommends the legislature should identify separate resources to allocate for the implementation of strategies that can be used preserve the affordability of existing affordable units that are nearing the end of their 15-year commitment to ELI households and are set to revert to serving higher AMI categories.

## 5.2 Recommendation 2: Continue state support for local Continuums of Care by funding the Challenge and Staffing Grants

State grants provide crucial leverage as matching funds for federal dollars to address homelessness. The grant funding provided by the State of Florida, particularly for the Challenge Grant, indicates the State's leadership in this area. The impact of this funding is demonstrated by Florida's ability to

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<sup>19</sup> [Affordability](#), Shimberg Center. Last accessed June 5, 2024. "Cost burdened" in this data set is defined as spending more than 30% of income on housing costs.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

outperform the national averages across most SPMs. For these reasons, the Council recommends **continuing to fund both the Challenge and Staffing Grants and allow for maximum flexibility in implementation to leverage other available funding sources and provide needed support for CoCs.**

### Challenge Grant

In 2023 the Legislative appropriation for the Challenge Grant was increased by \$16.8 million, more than four times the previous year's funding amount. These funds are, and will continue to be, critical in supporting Florida's most vulnerable populations with rental assistance and permanent supportive housing needs. Challenge Grant funding allows CoCs to reach individuals and households who would otherwise be excluded due to limitations on funding or failure to meet the strict eligibility requirements of federal grants. Examples of Challenge Grant-funded programs include diversion and other supportive programs to address the acute health, mental health, transportation, and educational needs of those experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless.

### Staffing Grant

Funding for the Staffing Grant was increased to \$5.2 million in 2023, a 74% increase over the previous year. The Staffing Grant provides operating funding for CoCs to build internal capacity, create effective crisis response systems, and draw down tens of millions of dollars in federal funding. In 2023, Florida received approximately \$134 million in CoC Program funding from HUD. This funding supported various projects across the state aimed at providing housing and supportive services to homeless individuals and families.

Examples of the vital CoC services funded by the Staffing Grant include:

- Planning and Coordinating Services: CoCs each develop a strategic plan to end homelessness, coordinate housing and service implementation within their communities, conduct an annual PIT Count of homeless individuals and families, and perform an annual gap analysis.
- Effectively Managing Funding: CoCs apply for federal funding through HUD's CoC Program Competition and are awarded based on their performance. The Florida CoCs have increased the amount of CoC Program funding year over year through federal resources in addition to managing state funding through DCF's unified funding grant application. CoCs then allocate funds to local projects to meet the needs of the CoC plan and ensure compliance with federal regulations. CoCs also monitor recipients of state and federal homeless funding and provide training to local partners to improve the homeless care system.
- Data Collection and Reporting: CoCs operate a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to track services, reporting this data to all local stakeholders, to HUD several times annually, and to the State every month. These data are used to measure program outcomes and ensure compliance with federal requirements.
- Stakeholder Collaboration: CoCs engage with a variety of stakeholders including service providers, government agencies, and individuals experiencing homelessness. CoC facilitation enables collaboration among community organizations to create a unified approach to addressing homelessness.

As the examples above illustrate, Staffing Grant funds are critical to ensuring CoCs have qualified staff to oversee community collaborations and systematic solutions to homelessness at the local level.

### 5.3 Recommendation 3: Adopt the recommendations of the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup's 2023 Action Plan

The Council recognizes the collective vision and work performed by the members of the Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup (Workgroup) to develop their 2023 Action Plan and Recommendations (Action Plan).<sup>20</sup> This Workgroup consisted of leadership from the Agency for Healthcare Administration, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Elder Affairs, the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, and the Office of Policy and Budget within the Executive Office of the Governor. The Workgroup's Action Plan provides strategic direction for coordinated creation and management of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). The Council recommends that the state serve as a best practice model for other states and **adopt the Workgroup's Action Plan.**

The Action Plan recommendations are to:

1. Develop and implement a coordinated interagency approach, overseen and guided by a coordinated state entity to develop and sustain the provision of adequate levels of permanent supportive housing throughout Florida.
2. Begin efforts to design coordinated permanent supportive housing initiatives and consolidate related funding to create sustainable solutions.
3. Establish new approaches to assisting permanent supportive housing residents in ultimately achieving self-sufficiency and moving on to independent housing.
4. Implement a scaled approach to improve and enhance existing programmatic efforts that currently supplement permanent supporting housing initiatives.

Individuals and households in need of PSH are typically interfacing with programs and services administered by multiple state agencies. The cross-agency representation of the Workgroup illustrates the breadth of services that support this population; and mirrors the state agency representation on the Council. Creation of a dedicated state office, modeled after a similar existing state office, committed to the furtherance of PSH would lead to improved outcomes for the population served by these programs and services, while also promoting efficient use of resources by directing services and funds toward the greatest needs. However, interagency coordination requires deliberate authority and oversight to overcome organizational, funding, and data management silos. The expected benefits of adopting the best practice framework put forth in the Workgroup's recommendations include:

- Coordination to allow for the best and most efficient use of resources in providing PSH and serving vulnerable households.
- Implementation of data-driven public-private approaches to solve the multifaceted aspects of homelessness which are often limited in potential and effectiveness due to program silos.

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<sup>20</sup> [Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup - Action Plan & Recommendations](#), Florida Housing Finance Corporation. Last accessed on April 25, 2024.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

- Coordination in program design and implementation, while also ensuring predictable funding for the necessary supportive services that accompany housing efforts.
- Integrating existing programs related to PSH into a more holistic model that will allow the State to better serve vulnerable households.
- Directing efforts to allow households to move between services using a “No Wrong Door” approach, thereby eliminating the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of starting anew each time a household is served by a different funding stream.<sup>21</sup>

### 5.4 Recommendation 4: Prioritize funding to providers that implement evidence-based and best-practices models

Addressing homelessness requires local agencies to efficiently deploy resources for services and supports that address the multitude of vulnerability factors across populations. Adhering to evidence-based approaches and best practices promotes the efficient use of resources by directing funding to the most impactful solutions. Therefore, the Council recommends that the State **prioritize funding to providers that implement evidence-based and best-practices models.**

#### Housing First

Housing First is an evidence-based practice that emphasizes moving households into stable permanent housing with supportive services as quickly as possible. Housing First should not be interpreted as “housing only,” and is intended to be implemented along with other strategies, services, and supports. These connections assist with access to health care, employment, and other supportive services to promote long-term housing stability, reduce recidivism, and improve quality of life. The Housing First approach is guided by the principle that people’s basic needs must be met before they can address other needs, such as finding employment, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Also importantly, Housing First allows clients to choose housing and supportive service participation. Success in housing is the goal of providing financial resources and supportive services only when the client needs or wants the services.

According to the Florida Department of Health, homelessness is a cycle that creates and reinforces multiple vulnerabilities and health problems and worsens existing health issues.<sup>22</sup> Homelessness also poses unique vulnerabilities to certain subpopulations. For example, people who have mental health and substance use disorder and are homeless are more likely to have immediate, life-threatening physical illnesses, live in dangerous conditions, and have an increased risk of suicide attempts.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, women experiencing homelessness are at an increased risk of becoming victims of violence and are vulnerable to multiple forms of interpersonal victimization, including sexual violence and trafficking at the hands of acquaintances, strangers, sex traffickers, and intimate partners while on

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<sup>21</sup> “No Wrong Door” is a policy approach to connect people with eligible services regardless of their entry point to a system. This approach can be used in a variety of settings, though it is commonly associated with public health services. For example, [Section 394.4573\(1\)\(d\) F.S.](#) defines no-wrong-door in the behavioral health context as “a model for the delivery of acute care services to persons who have mental health or substance use disorders, or both, which optimizes access to care, regardless of the entry point to the behavioral health care system.”

<sup>22</sup> Florida Department of Health (FDOH) letter to the Council on Homelessness. February 1, 2024.

<sup>23</sup> [Health](#), National Alliance to End Homelessness. Last accessed on May 10, 2024.



## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

the street.<sup>24</sup> To address this constellation of risks, the Council supports Housing First as both an evidence-based and a best practice.

Data show that Housing First is effective.<sup>25</sup> Housing First has been utilized in Florida since 2000 with the Shelter Plus Care program (i.e., housing with supportive services). The current version of this program, Permanent Supportive Housing, has a 96% housing success rate, meaning that 96% of chronically homeless, severely disabled individuals either retain their housing or move to permanent housing.<sup>26</sup> Incentivizing local agencies to adhere to Housing First promotes alignment to a recognized best practice across the range of services and supports needed to address homelessness.

### Participation in the local CoC Plan

No one organization can prevent and end homelessness alone. It takes organizations and leaders at the community, state, and national levels working together to create the policies and programs to solve homelessness. A CoC Plan provides the roadmap to design and implement an effective Homeless Response System. Individuals from a broad cross section of stakeholder groups (listed below) should be encouraged to participate in the local CoC process and to assist with the local CoC plan.<sup>27</sup>

- Local government
- Criminal justice system
- Community development
- Behavioral healthcare
- Persons with lived experience
- Funders
- Service providers
- Healthcare providers
- Housing providers
- Business leaders
- Civic groups
- Victim service providers
- Faith based organizations
- School districts
- Advocates
- Veteran service organizations
- Mainstream resource providers
- Workforce providers
- Public housing agencies
- Higher education
- Other interested partners

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<sup>24</sup> [Sexual Violence Against Women Experiencing Homelessness](#), Georgetown Law, Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy. Last accessed on May 10, 2024.

<sup>25</sup> [Housing First](#), National Alliance to End Homelessness. Last accessed on May 10, 2024.

<sup>26</sup> [CoC Performance Profile Reports](#), HUD Exchange. Last accessed on May 16, 2024.

<sup>27</sup> [Who Should be Involved in the CoC](#), Corporation for Supportive Housing. Last accessed on June 3, 2024.

### Discharge Planning

Discharge planning refers to aligning services and supports for people who are leaving an institutional setting, such as a hospital, addiction treatment facility, corrections facility, or a homeless shelter.<sup>28</sup> Individuals and families leaving these settings may have underlying substance abuse, mental health, physical health, or other challenges that need to be addressed for them to live independently and avoid returning to the institutional setting. Effective discharge planning encompasses a range of services and supports, such as housing, medical and behavioral health, career services, financial assistance, and education. The benefits of discharge planning include improved outcomes for the individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness, as well as reduced costs associated with extended or recurring shelter, hospital, or other stays.<sup>29</sup>

### Florida's Discharge Planning Toolkit

The Council's Ending Homelessness Workgroup developed a user-friendly Discharge Planning Toolkit to support early planning with centralized links to homelessness support information. In addition to discharge workers at hospitals, jails, and other settings, the tool can also be used by policy makers for developing procedures and policies. The toolkit includes a decision tree that provides a set of questions that leads users to resources, information about each COC's coordinated entry system, homeless prevention resources, and links to information about the managing entities and assisted living facilities.

### Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is a best practice related to Housing First that is designed to help individuals and families minimize the time they are homeless and return to permanent housing. Key aspects of RRH include housing identification, rental assistance, and case management to connect people with needed services. The most significant benefit of RRH is reducing the length of time individuals and families would otherwise experience homelessness, thereby minimizing related negative impacts (e.g., to health, employment, and/or education). The RRH best practice is focused on urgently connecting people with stable housing as a foundation for addressing other core needs.<sup>30</sup>

## 5.5 Recommendation 5: Amend the current State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) statute to allow local jurisdictions to allocate resources toward areas of greatest need

The State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program is designed to produce and preserve affordable homeownership and rental housing by distributing funds to local governments. Currently, all 67 counties and 55 Community Development Block Grant entitlement cities in Florida are funded

<sup>28</sup> [Discharge Planning from Publicly Funded Institutions](#), HUD Office of Community Planning and Development. Last accessed May 25, 2024.

<sup>29</sup> [Discharge Planning](#), Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Last accessed May 25, 2024.

<sup>30</sup> [Rapid Re-Housing Brief](#), HUD. Last accessed May 25, 2024.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

by SHIP. This program was intended to incentivize local governments to maintain and expand affordable housing through an emphasis on homeownership and construction. However, some local governments have faced challenges in navigating the funding percentage requirements, summarized in Table 3.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, households at lower AMI levels often experience challenges navigating the different systems of collecting information to meet some documentation requirements, while also identifying available and affordable rental units.

**TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF STATE HOUSING INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Allowable SHIP-Funded Expenditures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency repairs,</li> <li>• New construction,</li> <li>• Rehabilitation,</li> <li>• Down payment and closing cost assistance,</li> <li>• Impact fees,</li> <li>• Construction and gap financing,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mortgage buy-downs,</li> <li>• Acquisition of property for affordable housing,</li> <li>• Matching dollars for federal housing grants and programs, and</li> <li>• Homeownership counseling</li> </ul>
SHIP Award Requirements	
<p>Overall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of 65% of SHIP funds awarded must be spent on eligible homeownership activities</li> <li>• A minimum of 75% of funds must be spent on eligible construction activities</li> </ul> <p>Income-Based:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 30% of the funds must be reserved for very low-income households (up to 50% of AMI)</li> <li>• 30% must be reserved for low-income households (up to 80% of AMI)</li> <li>• Remaining funds may be reserved for households up to 140% of AMI</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than 10% of SHIP funds may be used for administrative expenses</li> <li>• Up to 25% of funding may be used for rental housing<sup>32</sup></li> </ul>	

Given that the purpose of this program is to serve affordable housing needs identified by local governments, the Council recommends **amending the SHIP statute to enable local jurisdictions to dedicate funding to areas most in need in accordance with their approved Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP)**. This amendment would provide opportunities to expand access to affordable housing funds, to support county local housing plans, and provide flexibility to meet locally identified needs. The State may opt to establish a working group with membership from the Council on Homelessness Affordable Housing Committee to propose potential SHIP amendments.

<sup>31</sup> [Section 420.0975 F.S.](#)  
<sup>32</sup> [Section 420.9075\(5\)\(b\) F.S.](#)

### 6 Conclusion

Florida continues to lead the nation across multiple measures in our efforts to prevent and end homelessness. The funding for homelessness programs and services is driving positive outcomes. However, along with these successes, persistent challenges remain.

The unprecedented increase in housing costs since COVID has resulted in a corresponding increase in the number of people living without a home. This dynamic coupled with the end of COVID programs that funded non-congregate shelters, namely FEMA and Emergency Solutions Grant- CV, has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of unsheltered people throughout Florida.

In addition to the recommendations in this report, the Council is encouraged by the outcomes of the Florida Medicaid Temporary Housing Assistance Pilot. The Medicaid Waiver pilot program has demonstrated the effectiveness of providing housing support services for Medicaid recipients with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD). Implemented on December 1, 2019, in collaboration with health plans such as Aetna, Molina, Simply, and Sunshine, the program aimed to facilitate housing stability and improve health outcomes for participants aged 21 and older who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. Covered services included transitional housing, tenant screening, tenancy sustaining services, mobile crisis management, and linkage to community resources. The pilot program successfully reduced health care utilization, with emergency department visits decreasing by 5%, inpatient admissions by 29%, narcotic overdoses by 57%, and suicide ideation by 14%. Moreover, the program achieved notable success in housing stability, with an average duration in the pilot program of 25 months leading to stable or permanent housing for many participants.

The recommendations in this report represent the Council's perspectives and guidance on the appropriate strategies and evidence-based practices Florida should implement to return to a continued reduction in rates of homelessness. They focus upon increasing access to affordable housing, especially for ELI households, reducing returns to homelessness, and ensuring legislation is meeting the state's policy objectives. For additional information concerning homelessness in Florida, the Appendices provide data and supporting detail related to the current state of homelessness and the Council's recommendations.

## 7 Appendices

The following Appendices are included in this report:

- Appendices I through V: Data concerning the extent of homelessness in Florida, including breakdowns of subpopulations based on the PIT Count and Housing Inventory Count (HIC), as well as Florida Department of Education (DOE) data for students.
- Appendix VI: SPMs for evaluating holistic CoC performance.
- Appendix VII: Spotlight on specific challenges to addressing housing and homelessness.
- Appendix VIII: Evictions and foreclosures data and trends for additional background on impacts of housing costs.
- Appendices IX through XI: Detail on CoC operations, funding, and geographic coverage.
- Appendix XII: Council on Homelessness membership information.
- Appendices XIII and XIV: Key terms and definitions.

### 7.1 Appendix I: Point in Time Data

HUD requires that CoCs conduct an annual Point in Time (PIT) Count of persons experiencing homelessness, which are divided into unsheltered and sheltered population categories for further analysis.<sup>33</sup> The PIT Count requires significant effort by volunteers, as well as coordination, mapping, resources, and data entry. The preliminary 2024 PIT Count results are presented in this Appendix with comparisons to previous years. Appendices II and III provide additional information about unsheltered and sheltered homeless counts, respectively. Appendix IV includes additional information about homelessness among families and Appendix V provides additional information about special populations.

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<sup>33</sup> While PIT Counts provide valuable information and are used for statewide and cross-state benchmarking, it is by definition a snapshot in time (i.e., a single night in January of each year). The difficulty of locating every person that is homeless in a community also means that the PIT data likely undercounts the total population.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 4: POINT IN TIME COUNTS BY CoC (2019-2024)**

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	2019	2020	2021 <sup>a</sup>	2022	2023	2024
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	1,135	1,044	526	1,138	1,150	1108
FL-501	Hillsborough	1,650	1,452	870	1,513	2,040	1893
FL-502	Pinellas	2,415	2,226	2,307	1,985	2,144	2110
FL-503	Polk	563	612	385	506	776	1300
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	875	904	694	865	1,053	1178
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	399	351	73	403	395	391
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	966	805	621	621	801	840
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	2,010	2,007	1,544	2,151	2,258	2883
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	804	880	677	925	1,006	759
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	1,499	1,379	814	846	925	701
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	1,654	1,366	1,222	1,279	1,247	1345
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	518	746	731	727	1,180	1123
FL-512	St. Johns	356	367	420	349	435	442
FL-513	Brevard	815	940	432	916	1,052	1071
FL-514	Marion	475	523	512	455	454	378
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	488	385	101	378	517	499
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	398	403	27	650	1,016	641
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	538	578	69	488	494	531
FL-519	Pasco	894	898	857	589	680	695
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	677	703	638	745	649	786
FL-600	Miami-Dade	3,472	3,560	3,224	3,276	3,657	3800
FL-601 <sup>b</sup>	Broward	2,803	2,211	2,561	2,054	2,487	2469
FL-602	Charlotte	156	169	154	148	427	343
FL-603	Lee	372	444	394	560	862	941
FL-604	Monroe	501	421	242	526	493	449
FL-605	Palm Beach	1,397	1,510	458	1,404	1,855	2126
FL-606	Collier	498	603	568	462	703	660
<b>Totals<sup>c</sup></b>		<b>28,328</b>	<b>27,487</b>	<b>21,121</b>	<b>25,959</b>	<b>30,756</b>	<b>31,462</b>

**Notes:**

a - The 2021 Point in Time Count numbers are not comparable to the previous or current years' counts. Typically, CoCs conduct a PIT Count of both sheltered and unsheltered households. In 2021, due to COVID-19 related safety concerns, only six of the 27 CoCs conducted such a count; 10 CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count; and others conducted a modified form of the unsheltered count. All CoCs conducted a sheltered PIT count. For those that did not conduct an unsheltered count, the CoCs reported zero unsheltered persons, resulting in an undercount of homelessness.

b - FL-601 did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

c - CoCs submit PIT data annually to the State and to HUD. Occasionally, there are technical adjustments made to the PIT data after the State's fiscal year end. In this case, the PIT data will be updated on the next annual report and marked as "Adjusted."

d - Note that the PIT counts for 2024 are preliminary, and subject to change prior to being finalized later in the year.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 5: POINT IN TIME COUNTS BY COUNTY (2019-2024)**

County	2019 <sup>a</sup>	2020 <sup>a</sup>	2021 <sup>a, c</sup>	2022 <sup>a</sup>	2023 <sup>a</sup>	2024 <sup>a</sup>
Alachua	714	657	521	625	931	639
Baker	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Bay	470	378	185	351	342	335
Bradford	4	N/C	12	21	1	1
Brevard <sup>e</sup>	815	815	432	902	1,052	1,071
Broward <sup>b</sup>	2,803	2,312	2,561	2,054	2,487	2,469
Calhoun	2	N/C	0	0	29	8
Charlotte	156	169	122	148	427	343
Citrus	262	171	221	154	199	277
Clay <sup>e</sup>	74	74	57	43	16	81
Collier	498	603	568	462	703	660
Columbia	316	312	60	276	285	234
DeSoto <sup>e</sup>	104	104	N/C	239	57	115
Dixie	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Duval <sup>e</sup>	1,494	1,494	1,137	989	1,176	1,209
Escambia <sup>e</sup>	504	504	770	724	1,168	1,087
Flagler	130	73	37	65	61	32
Franklin	N/C	7	0	N/C	9	0
Gadsden	2	14	8	10	29	9
Gilchrist	0	N/C	0	1	0	0
Glades <sup>e</sup>	34	34	N/C	49	18	91
Gulf	4	2	N/C	25	109	80
Hamilton <sup>e</sup>	45	45	N/C	42	40	47
Hardee <sup>e</sup>	70	70	N/C	406	494	195
Hendry <sup>e</sup>	45	45	N/C	124	4	39
Hernando <sup>e</sup>	151	151	169	112	183	193
Highlands <sup>e</sup>	102	102	N/C	246	402	159
Hillsborough <sup>e</sup>	1,650	1,650	870	1,513	2,040	1,893
Holmes	0	N/C	0	0	3	2
Indian River <sup>e</sup>	486	486	261	290	341	225
Jackson	5	3	N/C	1	32	58
Jefferson	N/C	6	N/C	3	1	0
Lafayette <sup>e</sup>	27	27	N/C	25	28	28
Lake <sup>e</sup>	254	254	223	141	228	277
Lee	630	444	394	560	857	941
Leon	966	761	539	596	732	831
Levy <sup>e</sup>	27	27	38	8	22	N/C
Liberty	N/C	45	0	N/C	0	0
Madison	N/C	N/C	0	N/C	4	0
Manatee	541	466	185	594	739	678
Marion	475	523	512	455	454	378
Martin <sup>e</sup>	305	305	266	248	246	195
Miami-Dade <sup>e</sup>	3,472	3,472	3,224	3,276	3,657	3,800
Monroe	501	437	242	526	493	449
Nassau <sup>e</sup>	86	86	28	17	55	55
Okaloosa <sup>e</sup>	372	372	73	353	189	204
Okeechobee <sup>e</sup>	48	48	N/C	79	30	30
Orange	1,544	1,401	1,162	1,532	1,626	2,090
Osceola	214	234	173	339	358	353
Palm Beach	1,397	1,510	458	1,404	1,855	2,126
Pasco <sup>e</sup>	894	894	857	516	680	695
Pinellas	2,415	2,209	2,307	1,985	2,144	2,110
Polk	563	565	385	506	607	1,300
Putnam	59	178	106	270	272	120
St. Johns	356	368	420	349	435	442
St. Lucie <sup>e</sup>	708	708	287	308	338	281
Santa Rosa <sup>e</sup>	13	13	24	3	12	36
Sarasota <sup>e</sup>	594	594	341	544	411	478
Seminole	252	372	209	280	274	440
Sumter	10	24	25	13	39	39

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

County	2019 <sup>a</sup>	2020 <sup>a</sup>	2021 <sup>a, c</sup>	2022 <sup>a</sup>	2023 <sup>a</sup>	2024 <sup>a</sup>
Suwannee	150	182	9	145	141	146
Taylor	9	11	6	12	10	0
Union	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Volusia	745	839	657	800	992	1,146
Wakulla	4	N/C	0	N/C	27	0
Walton <sup>e</sup>	27	27	N/C	50	206	38
Washington	7	2	0	1	9	16
Adjustment(s) <sup>d</sup>	-277	-192	-20	149	-53	196
<b>Totals</b>	<b>28,328</b>	<b>27,487</b>	<b>21,121</b>	<b>25,959</b>	<b>30,756</b>	<b>31,462</b>

**Notes:**

a - "N/C" indicates that no count was conducted. Zero (0) indicates that no individuals were found in the count.

b - FL-601, which encompasses Broward County, did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

c - The 2021 Point in Time Count numbers are not comparable to the previous or current years' counts. Typically, CoCs conduct a PIT Count of both sheltered and unsheltered households. In 2021, due to COVID-19 related safety concerns, only six of the 27 CoCs conducted such a count; 10 CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count; and others conducted a modified form of the unsheltered count. All CoCs conducted a sheltered PIT count. For those that did not conduct an unsheltered count, the CoCs reported zero unsheltered persons, resulting in an undercount of homelessness.

d - CoCs submit PIT data annually to the State and to HUD. Occasionally, there are technical adjustments made to the PIT data after the State's fiscal year end. In this case, the PIT data will be updated on the next annual report and marked as "Adjusted."

e - For the year 2020, the county used 2019 data due to COVID-19.

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# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 6: SHELTERED AND UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS BY CoC FOR 2024**

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	454	654	1,108
FL-501	Hillsborough	871	1,022	1,893
FL-502	Pinellas	1,389	721	2,110
FL-503	Polk	642	658	1,300
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	392	786	1,178
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	141	250	391
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	624	216	840
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	1,682	1,201	2,883
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	318	441	759
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	147	554	701
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	779	566	1,345
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	579	544	1,123
FL-512	St. Johns	175	267	442
FL-513	Brevard	292	779	1,071
FL-514	Marion	177	201	378
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	126	373	499
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	0	641	641
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	76	455	531
FL-519	Pasco	268	427	695
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	341	445	786
FL-600	Miami-Dade	2,767	1,033	3,800
FL-601 <sup>a</sup>	Broward	845	1,624	2,469
FL-602	Charlotte	134	209	343
FL-603	Lee	197	744	941
FL-604	Monroe	267	182	449
FL-605	Palm Beach	546	1,580	2,126
FL-606	Collier	254	406	660
Totals		14,412	16,971	31,462

**Notes:**

a - FL-601 did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 7: CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS BY CoC (2019-2024)**

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	2019	2020	2021 <sup>a</sup>	2022	2023	2024
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	246	188	72	255	132	289
FL-501	Hillsborough	264	266	64	114	260	245
FL-502	Pinellas	722	592	213	483	573	576
FL-503	Polk	80	78	22	57	137	53
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	89	76	24	73	137	184
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	269	183	18	85	92	120
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	152	192	145	153	178	209
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	478	489	158	403	464	756
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	261	225	64	223	3	227
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	51	45	0	48	207	113
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	301	71	0	88	62	121
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	52	184	1	250	234	406
FL-512	St. Johns	14	43	6	80	156	133
FL-513	Brevard	206	245	15	290	218	356
FL-514	Marion	150	130	13	63	84	72
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	34	43	3	71	87	59
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	235	98	2	12	907	104
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	41	65	0	37	34	21
FL-519	Pasco	265	265	68	126	43	112
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	68	58	16	24	46	99
FL-600	Miami-Dade	378	524	392	762	939	1110
FL-601 <sup>b</sup>	Broward	914	654	208	388	624	284
FL-602 <sup>c</sup>	Charlotte	48	23	1	0	0	0
FL-603	Lee	99	93	13	47	49	276
FL-604	Monroe	36	31	24	35	48	42
FL-605	Palm Beach	215	241	61	248	237	532
FL-606	Collier	61	80	31	39	472	5
Totals <sup>c</sup>		5,729	5,182	1,634	4,454	6,423	6,504

**Notes:**

a -The 2021 Point in Time Count numbers are not comparable to the previous or current years' counts. Typically, CoCs conduct a PIT Count of both sheltered and unsheltered households. In 2021, due to COVID-19 related safety concerns, only six of the 27 CoCs conducted such a count; 10 CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count; and others conducted a modified form of the unsheltered count. All CoCs conducted a sheltered PIT count. For those that did not conduct an unsheltered count, the CoCs reported zero unsheltered persons, resulting in an undercount of homelessness.

b - FL-601 did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

c - FL-602 achieved functionally 0 Chronic Homelessness in 2022 and has maintained this achievement.

d - CoCs submit PIT data annually to the State and to HUD. Occasionally, there are technical adjustments made to the PIT data after the State's fiscal year end. In this case, the PIT data will be updated on the next annual report and marked as "Adjusted."

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 8: HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS BY CoC (2019-2024)**

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	2019	2020	2021 <sup>a</sup>	2022	2023	2024
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	111	105	51	103	122	90
FL-501	Hillsborough	149	160	134	147	176	152
FL-502	Pinellas	316	265	285	310	292	231
FL-503	Polk	38	46	17	31	14	45
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	61	73	25	38	80	75
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	21	31	3	30	24	29
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	90	83	85	86	92	112
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	177	190	177	149	189	228
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	126	155	79	135	164	73
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	50	68	3	59	70	35
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	118	177	139	70	84	122
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	64	89	37	150	134	123
FL-512	St. Johns	25	26	3	20	28	16
FL-513	Brevard	182	119	120	147	187	161
FL-514	Marion	81	80	44	67	53	14
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	54	18	1	19	55	51
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	1	18	2	20	62	30
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	29	39	22	75	31	28
FL-519	Pasco	92	92	54	44	58	66
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	57	28	37	49	38	49
FL-600	Miami-Dade	169	163	123	131	93	134
FL-601 <sup>b</sup>	Broward	219	157	42	117	128	13
FL-602	Charlotte	43	51	25	40	66	54
FL-603	Lee	25	17	4	24	31	60
FL-604	Monroe	50	61	29	46	46	40
FL-605	Palm Beach	119	100	37	102	139	43
FL-606	Collier	5	27	5	22	48	96
Totals <sup>c</sup>		2,472	2,438	1,583	2,231	2,504	2,170

**Notes:**

a -The 2021 Point in Time Count numbers are not comparable to the previous or current years' counts. Typically, CoCs conduct a PIT Count of both sheltered and unsheltered households. In 2021, due to COVID-19 related safety concerns, only six of the 27 CoCs conducted such a count; 10 CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count; and others conducted a modified form of the unsheltered count. All CoCs conducted a sheltered PIT count. For those that did not conduct an unsheltered count, the CoCs reported zero unsheltered persons, resulting in an undercount of homelessness.

b - FL-601 did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

c - CoCs submit PIT data annually to the State and to HUD. Occasionally, there are technical adjustments made to the PIT data after the State's fiscal year end. In this case, the PIT data will be updated on the next annual report and marked as "Adjusted."

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 9: FAMILY HOMELESSNESS BY CoC (2019-2024)**

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	2019	2020	2021 <sup>a</sup>	2022	2023	2024
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	160	199	141	180	175	150
FL-501	Hillsborough	456	379	400	458	612	640
FL-502	Pinellas	381	350	372	449	506	515
FL-503	Polk	189	160	151	150	24	488
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	301	300	178	322	312	359
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	80	56	39	83	81	70
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	215	215	109	139	170	218
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	745	657	659	858	793	779
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	129	163	70	122	60	64
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	745	570	76	261	285	256
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	289	375	247	292	276	239
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	45	75	3	36	140	98
FL-512	St. Johns	120	97	80	44	75	80
FL-513	Brevard	211	222	160	172	210	139
FL-514	Marion	110	161	141	127	116	96
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	34	39	18	22	91	66
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	156	143	19	82	509	283
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	84	205	32	105	160	186
FL-519	Pasco	209	211	134	126	135	116
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	178	180	128	182	178	221
FL-600	Miami-Dade	1,160	1,299	1,011	1,054	1,219	1,254
FL-601 <sup>b</sup>	Broward	462	435	329	401	416	358
FL-602	Charlotte	25	32	25	46	97	76
FL-603	Lee	115	136	70	149	193	172
FL-604	Monroe	32	24	14	54	37	25
FL-605	Palm Beach	264	276	230	291	398	301
FL-606	Collier	168	184	145	155	262	195
Totals <sup>c</sup>		7,063	7,143	4,981	6,360	7,530	7,444

**Notes:**

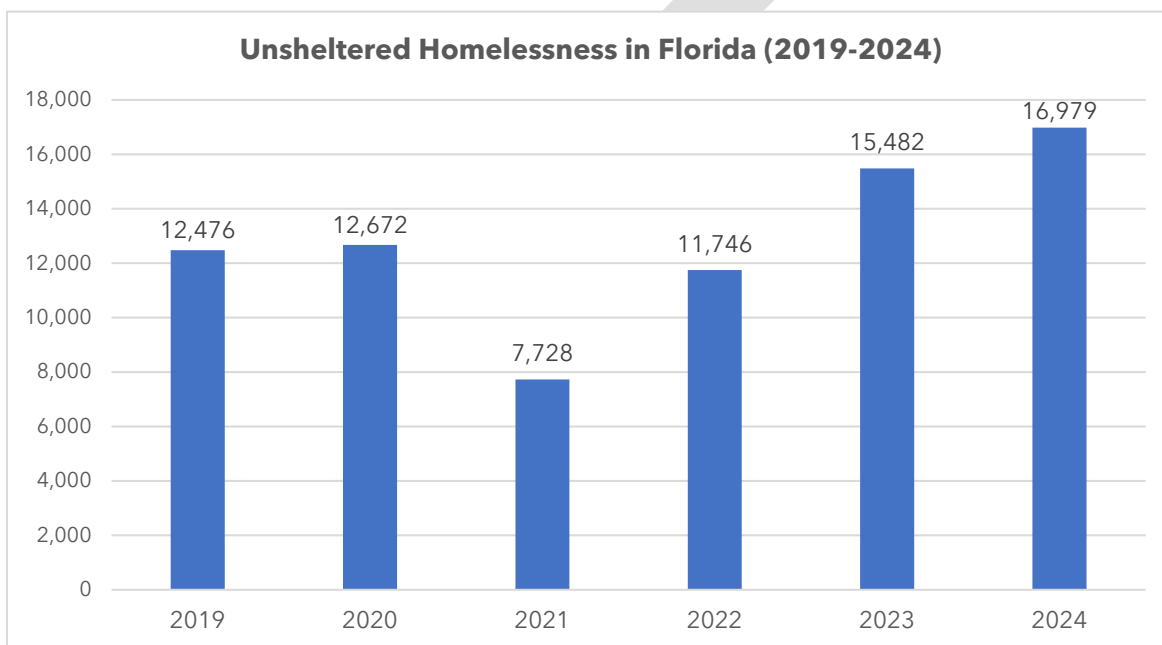
a -The 2021 Point in Time Count numbers are not comparable to the previous or current years' counts. Typically, CoCs conduct a PIT Count of both sheltered and unsheltered households. In 2021, due to COVID-19 related safety concerns, only six of the 27 CoCs conducted such a count; 10 CoCs did not conduct an unsheltered count; and others conducted a modified form of the unsheltered count. All CoCs conducted a sheltered PIT count. For those that did not conduct an unsheltered count, the CoCs reported zero unsheltered persons, resulting in an undercount of homelessness.

b - FL-601 did not conduct an Unsheltered count for 2024. The 2023 Unsheltered count of 1,624 was added to the 2024 PIT count to ensure that the total homeless population for 2024 was not skewed.

c - CoCs submit PIT data annually to the State and to HUD. Occasionally, there are technical adjustments made to the PIT data after the State's fiscal year end. In this case, the PIT data will be updated on the next annual report and marked as "Adjusted."

## 7.2 Appendix II: Unsheltered Homelessness

The unsheltered homelessness count includes individuals who may be sleeping in cars, park benches, abandoned buildings, or other places not meant for human habitation. The number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Florida increased from 15,482 in 2023 to 16,979 in 2024 (9.67%) as shown in Figure 4.<sup>34</sup>



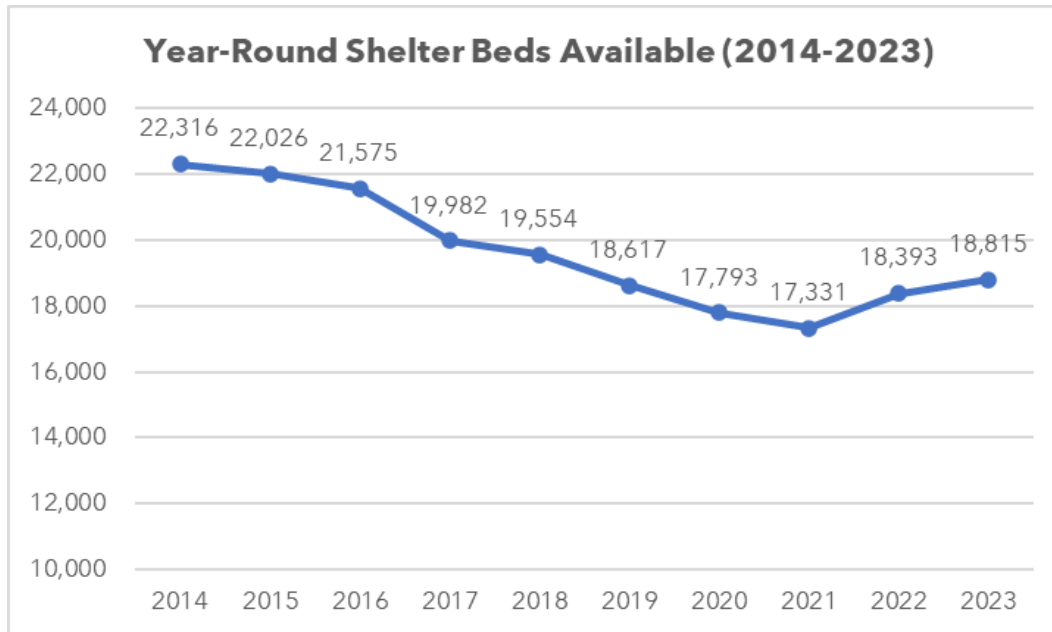
**FIGURE 4: UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS (2019-2024)**

The number of available shelter beds in the state provides an indication of shelter capacity relative to the number of individuals experiencing homelessness. The number of beds fluctuates from year to year based on the level of appropriations and funding. For example, there was an increase in year-round beds from 2020 to 2023 due to the additional federal Emergency Solutions Grant Coronavirus-related (ESG-CV) funding, as well as FEMA beds that were made available for non-congregate shelter after Hurricanes Idalia, Nicole, Ian, and Sally. Despite this recent increase in beds, there has been a 15.7% decrease in the number of year-round shelter beds available over the last 10 years (2014 to 2023, as shown in Figure 5) as federal funding was reappropriated to housing solutions (e.g., RRH).<sup>35</sup> The expiration of ESG-CV funding on June 30, 2024 presents a risk that the unsheltered population could increase as the shelter spaces that it funded will no longer be available.

<sup>34</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation. CoC FL-601 (Ft Lauderdale/Broward County) did not conduct an unsheltered count in 2024.

<sup>35</sup> [CoC Housing Inventory Count Reports](#), HUD. Last accessed on June 6, 2024.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT



**FIGURE 5: YEAR-ROUND SHELTER BEDS AVAILABLE (2014-2023)**

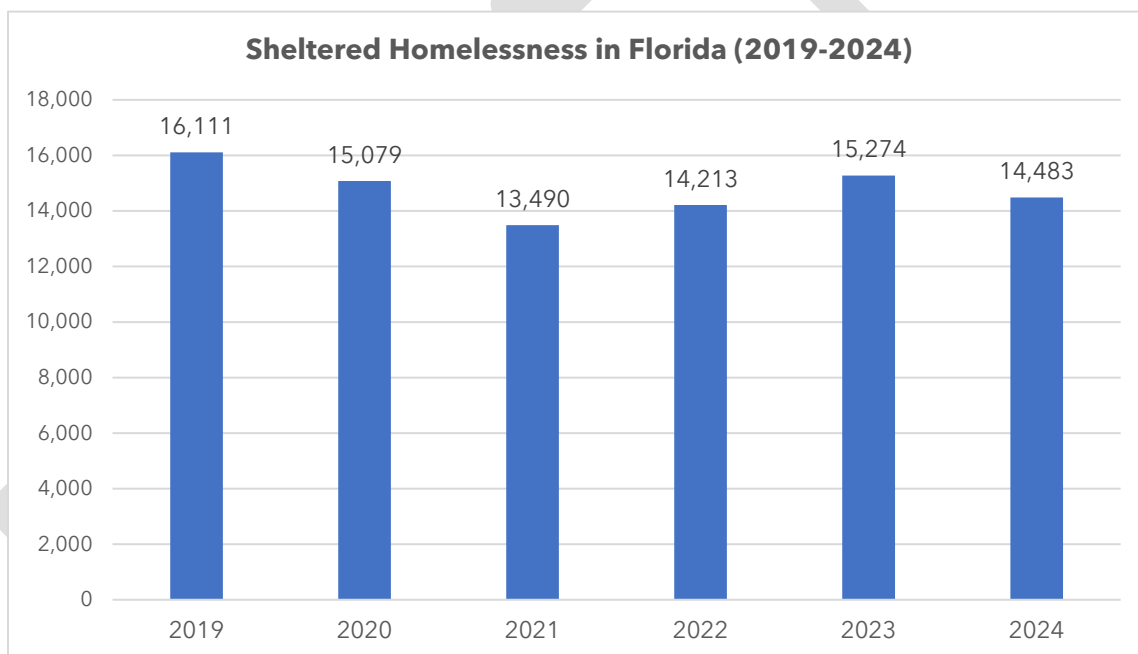
As noted in previous annual reports, the impact of unsheltered homelessness on communities could include increased utilization of emergency health services, frequent interactions with law enforcement, and governmental costs to managing encampments. Unsheltered individuals are more likely to report higher rates of lifetime illnesses, substance use, mental health disorders, and incarceration.<sup>36</sup> The evidence-based best practices and solutions offered in Section 5 of this report speak to models for addressing the root causes of homelessness and avoiding the acutely negative impacts of unsheltered homelessness.

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<sup>36</sup> [Unsheltered Homelessness: Trends, Characteristics, and Homeless Histories](#), Urban Institute. Last accessed May 27, 2024.

## 7.3 Appendix III: Sheltered Homelessness

Sheltered homelessness refers to the count of people who were living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or other temporary settings. The number of people experiencing sheltered homelessness in Florida decreased from 15,274 in 2023 to 14,483 in 2024 (-5.18%) as shown in Figure 6.<sup>37</sup> When considered in isolation, a decrease in the sheltered homelessness count may be viewed as a positive indicator. However, as shown in Appendix II, the unsheltered count increased between 2023 and 2024, and part of the increase may be associated with loss of access to emergency shelters, transitional housing, or other temporary living arrangements. Investments in affordable housing, as recommended in this report, would increase available permanent housing for those facing continued housing instability.



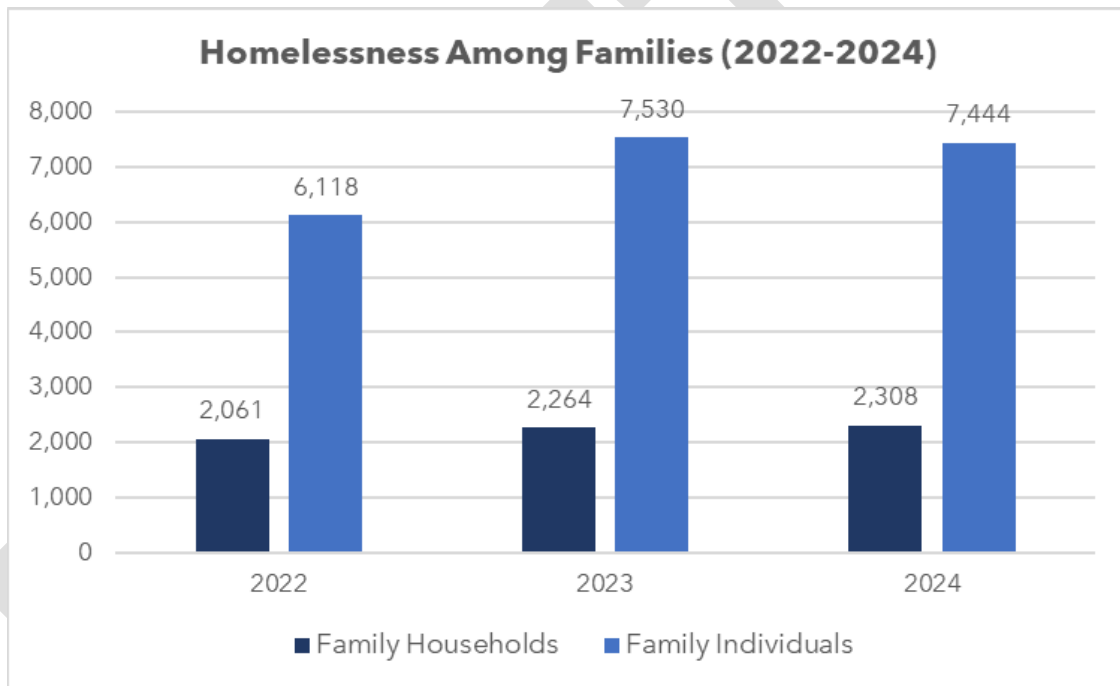
**FIGURE 6: SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS (2019-2024)**

While sheltered homelessness provides immediate support and stability over unsheltered homelessness, there remain several concerns that should be considered. For example, sheltered homelessness may result in demands on shelters that exceed the available space, leading to overcrowding and waitlists, resulting in some individuals without a safe place to stay. Furthermore, shelters are a temporary solution to homelessness, and some individuals may struggle with transitioning out of a shelter into housing. Best practices for shelter services, therefore, include supports to align individuals and families with affordable housing, job opportunities and counseling, and case management.

<sup>37</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation. The 2024 sheltered count was not available for CoC FL-517 (Hendry, Hardee, Highlands Counties).

## 7.4 Appendix IV: Homelessness Among Families

The count of families experiencing homelessness is comprised of families with children and tracks the number of individuals as well as family households. Family homelessness is associated with other vulnerabilities and stressors, such as food insecurity, poor physical and behavioral health, compromised education, and possible family separation.<sup>38</sup> Preliminary PIT data indicate that the number of family households experiencing homelessness increased between 2023 and 2024, from 2,264 to 2,308 (2%). At the same time, the number of individuals decreased from 7,530 to 7,444 (-1%).<sup>39</sup> The trend in homelessness among families between 2022 and 2024 is shown in Figure 7.



**FIGURE 7: HOMELESSNESS AMONG FAMILIES (2022-2024)**

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<sup>38</sup> [The SHIFT Study: Final Report](#), American Institutes for Research. Last accessed June 6, 2024.

<sup>39</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation.



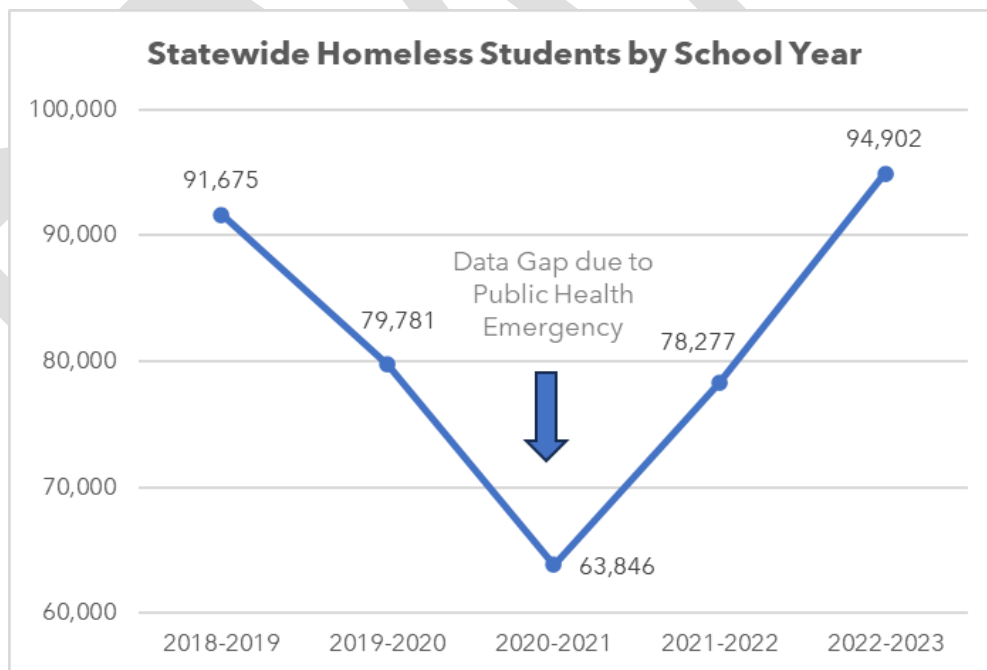
## 7.5 Appendix V: Homelessness Among Special Populations

This Appendix includes data and discussion of PIT counts for the special populations of students, unaccompanied youth, veterans, and seniors (i.e., older adults aged 55+).

### 7.5.1 Students and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Homelessness among students is a serious social concern due the vulnerabilities of young people and the impact of homelessness and housing insecurity on graduation rates and educational attainment.<sup>40</sup> According to data provided by DOE, the overall number of homeless students increased by 16,625 (21%) between 2022 and 2023 as shown in Figure 8.<sup>41</sup> School districts attribute the increase in the observed number of students experiencing homelessness to:

- Training staff within the schools and school district.
- Growth in McKinney-Vento staffing.
- Natural disasters.
- Community outreach.
- Procedural changes.



**FIGURE 8: TOTAL HOMELESS STUDENTS BY SCHOOL YEAR**

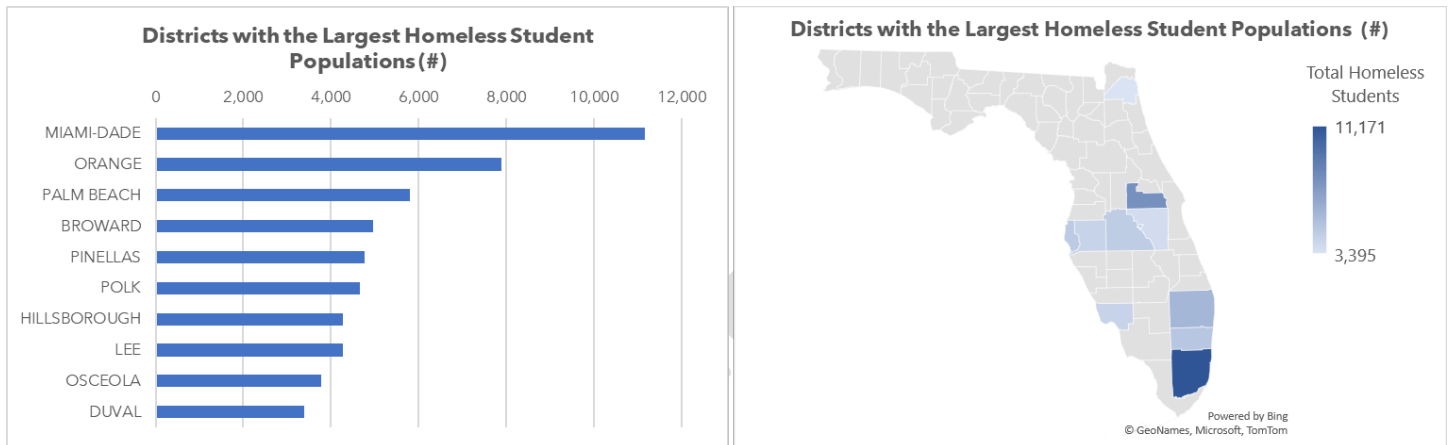
The change in the number of homeless students at the district level varied across the 80 districts and charter entities for which data were available. While the districts with the largest populations of

<sup>40</sup> [Students Experiencing Homelessness in Florida: Updates and Solutions](#), Shimberg Center. Updated August 2019.

<sup>41</sup> The Department of Education uses a broader definition of homelessness than the HUD PIT Count, and includes youth who “lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence.” Appendix XIII includes additional information on definitions of homelessness.

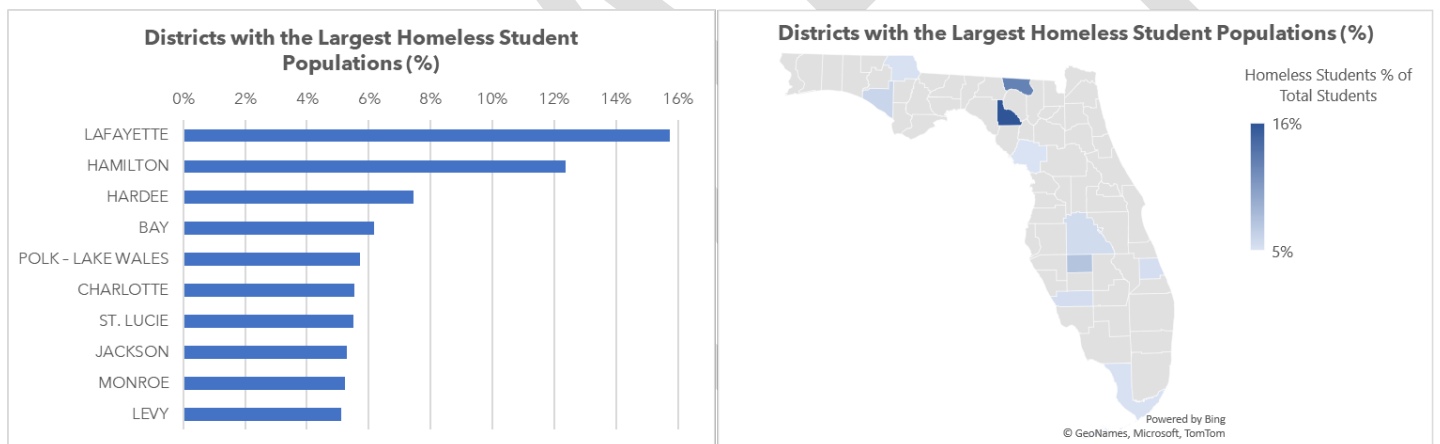
# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

homeless students were in large metropolitan areas in South and Central Florida, the districts with the largest percentages of homeless students were in less populous parts of the state (e.g., North and



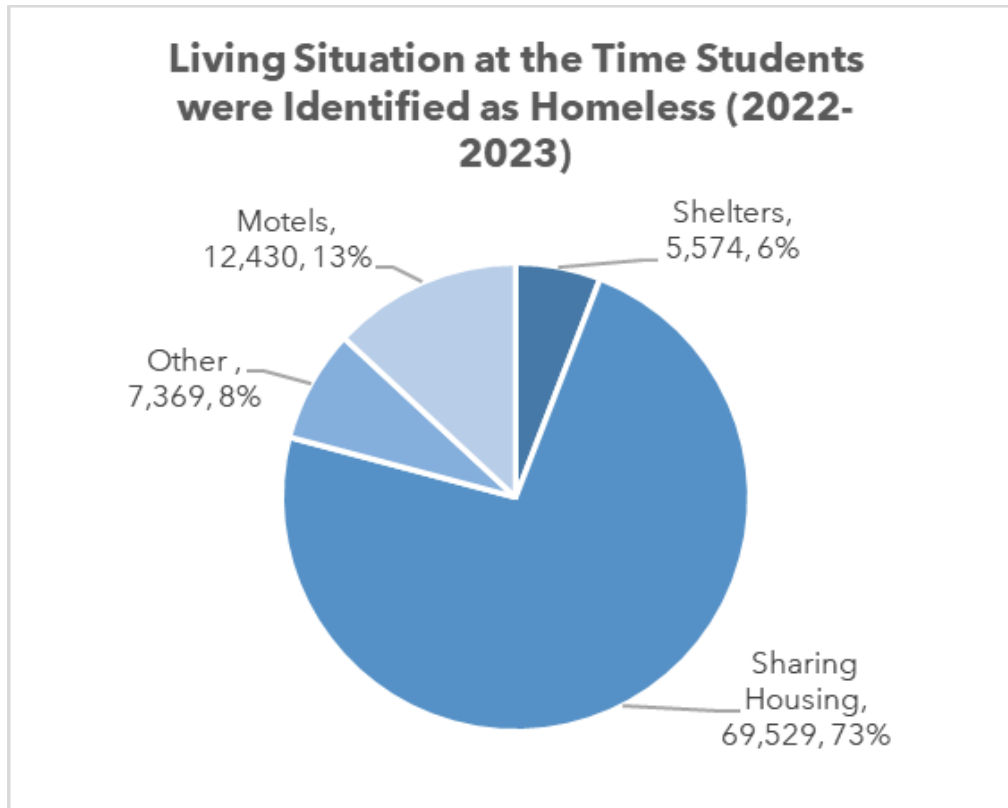
Panhandle) as shown in Figure 9 and Figure 10, respectively.

**FIGURE 9: DISTRICTS WITH THE LARGEST HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION (TOTAL NUMBER)**



**FIGURE 10: DISTRICTS WITH THE LARGEST HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION (% OF STUDENTS)**

The living situations that fall under the definition of homelessness used by the DOE include households referred to as “doubled up,” where a family may be living in a home without a lease in their name or “couch-surfing” where people move from one place to another in rapid succession. As with previous school years, the majority of students experiencing homelessness in 2022-2023 were in a home sharing arrangement, followed by motels, other situations (which captures living in cars, parks, and other places not designated for regular sleeping accommodations), and shelters, as shown in Figure 11.

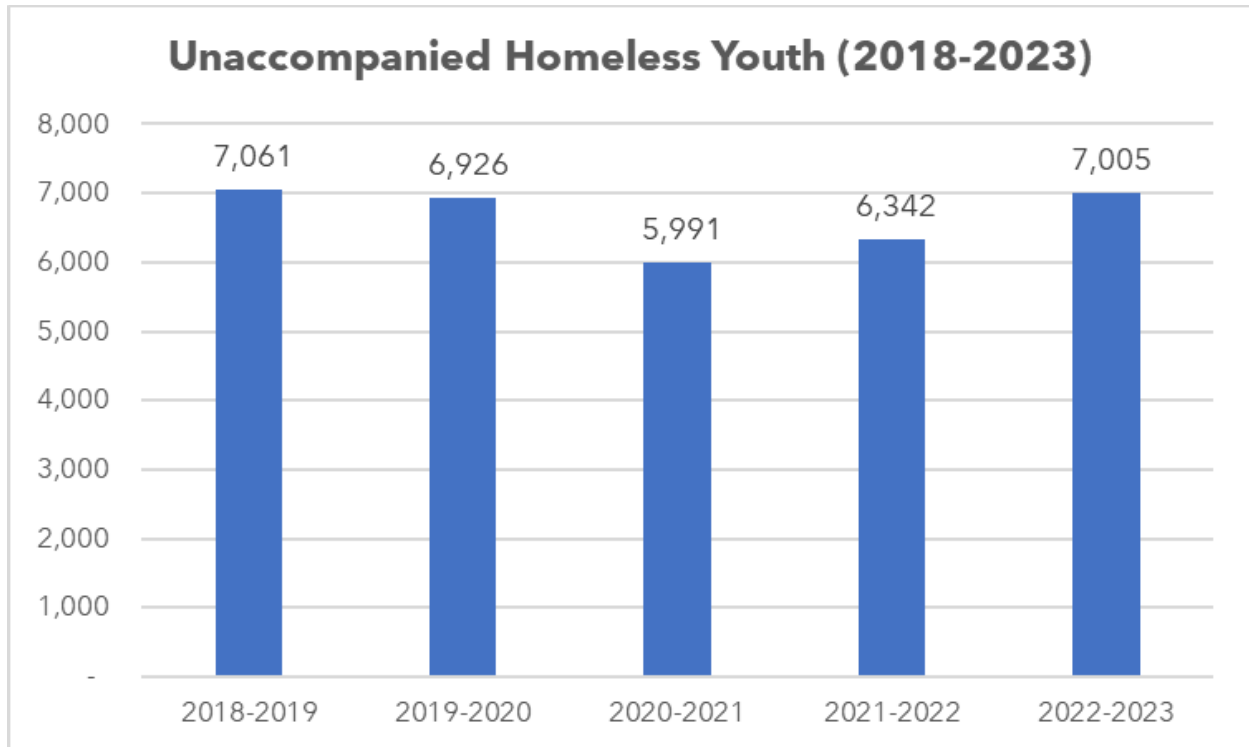


**FIGURE 11: LIVING SITUATIONS FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS (2022-2023)**

The Shimberg Center has identified the affordable housing shortage as the root cause of student homelessness.<sup>42</sup> The Council’s recommended solutions to address homelessness among students in Florida’s school system mirror the successful interventions in other aspects of the housing crisis response system, which include developing cross-sector collaborations, employing evidence-based best practices, and securing funding for the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

An unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) refers to a youth who is homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. According to DOE data, the number of UHY increased from 6,342 to 7,005 (663, 10%) between 2022 and 2023, as shown in Figure 12. The increase in the UHY count reflects the increase in the number of students experiencing homelessness overall, though the UHY increase was proportionally smaller (i.e., 10% for UHY and 21% for students overall).

<sup>42</sup> [Students Experiencing Homelessness in Florida: Updates and Solutions](#), Shimberg Center. Updated August 2019.



**FIGURE 12: UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH BY SCHOOL YEAR**

While the count of UHY had been declining in the state, the 2022-2023 count is approaching pre-pandemic levels. Homelessness among this population is a particular concern due to the lasting impacts on the lives of youth. The risk factors for youth experiencing homelessness are sexual orientation, sexual activity, school problems, pregnancy, and substance abuse. UHY have numerous vulnerabilities which include untreated mental health disorders, drug use, and sexual exploitation.<sup>43</sup> To adequately address homelessness among unaccompanied youth, systems of care must coordinate services, especially between education agencies, child welfare, and juvenile justice.

Statewide homeless student data are summarized in Table 10 and Table 11 on the following pages.

<sup>43</sup> [Runaway and Homeless Youth: Demographics and Programs](#), Congressional Research Service. Updated March 26, 2019.

# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 10: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HOMELESS STUDENT COUNT (2022-2023)**

District Name	Living Situation at the Time the Student was Identified as Homeless				Total Homeless	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)
	Shelters	Sharing Housing	Other	Motels		
ALACHUA	119	717	40	125	1,001	98
BAKER	0	157	12	12	181	33
BAY	100	1,482	110	138	1,830	279
BRADFORD	<11	97	<11	23	134	15
BREVARD	125	1,041	113	344	1,623	174
BROWARD	252	3,581	379	743	4,955	310
CALHOUN	<11	95	<11	<11	113	24
CHARLOTTE	48	723	118	118	1,007	57
CITRUS	38	581	71	52	742	85
CLAY	25	755	16	104	900	246
COLLIER	128	1,679	26	99	1,932	278
COLUMBIA	20	290	27	46	383	21
MIAMI-DADE	683	9,443	471	574	11,171	298
DESOTO	<11	98	<11	<11	120	<11
DIXIE	<11	91	<11	<11	106	17
DUVAL	135	2,840	48	372	3,395	532
ESCAMBIA	139	1,359	72	343	1,913	117
FLAGLER	12	219	12	27	270	11
FRANKLIN	<11	36	<11	<11	51	<11
GADSDEN	<11	143	<11	17	166	<11
GILCHRIST	<11	93	20	0	116	11
GLADES	0	70	<11	<11	78	14
GULF	<11	13	<11	0	17	<11
HAMILTON	0	227	<11	<11	231	<11
HARDEE	35	299	61	<11	396	23
HENDRY	274	383	41	18	716	26
HERNANDO	55	790	55	69	969	100
HIGHLANDS	27	416	19	17	479	<11
HILLSBOROUGH	327	2,754	272	930	4,283	406
HOLMES	<11	69	15	11	96	13
INDIAN RIVER	61	443	15	48	567	<11
JACKSON	<11	314	17	<11	350	60
JEFFERSON	<11	<11	0	0	<11	0
LAFAYETTE	0	94	107	0	201	<11
LAKE	50	1,306	151	215	1,722	94
LEE	156	1,269	2,564	281	4,270	130
LEON	96	669	25	149	939	108
LEVY	12	246	38	15	311	16
LIBERTY	0	62	<11	0	68	<11
MADISON	0	81	11	<11	94	<11
MANATEE	35	1,018	39	111	1,203	68
MARION	78	821	115	295	1,309	250
MARTIN	61	675	26	34	796	58
MONROE	55	415	22	19	511	22
NASSAU	<11	303	52	24	388	112
OKALOOSA	95	444	46	66	651	81
OKEECHOBEE	<11	294	25	25	350	24
ORANGE	413	5,273	466	1,746	7,898	366
OSCEOLA	130	2,470	150	1,027	3,777	82
PALM BEACH	329	4,695	320	459	5,803	165
PASCO	91	1,362	76	244	1,773	236
PINELLAS	431	3,342	162	838	4,773	393
POLK	206	3,490	200	768	4,664	388
PUTNAM	56	308	48	22	434	41
ST. JOHNS	41	308	26	105	480	69
ST. LUCIE	45	2,386	57	238	2,726	176
SANTA ROSA	44	829	66	52	991	91

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

District Name	Living Situation at the Time the Student was Identified as Homeless				Total Homeless	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)
	Shelters	Sharing Housing	Other	Motels		
SARASOTA	85	709	50	211	1,055	58
SEMINOLE	80	2,009	111	486	2,686	355
SUMTER	36	64	<11	45	154	<11
SUWANNEE	<11	168	38	<11	220	19
TAYLOR	0	84	24	21	129	11
UNION	0	109	0	0	109	<11
VOLUSIA	231	2,064	151	540	2,987	229
WAKULLA	0	43	<11	<11	48	<11
WALTON	0	245	12	15	272	15
WASHINGTON	12	151	<11	14	181	15
DEAF/BLIND	0	16	<11	<11	22	<11
DADE - KIPP MIAMI	<11	34	<11	<11	45	0
DADE - MATER FLORIDA	0	<11	0	0	<11	0
DUVAL - SAN JOSE CHARTER	0	>11	0	0	>11	0
FAMU LAB SCH	0	<11	0	0	<11	<11
FAU LAB SCH	<11	19	0	0	20	0
FL VIRTUAL	<11	91	<11	40	144	<11
FSU LAB SCH	0	<11	0	0	<11	0
HILLSBOROUGH - IDEA CHARTER	0	<11	0	0	<11	0
ORANGE - UCP	<11	18	<11	<11	35	0
PALM BEACH - SOUTH TECH	<11	44	<11	<11	55	<11
POLK - LAKE WALES	<11	187	78	24	296	17
UF LAB SCH	0	<11	0	2	<11	<11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,574</b>	<b>69,529</b>	<b>7,369</b>	<b>12,430</b>	<b>94,902</b>	<b>7,005</b>

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# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**TABLE 11: HOMELESS STUDENT COUNT BY DISTRICT (2018-2023)**

District Name	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
ALACHUA	1,026	1,045	809	896	1,001
BAKER	55	103	120	233	181
BAY	5,725	3,774	2,050	1,830	1,830
BRADFORD	160	140	152	124	134
BREVARD	2,261	1,614	1,125	1,278	1,623
BROWARD	5,424	5,090	3,264	4,207	4,955
CALHOUN	202	271	131	80	113
CHARLOTTE	364	387	396	491	1,007
CITRUS	619	637	638	889	742
CLAY	983	812	793	765	900
COLLIER	1,030	1,163	1,154	1,295	1,932
COLUMBIA	507	462	347	342	383
MIAMI-DADE	9,949	9,438	5,749	8,485	11,171
DESOTO	155	125	61	71	120
DIXIE	53	68	41	40	106
DUVAL	3,770	3,352	2,435	3,177	3,395
ESCAMBIA	1,936	1,812	1,363	1,822	1,913
FLAGLER	556	445	284	321	270
FRANKLIN	289	140	108	67	51
GADSDEN	252	149	170	78	166
GILCHRIST	13	<11	<11	39	116
GLADES	45	35	56	64	78
GULF	108	30	23	18	17
HAMILTON	347	285	273	245	231
HARDEE	178	252	283	345	396
HENDRY	346	445	607	487	716
HERNANDO	577	691	686	833	969
HIGHLANDS	465	426	374	457	479
HILLSBOROUGH	4,240	4,782	4,011	4,513	4,283
HOLMES	56	58	21	78	96
INDIAN RIVER	441	529	423	470	567
JACKSON	2,861	386	360	447	350
JEFFERSON	34	26	26	20	<11
LAFAYETTE	204	203	156	183	201
LAKE	1,999	1,508	1,296	1,692	1,722
LEE	1,275	1,240	961	1,510	4,270
LEON	1,352	837	521	630	939
LEVY	256	207	155	186	311
LIBERTY	34	52	58	60	68
MADISON	227	186	127	131	94
MANATEE	1,406	1,279	1,192	1,373	1,203
MARION	2,150	1,080	1,016	1,117	1,309
MARTIN	620	667	622	709	796
MONROE	352	276	264	258	511
NASSAU	546	510	490	378	388
OKALOOSA	1,132	733	606	584	651
OKEECHOBEE	432	352	356	236	350
ORANGE	6,118	4,774	3,914	5,556	7,898
OSCEOLA	3,489	2,621	2,501	2,943	3,777
PALM BEACH	4,465	4,489	2,927	4,417	5,803
PASCO	1,908	1,877	1,550	1,829	1,773
PINELLAS	4,371	4,255	3,334	4,669	4,773
POLK	3,517	3,665	3,682	3,984	4,664
PUTNAM	537	523	357	248	434
ST. JOHNS	732	643	650	786	480
ST. LUCIE	1,512	1,429	1,700	2,355	2,726
SANTA ROSA	1,141	797	820	817	991
SARASOTA	833	727	611	748	1,055
SEMINOLE	1,590	1,599	1,395	1,934	2,686

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

District Name	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
SUMTER	127	97	92	111	154
SUWANNEE	307	266	252	223	220
TAYLOR	100	109	87	106	129
UNION	61	73	48	67	109
VOLUSIA	2,744	2,666	2,569	2,713	2,987
WAKULLA	94	63	73	71	48
WALTON	465	338	220	225	272
WASHINGTON	211	231	231	205	181
DEAF/BLIND	19	27	27	30	22
DADE - KIPP MIAMI	0	0	33	28	45
DADE - MATER FLORIDA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<11
DUVAL - SAN JOSE CHARTER	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<11
FAMU LAB SCH	38	55	317	226	144
FAU LAB SCH	20	21	25	25	20
FL VIRTUAL	<11	<11	<11	<11	<11
FSU LAB SCH	16	14	<11	<11	<11
HILLSBOROUGH - IDEA CHARTER	N/A	N/A	N/A	16	<11
ORANGE - UCP	21	16	<11	<11	35
PALM BEACH - SOUTH TECH	39	42	21	60	55
POLK - LAKE WALES	177	251	240	322	296
UF LAB SCH	<11	<11	<11	<11	<11
<b>TOTAL</b>	91,675	79,781	63,846	78,277	94,902

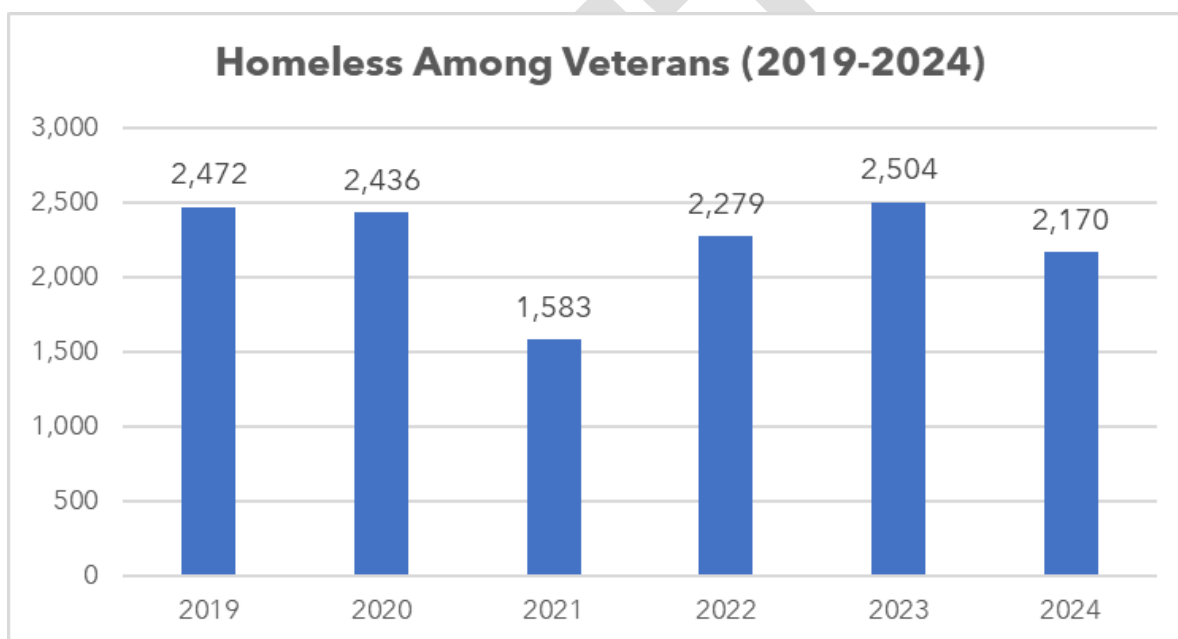
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# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

## 7.5.2 Veterans

Reducing homelessness among veterans is an ongoing policy focus for local, state, and federal agencies. Veterans experience homelessness at a higher rate than non-veterans, and the risk factors for veteran homelessness include substance abuse, mental health, poverty, and social isolation.<sup>44</sup> Preliminary 2024 PIT data indicate the count of veterans experiencing homelessness in the state decreased by 334 (13%) from 2023 to 2024 and has decreased 11% over the last five years, as shown in Figure 13.<sup>45</sup>



**FIGURE 13: HOMELESSNESS AMONG VETERANS (2019-2024)**

Programs specifically aimed at reducing the number of veterans experiencing homelessness include HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers and Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF).<sup>46, 47</sup> As indicated throughout the report, solutions for veteran homelessness must combine supportive services, evidence-based best practices (e.g., discharge planning), and investments in affordable housing.

<sup>44</sup> [Risk Factors for Homelessness Among US Veterans](#), National Coalition for Homeless Veterans. Last accessed June 10, 2024.

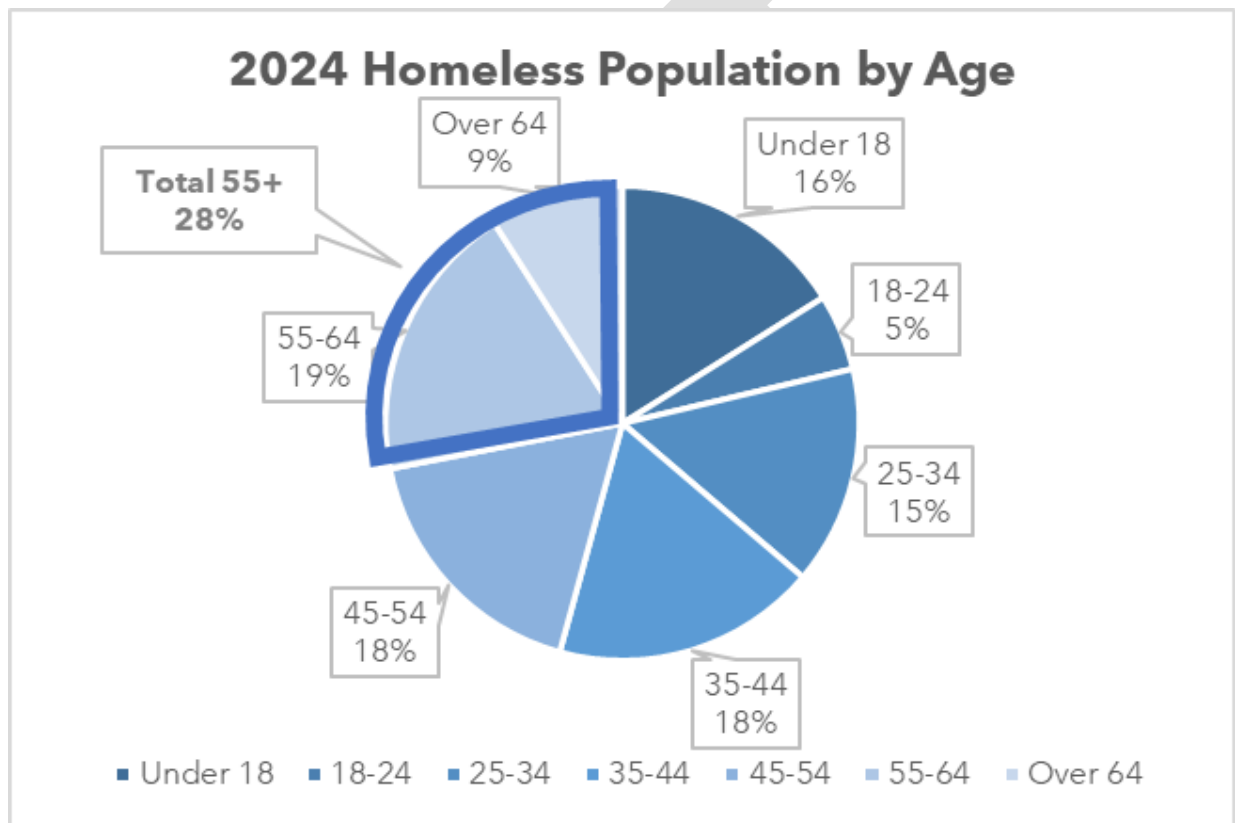
<sup>45</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation.

<sup>46</sup> [HUD-VASH Vouchers](#), HUD. Last accessed June 10, 2024.

<sup>47</sup> [Supportive Services for Veteran Families](#), U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Last accessed June 10, 2024.

## 7.5.3 Seniors

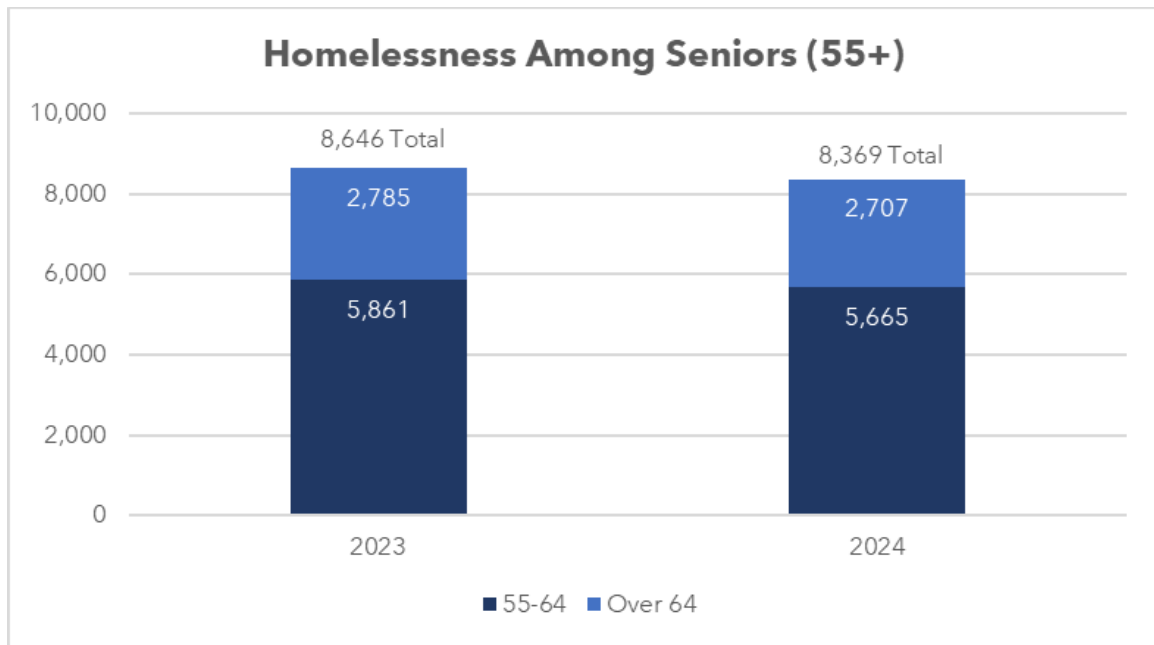
The overlapping vulnerabilities of age, income, and health make homelessness among seniors a significant focus in Florida. Based on the preliminary 2024 PIT data, seniors (i.e., those aged 55 or older) represent 28% of the overall homeless population as shown in Figure 14. The total number of seniors experiencing homelessness decreased by 274 (-3%) between 2023 and 2024 as shown in Figure 15.<sup>48</sup>



**FIGURE 14: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE 2024 HOMELESS POPULATION**

<sup>48</sup> The PIT count information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies and is subject to change based on HUD validation. As a note, Figure 15 will be off slightly from the 2024 PIT count due to FL-601 conducting a HUD-allowed biennial unsheltered PIT count. As such, there is no 2024 age breakdown of FL-601's unsheltered population.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT



**FIGURE 15: HOMELESSNESS AMONG SENIORS (2023-2024)**

The number of older adults experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness has been increasing nationwide, and this trend is expected to continue.<sup>49</sup> By 2040, the population of older Americans is projected to reach more than 80 million, or 22% of the total population. As the aging population increases, so does their rate of homelessness. The root causes of homelessness among older adults include community-level factors such as lack of accessible and affordable housing, as well as individual risk factors including medical conditions, substance use disorders, social isolation, and financial insecurity. Efforts to address homelessness among older adults must include a combination of affordable housing and supports to address the needs of seniors who may have compounding vulnerabilities (e.g., seniors who have extremely low incomes, are veterans, etc.)

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<sup>49</sup> [Addressing Homelessness Among Older Adults](#), HHS ASPE. Published October 30, 2023.

## 7.6 Appendix VI: System Performance Measures

HUD SPMs are a component of the CoC Performance Profile Reports, which are intended to provide a snapshot of CoC effectiveness in meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness.<sup>50</sup>

Communities use SPMs to track progress in preventing and ending homelessness based on how long people are experiencing homelessness, how many households are entering and exiting throughout the year, and housing outcomes.<sup>51</sup> The Council focuses on three key SPMs to gauge CoC performance in Florida:

- Returns to Homelessness (SPM 2)
- First Time Homelessness (SPM 5)
- Successful Exits to Permanent Housing (SPM 7)

2023 SPM data indicates positive CoC performance in Florida with respect to people experiencing homelessness for the first time and successful exits to permanent housing. However, returns to homelessness also increased in 2023, indicating that people facing recurring or chronic homelessness experienced challenges in maintaining stable, affordable housing. The states performance across multiple SPMs is depicted in Table 12, Figure 16, and Figure 17.

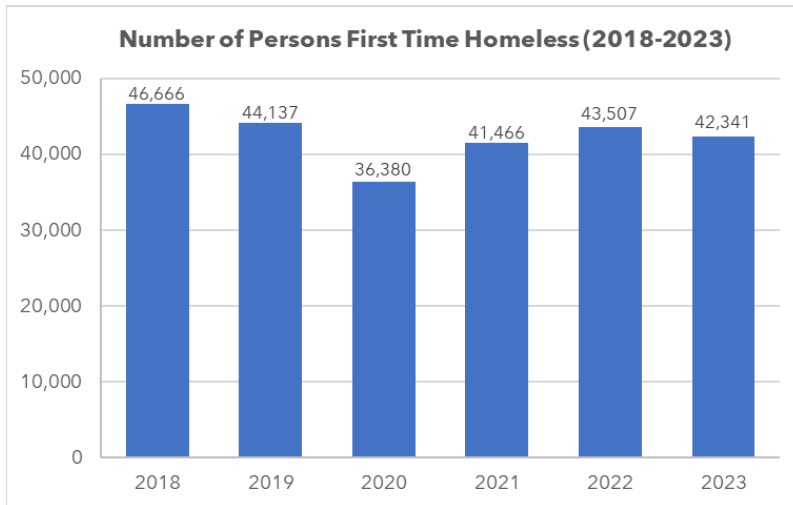
**TABLE 12: SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASURES FROM 2018-2023**

System Performance Measures Summary (2019-2023)						
System Performance Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022-2023 Change
Rate of People Returning to Homelessness in 6 Months (SPM 2)	11.0%	9.9%	8.7%	8.3%	9.0%	⬇️
Number of Persons Experiencing Homelessness for the First Time (SPM 5.2)	44,137	36,380	41,466	43,507	42,341	⬆️
Rate People Exiting from ES, SH, TH, and RRH to PH (SPM 7.b.1)	42.4%	41.9%	49.6%	44.0%	42.9%	⬇️
Rate of People in PSH and OPH Retain or Exit to PH (SPM 7.b.2)	95.8%	96.4%	99.1%	96.0%	96.2%	⬆️
<b>Abbreviations:</b>						
ES = Emergency Shelter	TH = Transitional Housing		PH = Permanent Housing			
SH = Safe Haven	RRH = Rapid Re-Housing		PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing			
			OPH = Other Permanent Housing			

<sup>50</sup> [CoC Performance Profile Reports](#), HUD Exchange. Last accessed on May 16, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> The SPM information in this report is based on data submitted by the 27 local CoC planning agencies. The CoCs capture information on the makeup of people experiencing homelessness in Florida from direct interviews or from agency data on persons experiencing homelessness served as entered the HMIS. The current 2023 data are compared to reported data since 2018. Reported characteristics are based on the individuals own self-reporting and may not have been verified.

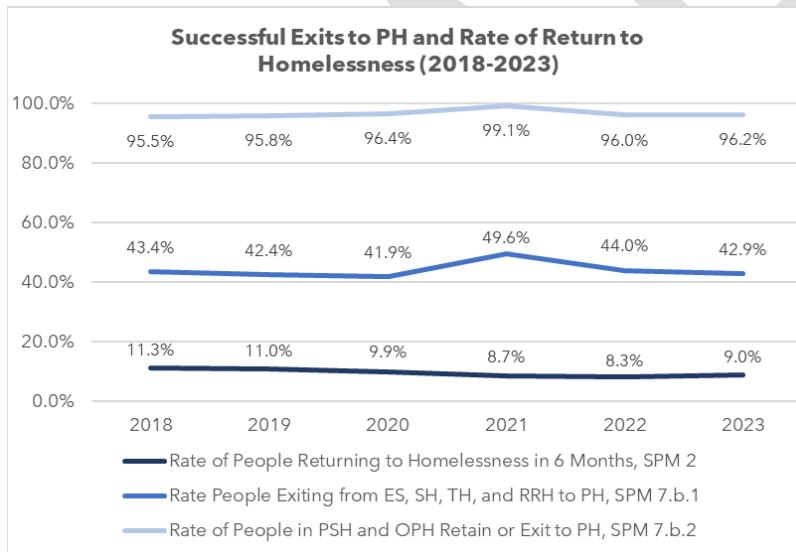
# 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT



**FIGURE 16: NUMBER OF PERSONS FIRST TIME HOMELESS 2018-2023**

The number of people experiencing homelessness for the first time in Florida decreased 2.7% between 2022 and 2023 (43,507 to 42,341).

Successful exits to PH from PSH/OSH also remained relatively strong at 96.2%.



**FIGURE 17: SUCCESSFUL EXITS TO PH AND RATE OF RETURN TO HOMELESSNESS FROM 2018-2023**

However, the rates of returns to homelessness increased (8.3 to 9.0%) and successful exits to PH from ES, SH, TH and RRH decreased (44.0 to 42.9%).

### 7.7 Appendix VII: Leveraging Resources to Address Housing and Homelessness

It is known that affordable, subsidized housing units available to the scale needed will significantly address the needs of those experiencing homelessness. However, Florida is behind in the production of this type of housing and population need continues to increase each year.<sup>52</sup> In order to fully meet the housing needs of these Floridians, the Council suggests expanding the use of tools such as Linkage Fees and Inclusionary Zoning.<sup>53</sup> Statewide promotion of the use and implementation of Linkage Fees on commercial developments would bolster affordable housing resources at the local level to adequately meet the needs of those with extremely low incomes. For example, if there is a self-storage facility proposed to be built at 66,500 square feet with a \$1 per square foot linkage fee, then this fee would produce \$66,500 to be invested in an affordable housing trust to be used for development of affordable housing. As of 2022, several Florida counties or municipalities have implemented programs akin to Linkage Fees, such as Winter Park, Jupiter, Coconut Creek, and Ocala.

Many local governments however have felt deterred from utilizing Linkage Fees and have put a pause on implementing Linkage Fees covering residential or mixed-use residential development because, according to Chapter 2020-27, local governments must “fully offset all costs” to the developer associated with the fee.<sup>54</sup> Moving forward, in order to address this concern, it is recommended that a local government provides a mix of incentives in order to offset costs for a fee that covers residential or mixed-use residential development. It is extremely important to note that the local government does not need to fully offset all costs for a Linkage Fee assessed on commercial development. Therefore, local governments can comfortably assess Linkage fees on commercial development in accordance with Florida law without needing to offset the costs associated with the fee.

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<sup>52</sup> [2022 Rental Market Study](#), Shimberg Center. Released June 2022.

<sup>53</sup> Linkage Fees are typically assessed on new commercial, industrial, and office developments to address housing needs, similar to that of an impact fee.

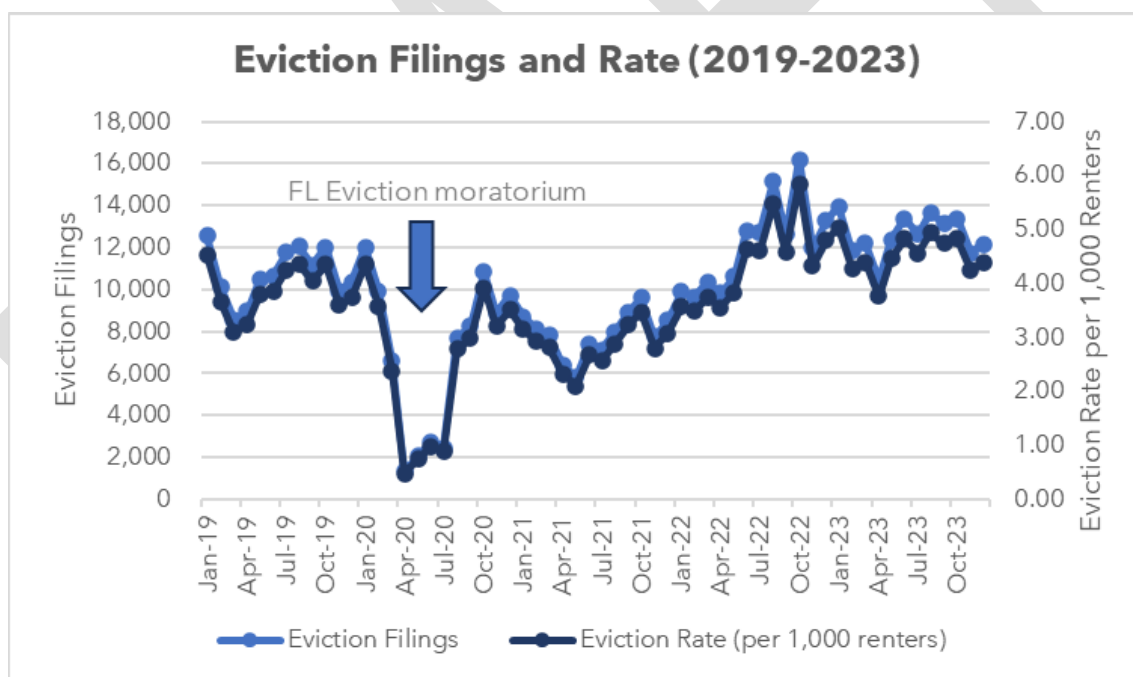
<sup>54</sup> [Ch. 2020-27, Laws of Fla. \(2020\)](#).

## 7.8 Appendix VIII: Evictions and Foreclosures Filed in Florida

The University of Florida’s Shimberg Center tracks eviction and foreclosure filing data in the state. In 2023, the number of eviction filings continued to increase, though at a slower pace than the previous year (i.e., 4% for 2022-23 versus 54% for 2021-22, as shown in Table 13). The eviction rate per 1,000 renters tracked with the number of filings, which indicates correlation between the number of eviction filings and actual evictions, as shown in Figure 18.

**TABLE 13: EVICTION FILINGS AND RATE (2019-2023)**

Year	Eviction Filings	Average Eviction Rate (per 1,000 renters)	Filings Change	Filings % Change
2019	128,754	3.88		
2020	82,525	2.49	(46,229)	-36%
2021	94,181	2.84	11,656	14%
2022	145,154	4.37	50,973	54%
2023	150,842	4.54	5,688	4%

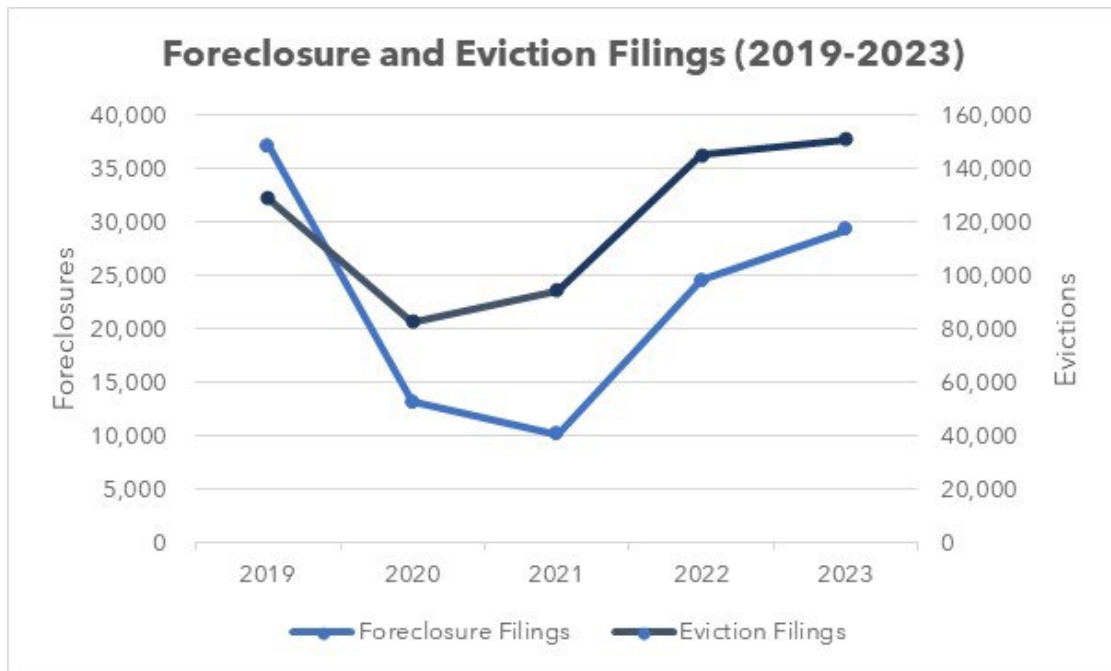


**FIGURE 18: EVICTION FILINGS AND RATE (2019-2023)**

Foreclosure and evictions data have followed a similar trajectory over 2019 to 2023, as shown in Figure 19. While the affected populations are different (i.e., homeowners vs renters), the drivers and effects on housing insecurity are similar. Evictions in 2022 and 2023 exceeded pre-pandemic (2019) levels; based on the annual increase in foreclosures since 2021, the number of foreclosure filings may exceed 2019 levels by 2025. The growth in these metrics illustrate the impact of the expiration of pandemic relief measures (i.e., the state’s eviction moratorium, Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), and other supports) and the ongoing housing affordability gap. In addition to funding measures to enable

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

renters and homeowners to directly cover their housing costs, approaches such as providing legal services and mediation have also shown to be effective in helping people avoid becoming homeless due to eviction.<sup>55, 56</sup>



**FIGURE 19: FORECLOSURE AND EVICTION FILINGS (2019-2023)**

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<sup>55</sup> [America's Rental Housing](#), Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. Last accessed on May 15, 2024.

<sup>56</sup> [Unaffordable America: Poverty, housing, and eviction](#), University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty. Released March 2015.



### 7.9 Appendix IX: CoC Operation in Florida

A significant effort to prevent and end homelessness as modeled by HUD nationwide, is the establishment of a Continuum of Care (CoC) model, which comprises all stakeholders in a geographical area that work together to prevent and end homelessness. The State of Florida has 27 CoCs of varying sizes and geographic areas of which some CoCs serve one county, while others can span up to eight counties.

In alignment with best practice, the CoC is composed of a broad array of stakeholders across multiple systems in the community, extending beyond nonprofits that provide homeless-specific services. To prevent and end homelessness, it is necessary to take a multi-disciplinary approach, encouraging participation in action planning to support activities that address homelessness in local communities. These efforts strengthen collective impact when addressing the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These partnerships can assist CoCs to strengthen the housing crisis response system, expand funding opportunities, increase economic opportunity, and incorporate perspectives that help build a more effective system of care.

CoCs work to engage multiple sectors, including but not limited to:

- Philanthropy
- Local government
- Housing developers
- Realtors
- Health care systems
- Child welfare
- Criminal justice
- Workforce development

Prior to the development of the current CoC model, homeless services organizations worked individually and applied directly to HUD for funding. Currently, as required by the federal HEARTH Act, the CoC establishes a local planning body to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.<sup>57</sup> The planning body is typically a CoC Board or Council comprising community leaders and representatives of multiple stakeholder groups. The CoC also designates a “CoC Lead Agency.”<sup>58</sup>

CoCs are required to submit an annual consolidated application to HUD for CoC Program funding. All CoCs have a designated Lead Agency that serves as this collaborative applicant. The CoC Lead Agency provides staff leadership for the system, submits funding applications on behalf of the CoC to HUD and the State of Florida, and has a wide range of responsibilities to ensure that the local system is effectively ending homelessness. CoC Lead Agencies are tasked with leading the coordination of community efforts that include a diverse group of stakeholders.

The State of Florida supports this vital work of the Lead Agency through CoC Staffing Grants.<sup>59</sup> The CoC geographic areas are agreed upon by the local communities and HUD and are recognized by the State. The Florida CoC geographic areas and a link to CoC contacts are provided in Appendix XI.

<sup>57</sup> [Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act](#), HUD. Last accessed May 21, 2024.

<sup>58</sup> [Homelessness](#), DCF. Last accessed May 21, 2024.

<sup>59</sup> [CoC Program Grants Administration User Guide](#), HUD. Last accessed May 21, 2024.

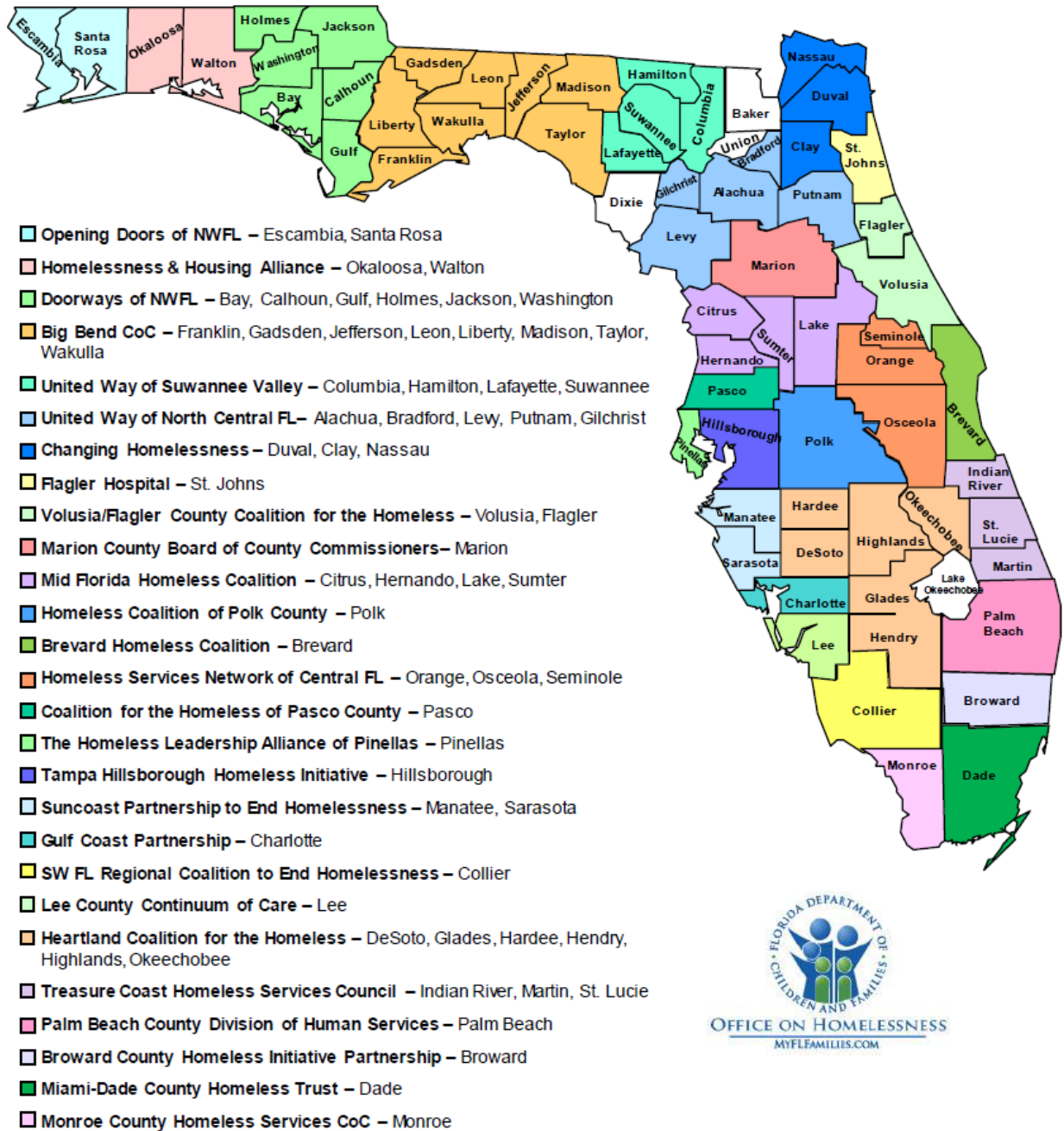
## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

### 7.10 Appendix X: CoC Funding

Note: Appendix X is a draft and represents a projection of funding for upcoming Fiscal Year 2024-25. This does not include an additional \$10,000,000 which will be distributed to CoCs according to the relevant proviso language in the 2024 General Appropriations Act.

CoC #	CoC Catchment Area (Counties)	Challenge	Staffing	ESG	ESG-RUSH	TANF
FL-500	Manatee, Sarasota	\$ 748,704.04	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 189,500.35	\$ 45,688.36	\$ 38,000.00
FL-501	Hillsborough	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 166,363.67	\$ -	\$ -
FL-502	Pinellas	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 220,349.23	\$ 85,764.80	\$ 46,582.00
FL-503	Polk	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 189,500.34	\$ -	\$ 34,683.00
FL-504	Volusia, Flagler	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 220,349.23	\$ -	\$ 46,582.00
FL-505	Okaloosa, Walton	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 330,523.85	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-506	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 165,261.93	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-507	Orange, Osceola, and Seminole	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 220,349.23	\$ 157,720.53	\$ 46,582.00
FL-508	Alachua, Bradford, Gilchrist, Levy, and Putnam	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-509	Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 330,523.85	\$ -	\$ -
FL-510	Clay, Duval, and Nassau	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 189,500.34	\$ -	\$ 46,582.00
FL-511	Escambia and Santa Rosa	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-512	St. Johns	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 248,994.64	\$ 74,221.37	\$ 32,250.00
FL-513	Brevard	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-514	Marion	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 189,500.34	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-515	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 248,994.64	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-517	DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 248,994.64	\$ 55,836.61	\$ -
FL-518	Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, and Suwannee	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-519	Pasco	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 189,500.34	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-520	Citrus, Hernando, Lake, and Sumter	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-600	Miami-Dade	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 220,349.23	\$ -	\$ 46,582.00
FL-601	Broward	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 213,759.69	\$ -	\$ -
FL-602	Charlotte	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 330,523.85	\$ -	\$ 46,582.00
FL-603	Lee	\$ 934,307.11	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 116,261.76	\$ 104,945.00	\$ 46,582.00
FL-604	Monroe	\$ 748,704.01	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 283,148.77	\$ -	\$ 32,250.00
FL-605	Palm Beach	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,000.00
FL-606	Collier	\$ 541,080.21	\$ 185,894.85	\$ 220,349.23	\$ 17,775.94	\$ -
Totals		\$ 20,016,822.00	\$ 5,019,160.95	\$ 6,148,343.00	\$ 541,952.61	\$ 852,507.00

## 7.11 Appendix XI: Designated CoC Lead Agency Map



Contact information for the Continuums of Care can be found at [www.myflfamilies.com/services/public-assistance/homelessness](http://www.myflfamilies.com/services/public-assistance/homelessness).

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

### 7.12 Appendix XII: Council Members

Council Member <sup>60</sup>	Representing
Council Leadership	
Shannon Nazworth, Board Member, Policy Committee Chair <b>Council Chair</b>	Florida Supportive Housing Coalition
Claudia Tuck, Director (Alachua) <b>Council Vice Chair</b>	Florida Association of Counties
Council Members	
Teresa Berdoll, State PATH Coordinator, SOAR State Team Lead, FDC Aftercare Process Lead Housing & Employment Process Lead	Florida Department of Children and Families
Isabelle Potts, Supervisor, Program Development and Research Unit	Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
Cassandra Moore, Bureau Chief, Interstate Compact and Probation	Florida Department of Corrections
Courtney Walker, State Coordinator	Florida Department of Education
Shay Chapman, Division Director, Community Health Promotion	Florida Department of Health
Robert (Bob) Asztalos, Deputy Executive Director	Florida Department of Veteran Affairs
Warren Davis, Policy Analyst	CareerSource Florida
Leeanne Sacino, Executive Director	Florida Coalition to End Homelessness
Zachary Summerlin, Policy Director & Supportive Housing Coordinator	Florida Housing Finance Corporation
Lisa Kane DeVitto, Commissioner (City of Crescent City)	Florida League of Cities
Kim Smoak, Deputy Secretary	Agency for Health Care Administration
Jennifer Moore, Deputy Director, Statewide Community Based Services, Senior Housing Liaison	Florida Department of Elder Affairs
Amanda Wander, Director, Ending Homelessness Team	Florida Housing Coalition
Governor Appointees	
Steve Smith, Founder	
Vacant (3 seats)	To apply please visit <a href="http://www.flgov.com">www.flgov.com</a>
Ex-Officio Appointees	
Lindsey Cannon, Regional Executive Director, Program Operations	Children's Home Society Pensacola
Steven Tillman, VISN 8 Network Homeless Coordinator VA Sunshine Healthcare Network	US Department of Veteran Affairs

<sup>60</sup> [Homelessness Council Members](#), Florida Department of Children and Families. Last accessed on May 22, 2024.

### 7.13 Appendix XIII: Defining Homelessness

Homelessness occurs when a person lacks a home. While conceptually simple, state statutes and federal regulations dictate what it means for an individual or family to be defined as homeless. It is important to recognize that various systems may have different criteria/definitions, sometimes causing systems to become more complex and difficult to navigate for those who need it. A household's eligibility is often tied to definitions outlined by the funding source. Technical and varying definitions can create unintentional barriers to resolving an individual or family's housing crisis.

While the term "homeless" can paint various pictures for people, it is important to understand there is no singular defining characteristic of a household experiencing homelessness outside of lacking a stable place to live. Communities are tasked with addressing homelessness among a wide variety of households, including people who are unsheltered, living in places not meant for human habitation, fleeing domestic violence, aging out of foster care, staying in a homeless emergency shelter, and more. The entity responsible for coordinating, planning, and pursuing the end of homelessness in a community is the Collaborative Applicant or Lead Agency of the local Continuum of Care (CoC). This work is primarily funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), therefore CoCs work within a specific definition and often are tasked with prioritizing households based on the federal goal to reduce and end homelessness.

As alluded to throughout this report, there are varying definitions of homelessness dependent upon sources of funding and state and federal funding or agencies. The report utilizes the HUD definition of homelessness, unless specified otherwise. The following section describes two of the varying definitions provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the US Department of Education.

#### US DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

HUD defines homelessness among four categories to provide a defined scope that ensures individuals and families at the greatest risk are served with the limited resources available.

1. **Literally Homeless:** Individuals and families who live in a place not meant for human habitation (including outdoors or in their car), emergency shelter, transitional housing, and motels paid for by a government or charitable organization.
2. **Imminent Risk of Homelessness:** Individuals and families who will lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days and have no other resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.
3. **Homeless Under other Federal Statutes:** Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not meet any of the other categories are homeless under other federal statutes, have had a lease, and have moved two or more times in the past 60 days, and are likely to remain unstable because of their special needs or barriers.
4. **Fleeing or Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence:** Individuals or families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and who lack resources and support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

#### US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (MVA) prescribes a definition of homelessness that more broadly accounts for the traumatic impact of housing instability on children and youth and the impact of that trauma on their education and development. The Department of Education uses the MVA definition of homelessness.

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

Homeless children and youth are defined as Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

1. Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement.
2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above in (1) through (3).

Subtitle VII-B of the MVA also defines unaccompanied youth as follows: The term “unaccompanied youth” includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

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### 7.14 Appendix XIV: Glossary

**Affordable Housing** - In general, housing for which the tenants are paying no more than 30% of their income for housing costs, including utilities. Affordable housing may either be subsidized housing or unsubsidized market housing. A special type of affordable housing for people with disabilities who need services along with affordable housing is "Permanent Supportive Housing."

**Area Median Income (AMI)** - The household in a certain region that is in the exact middle in terms of income compared to other households will set the AMI for their region (the household size is a factor considered; there are different AMIs for households of different sizes in the same region). This number is calculated every year by HUD. HUD focuses on a region, rather than a single city because families and individuals are likely to look outside of cities to surrounding areas when searching for a place to live.

**Chronically Homeless** - In general, a household that has been continuously homeless for over a year, or one that has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years, where the combined lengths of homelessness of those episodes is at least one year, and in which the individual has a disabling condition. (See 24 CFR 578.3)

**Continuum of Care (CoC)** - A local geographic area designated by HUD and served by a local planning body, which is responsible for organizing and delivering housing and services to meet the needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. The terms "CoC Governing Body" or "CoC Board" have the same meanings. In some contexts, the term "continuum of care" is also sometimes used to refer to the system of programs addressing homelessness. The geographic areas for the Florida CoCs are provided in Appendix XI. (See 24 CFR 578.3 and F.S. 420.621)

**CoC Lead Agency** - The local organization or entity that implements the work and policies directed by the CoC. In Florida, there are 27 CoC Lead Agencies, serving 64 of 67 Florida counties. The CoC Lead Agency typically serves as the "Collaborative Applicant," which submits annual funding requests for HUD CoC Program funding on behalf of the CoC. The contacts for the CoC Lead Agencies are linked in Appendix XI.

**Coordinated Entry System** - A standardized community-wide process to perform outreach and identify homeless households, enter their information into HMIS, use common tools to assess their needs and prioritize access to housing interventions and services to end their homelessness. Sometimes referred to as a "triage system" or "coordinated intake and assessment." (See 24 CFR 578.3)

**Council on Homelessness** - The Council on Homelessness was created in 2001 to develop policies and recommendations to reduce homelessness in Florida. The Council's mission is to develop and coordinate policy to reduce the prevalence and duration of homelessness and work toward ending homelessness in Florida. (See F.S. 420.622)

**Diversion** - A strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them stay housed where they currently are or by identifying immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

housing. This strategy is used in order to keep individuals from entering the homelessness system in their county.

**Effectively Ending Homelessness** - Effectively ending homelessness means that the community has a comprehensive response in place to ensure that homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it cannot be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring phenomenon. Specifically, the community will have the capacity to: (1) quickly identify and engage people at risk of or already experiencing homelessness; (2) intervene to prevent the loss of housing and divert people from entering the homelessness services system; and (3) when homelessness does occur, provide immediate access to shelter and crisis services, without barriers to entry, while permanent stable housing and appropriate supports are being secured, and quickly connect people to housing assistance and services—tailored to their unique needs and strengths—to help them achieve and maintain stable housing. (Source: USICH)

**Emergency Shelter** - A facility operated to provide temporary shelter for people who are homeless. HUD's guidance is that the lengths of stay in emergency shelters prior to moving into permanent housing should not exceed 30 days. (See 24 CFR 576.2)

**Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)** - HUD funding that flows through the state and certain local governments for street outreach, emergency shelters, rapid re-housing, homelessness prevention, and certain HMIS costs. (See 24 CFR 576)

**Encampment** - The term encampment has connotations of both **impermanence and continuity**. People are staying in temporary structures or enclosed places that are not intended for long-term continuous occupancy on an ongoing basis. (Source: HUD)

**Extremely Low-Income (ELI)** - Household income that is 30% or less of the AMI of the community. (See F.S. 420.0004)

**Florida Housing Finance Corporation** - Florida Housing Finance Corporation was created by the Florida Legislature to help Floridians obtain safe, decent, affordable housing that might otherwise be unavailable to them. The corporation provides funds for the development of housing. (See F.S. 420.501-420.55)

**Homeless** - Refer to Appendix XIII: Defining Homelessness

**The Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act** - Federal Legislation that, in 2009, amended and reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The HEARTH/McKinney Vento Act provides federal funding for homeless programs, including the HUD ESG funds and the HUD CoC Grant funding. (See [https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/S896\\_HEARTHAct.pdf](https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/S896_HEARTHAct.pdf))

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** - A web-based software solution and database tool designed to capture and analyze client-level information including the characteristics, service needs, and use of services by persons experiencing homelessness. HMIS is an important component of an effective Coordinated Entry System, CoC planning efforts, and performance evaluation based on program outcomes. (See 24 CFR 578.3)



## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**Homelessness Prevention** - Short-term financial assistance, sometimes with support services, for households at imminent risk of homelessness and who have no other resources to prevent homelessness. For many programs, the household must also be extremely low-income, with income at or less than 30% of the AMI, to receive such assistance. (See 24 CFR 576.103)

**Housing First Approach** - An approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible and, once the person is housed, then providing services to help the person remain stably housed. This approach is consistent with what most people experiencing homelessness need and want. Housing First is recognized as an evidence-based best practice, is cost-effective, and results in better outcomes as compared to other approaches. The Florida Legislature encourages CoCs to adopt the housing first approach to reduce homelessness.

**Housing or Permanent Housing** - Any housing arrangement in which the person/tenant can live indefinitely, as long as the rent is paid, and lease terms are followed. Temporary living arrangements and programs - such as emergency shelters, transitional programs, and rehabilitation programs - do not meet the definition of housing.

**Housing Trust Funds (Local and State)** - Florida's Sadowski Act Affordable Housing Trust Funds receive funding from dedicated revenue from real estate doc stamps. 70% of these funds are allocated to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP) that funds housing programs. 30% of these funds are allocated to the State Housing Trust Fund for programs such as the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program. In Florida, the Housing Trust Funds are used for affordable housing when appropriated for that use by the State Legislature. Housing Trust Funds may also be funded by general revenue and government bonds.

**HUD (The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)** - HUD provides funding to states and local communities to address homelessness. In addition, this department supports fair housing, community development, and affordable housing, among other issues.

**HUD CoC Funding** - Funding administered by HUD through local CoC Collaborative Applicant (i.e., CoC Lead Agency) entities. Eligible uses for new projects include permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, coordinated entry, HMIS, and CoC planning.

**Low Income** - Low-income persons means one or more natural persons or a family, the total annual adjusted gross household income of which does not exceed 80% of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the state, or 80% of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or, if not within an MSA, within the county in which the person or family resides, whichever is greater. (See F.S. 420.0004)

**Office on Homelessness** - Created in 2001, the Office on Homelessness was established as a central point of contact within state government on matters related to homelessness. The Office coordinates the services of the various state agencies and programs to serve individuals or families who are homeless or are facing homelessness. Office staff work with the Council on Homelessness to develop state policy. The Office also manages targeted state grants to support the implementation of local homeless service CoC plans. The Office is responsible for coordinating resources and programs across

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

all levels of government, and with private providers that serve people experiencing homelessness. (See F.S. 420.622)

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** - Safe and affordable housing for people with disabling conditions, legal tenancy housing rights, and access to individualized support services. PSH that is funded through HUD CoC funding should prioritize people who are chronically homeless with the longest terms of homelessness and the highest level of vulnerability/acute in terms of health issues and service needs. (See 24 CFR 578.3)

**Point in Time (PIT) Count** - HUD requires CoCs to count the number of people experiencing homelessness in their geographic area through the Point in Time (PIT) Count on a given day. Conducted by most CoCs during the last ten days in January, the PIT Count includes people served in shelter programs every year, with every other year also including people who are un-sheltered. Data collected during the PIT Counts is critical to effective planning and performance management toward the goal of ending homelessness for each community and the nation as a whole. A one-night snapshot of homelessness in a specific geographic area, the PIT Count data are presented in Appendix I. (See 24 CFR 578.3)

**Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)** - A housing intervention designed to move a household into permanent housing (e.g., a rental unit) as quickly as possible, ideally within 30 days of identification. Rapid Re-Housing typically provides (1) help identifying appropriate housing; (2) financial assistance (deposits and short-term or medium-term rental assistance for 1-24 months), and (3) support services as long as needed and desired, up to a certain limit. (See 24 CFR 576.104)

**Services or Support Services** - A wide range of services designed to address issues negatively affecting a person's quality of life, stability, and/or health. Examples include behavioral health counseling or treatment for mental health and/or substance use issues, assistance increasing income through employment or disability assistance, financial education, assistance with practical needs such as transportation or housekeeping, and connections to other critical resources such as primary health care.

**Sheltered/Unsheltered Homelessness** - People who are in temporary shelters, including emergency shelter and transitional shelters, are considered "sheltered." People who are living outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation are considered "unsheltered."

**Stella P.** - Used as a tool to visualize system performance based on Longitudinal System Analysis data, Stella P. provides an illustrative approach to a housing crisis response system's data by reporting the number of days homeless, exists from the homeless system to permanent destinations, and returns to homelessness. Stella P. develops data visualization elements to describe trends, population characteristics, performance, and comparisons based on official HUD data sets.

**Street Outreach** - A necessary homeless system component that involves interacting with unsheltered people who are homeless in whatever location they naturally stay (e.g., in campsites, on the streets), building trust, and offering access to appropriate housing interventions. (See 24 CFR 576.101)

## 2024 COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL REPORT

**Transitional Housing** - A temporary shelter program that allows for moderate stays (3-24 months) and provides support services. Based on research on the efficacy and costs of this model, this type of program should be a very limited component of the housing crisis response system, due to the relative costliness of the programs in the absence of outcomes that exceed rapid re-housing outcomes. Transitional housing should be used only for specific subpopulations such as transition-age youth.

**United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)** - A federal Council that co-ordinates the federal response to homelessness, working in partnership with Cabinet Secretaries and senior leaders from nineteen federal member agencies.

**Very Low Income** - Very-low-income persons means one or more natural persons or a family, not including students, the total annual adjusted gross household income of which does not exceed 50% of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the state, or 50% of the median annual adjusted gross income for households within the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) or, if not within an MSA, within the county in which the person or family resides, whichever is greater.

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