

From Living Outdoors to Leasing Up: Leveraging Resources and Partnerships to Move People from Encampments to Housing

2024 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
ENDING HOMELESSNESS

★ AND CAPITOL HILL DAY ★

JULY 8-10, 2024

WASHINGTON D.C.

#NAEH2024

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Leading with evidence-based practices over forced evictions when working with people living in encampments requires new resources, deep partnerships, and inclusive decision-making. Learn from geographically and politically diverse communities who are leading the way in building the local political and public will to scale housing-focused solutions to end unsheltered homelessness.

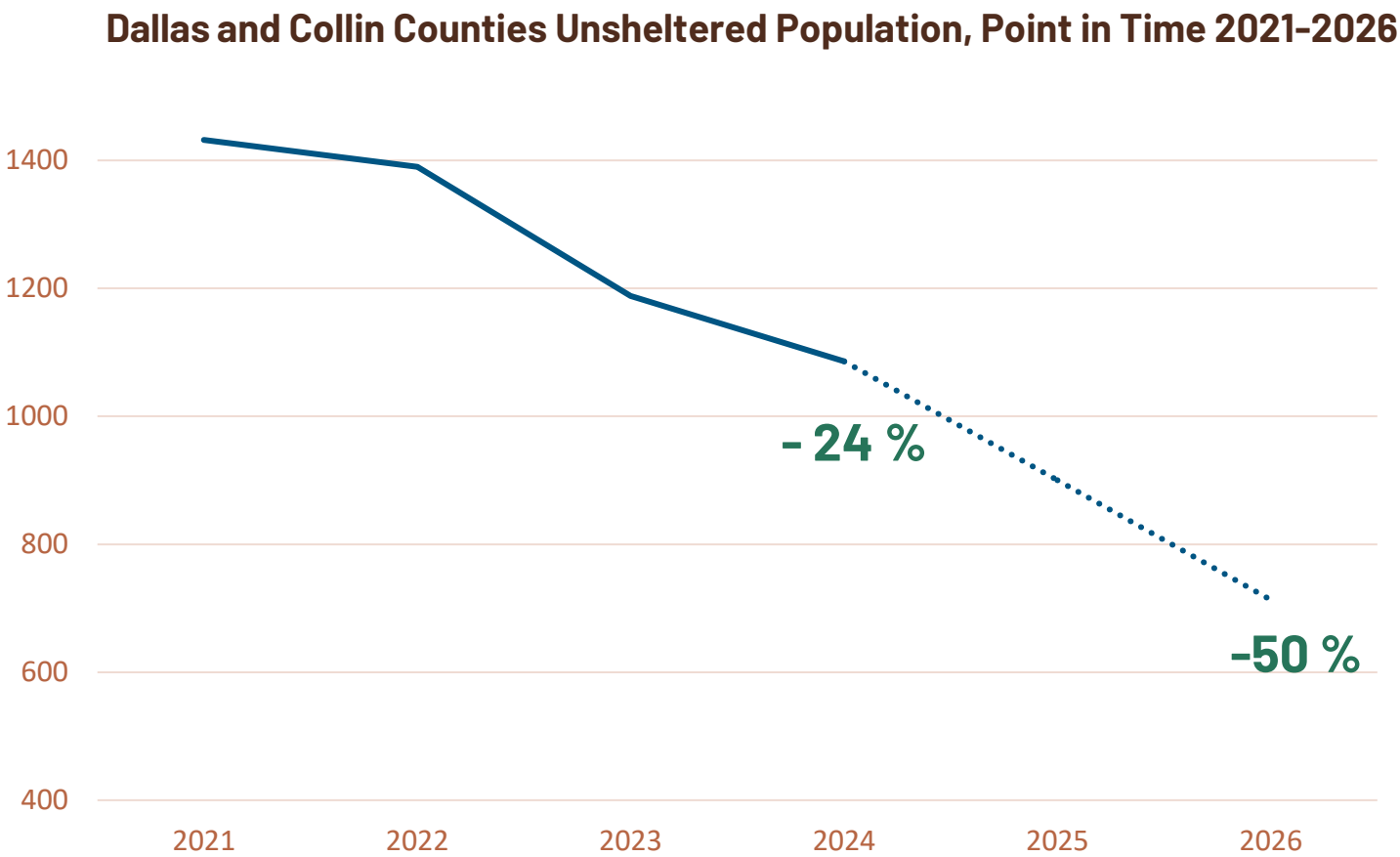




STREET TO HOME ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE

JULY 9, 2024

NEXT MILESTONE: 50% REDUCTION IN UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS



What will it take?

- 1. \$30M Public/Private Investment in Rehousing/Services
- 2. Enhanced Street-to-Home Encampment Response

CONTINUING TO MOVE THE NEEDLE ON UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

Street-to-Home Encampment Response



Address public health and safety, while ending homelessness through connections to housing and support

Target and prioritize
locations across the
community

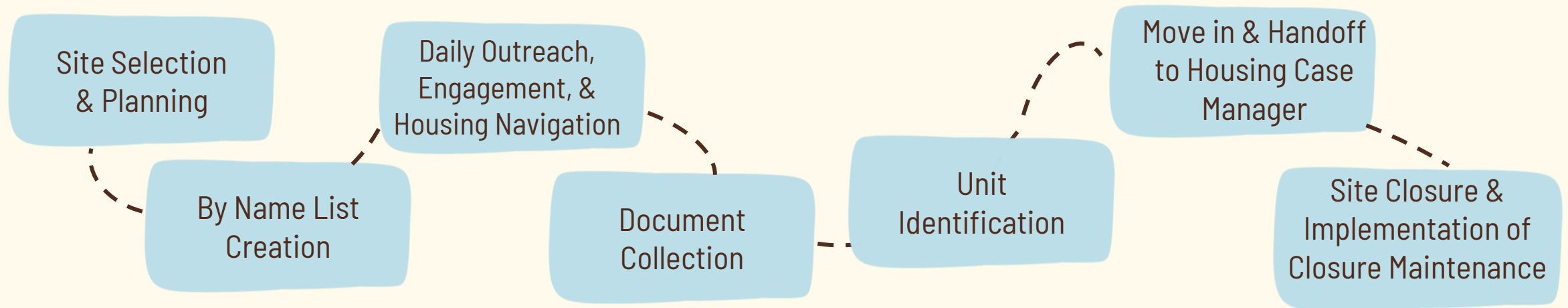
Bring rehousing services
and integrated behavioral
healthcare to each site

Coordinated with local
government to maintain
site closure

STREET TO HOME OVERVIEW

VISION: Permanently close an encampment site 4-8 weeks by offering every encampment resident permanent housing.

GOALS: Improved effectiveness, efficiency, intentional way of closing an encampment, done in tandem with the City of Dallas to ensure a comprehensive closure maintenance strategy.



Leadership Oversight & Community Response
Housing Forward, City, Community Partners (Chief Level)
Provide oversight and system wide problem solving
Support communications strategy and media requests

Lead Project Management
Housing Forward, City, Community Partners

Coordinate all response work, rehousing teams, and closure maintenance team

Outreach / Navigation
City & Community Partners, All Neighbors Coalition Coordinated Outreach

Provide outreach, engagement, and housing navigation support; to include document collection, subsidy applications, move-in support

Housing Team
Housing Authorities, Community Partners

Complete program enrollments onsite at encampment
Accompany clients to lease signings
Assist client with housing stabilization

Unit Acquisition
Housing Forward Landlord Engagement Team

Engage landlords and secure units for all those on an encampment BNL
Process LL incentives

Supportive Services
Healthcare, LMHA, Furniture Vendors

Provide access to health and behavioral health services
Ensure furniture and move in kits are available for lease ups

Closure Maintenance
City, PD, Community Partners
Clean up marked trash following site clearing
Fence sites where appropriate
Posting/Notices
Coordinate Law Enforcement patrols to support closure maintenance

LESSONS LEARNED

Keys to Success

- Street to home approach versus interim housing
- Pre-negotiated units, held under contract
- Housing Authority Speed & Flexibility
- Intentional Response Structure and dedicated City and CoC Lead Project Managers
- Listening to residents about needs, strengths of each encampment
- Outreach – consistent, persistent engagement with encampment residents to discuss housing
- **Closure maintenance !!!**

Ongoing Problem Solving

- Collecting critical documentation
- Integration of behavioral healthcare
- Supporting transitions into permanent housing (getting basic needs met, rebuilding support network, tenancy supports etc)
- **On-going sufficient rehousing resources**



A “YES” CULTURE APPROACH



We work as a cohesive team and communicate with our Neighbors as a singular unit



We follow up when and where we say we will



We are data-driven and action-oriented



We are flexible learners who are transparent and reliable

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NAEH National Conference on Ending Homelessness



Presented by: Cullen Ryan
Executive Director
Community Housing of Maine



Community Housing of Maine (www.chomhousing.org)

Community Housing of Maine (CHOM) develops, owns, and maintains 1026 units of high-quality affordable housing in 89 projects across Maine.

CHOM's housing either includes or is set up entirely as supportive housing.

CHOM is the largest housing provider for homeless populations in Maine.



Homelessness and Housing

- No one does well without housing.
- Everyone does well with housing.

Homelessness and Housing

When someone is unhoused, they experience one of the most stressful situations known to mankind.

Stress exacerbates everything including:

- Serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI)
- Substance use disorder (SUD)
- Poverty and homelessness
- Negative self-perceptions

Chronic stress leads to premature death. People experiencing chronic homelessness die in their fifties of symptoms more typical of people in their eighties.

Housing is healthcare and a pathway to wellness for people with very challenging situations.

This is especially true for unsheltered populations.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – House or Safely Shelter

- Everyone deserves the opportunity to be inside and safe.
- Living outside is not good, and neither are encampment sweeps without providing a true alternative.
- Housing people is best, and if that is not readily available, sheltering people is vital.
- In cold/hot/dangerous climates, shelter is paramount. Creating shelter in more hospitable climates may not be feasible because the infrastructure was never there. Where shelter is feasible, work to create capacity by diversion and housing the people there.

Create safe indoor shelter space to meet needs whenever possible.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Structure is key

Homelessness generally offers no structure or accountability. Structural support and accountability framework are keys to success; it is nearly impossible to provide any such framework without shelter or housing.

According to Maine drug overdose data, people who were homeless in 2023 were 32 times more likely to die of a fatal overdose than people in the general population.

(2023 data: 607 fatal ODs within overall population of 1.396M, 73 (12%) were within 6000 people homeless)

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Structure is key

- When people are clustered together in an unstructured and unsupervised setting, bad things can happen.
- Sometimes people are drawn to encampments because it feels like a community, and it can offer a sense of safety in numbers vs being isolated or alone.
- But in some settings, people become targets for others to prey on.
- Encampments can lead to increases in homelessness, both in numbers of people drawn in, and in complexity for populations participating because substance use, human trafficking, sexual and physical traumas occur.
- Encampments can be a miserable existence and further or deepen negative self-perceptions for participants.
- Some people will say they prefer to be outside. This can be an effort by people who don't feel good about themselves to push people away or tell them what they think they want to hear. It can be a cry from people who are suffering and don't feel worthwhile. It can feel like their only choice.
- It is on us to read between the lines and insist that everyone deserves to be safely inside.
- We also must factor in the need for connections and ensure those carry through.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – The goal is housing

- Housing people directly from encampments presents challenges but is possible.
- Moving people in encampments inside, where basic needs can be better met and the stress of unsheltered homelessness is alleviated, creates an optimal pathway to housing.
- Creating shelter capacity (even if temporary) to get people indoors is critical.
- Targeted/collaborative initiatives are key for this population.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Start with thoughtful structure

- Three key steps to address encampments:
 - Find/create temporary, indoor shelter with low barriers and bring people inside.
 - Ensure a collaborative coordination of services for all people who are unhoused/unsheltered.
 - Find housing or indoor space/shelter for each individual so that closure of an encampment becomes feasible. Set the stage for indoor community support.
- Set a timeline to close encampments and complete bringing people inside, adjust it if needed to ensure people have access to housing or shelter before the closure.
- Do this thoughtfully, with respect to people who are unhoused, and with sufficient notice.
- Work with each person to move them into temporary shelter or another appropriate option, rather than allowing unsafe, unhealthy encampments to persist or reemerge.
- Be persistent, but also incorporate flexibility to meet each person where they are at for success.
- Criminalizing homelessness is not helpful. Insisting and persisting through relationships is effective in helping people make good choices.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – From crisis to success

- Portland, Maine exploded from 60 tents to 282 tents between March and October 2023.
- The cause was a sudden inflow of asylum seekers who were successful in a first-come first-served shelter. People chronically homeless were less successful and landed outside beginning in March.
- The City made three important choices:
 1. Working with a partner it created a shelter to properly serve single adult asylum seekers. This opened on November 30, 2023. 120 people relocated there in the first hour.
 2. The City opened an additional 50 shelter beds using internal capacity. These came online around the same time meaning 170 beds were suddenly available.
 3. The City lowered barriers and prioritized people who were unsheltered.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Successful models involve capacity and lowered barriers

The result:

- Portland saw a 90% reduction in tents the next two months, 85% of that in the first 5 weeks.

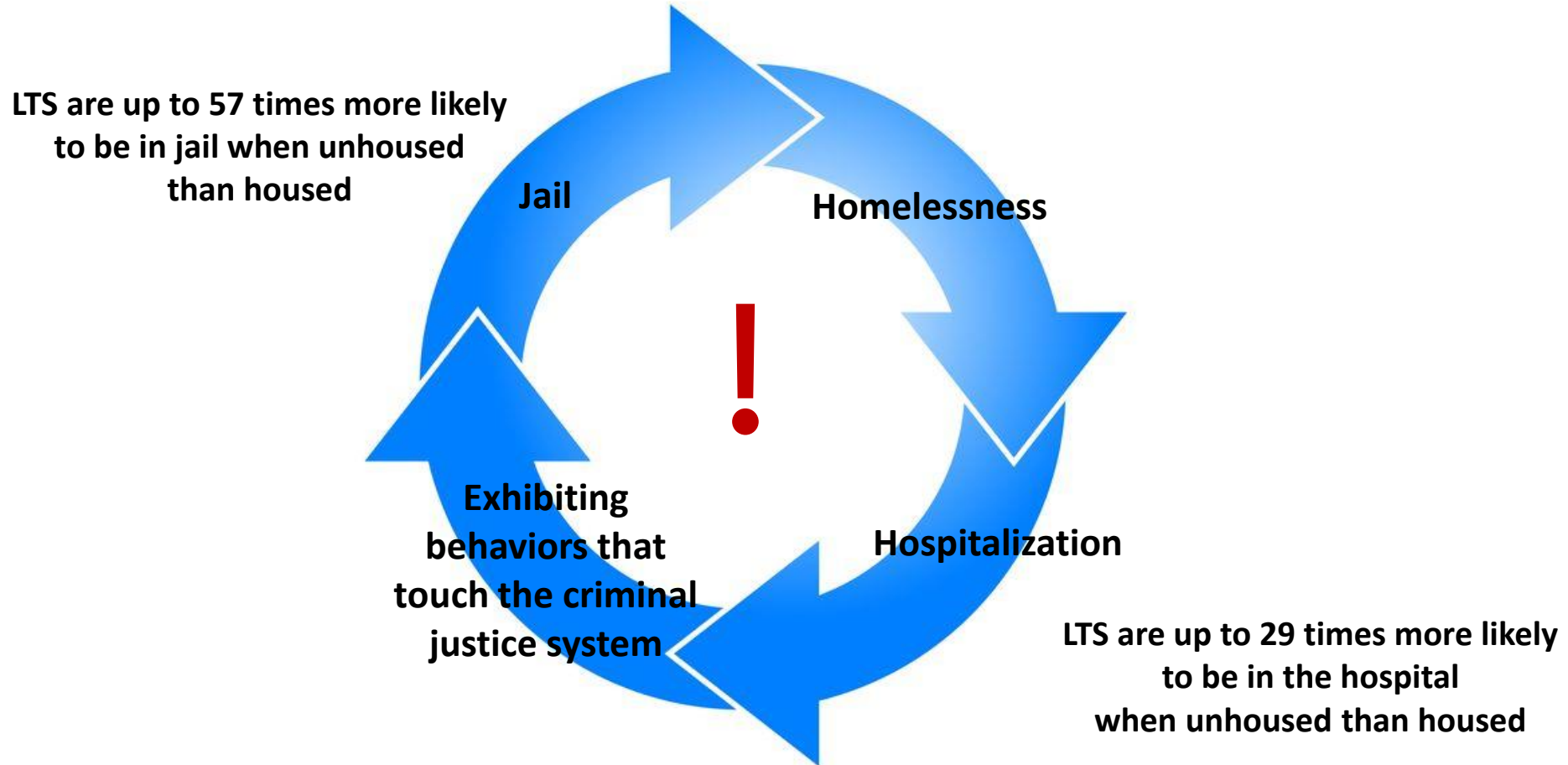
There were 30 tents outside in February, it has remained around that level since. The City has had maintained shelter capacity headroom above need since then, and just made permanent that internal space.

- Numbers of people unsheltered are lower this year than in any of the last 10 years.

There were three fatal overdoses in one encampment alone in May 2023. In contrast, the entire City had no fatal overdoses in the month of January 2024, precisely when most people moved inside.

THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

**The cycle of emergencies when someone is UNHOUSED:
Chronically Homeless or Long-Term Stayer (LTS) populations ricochet
through our most expensive emergency systems.**



HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

**The cycle of emergencies is broken when someone is housed.
This population all but stops touching the emergency system once housed.**



Once housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

Shelters are particularly skilled at providing housing navigation services.

This results in steady outflow from the shelter to housing.

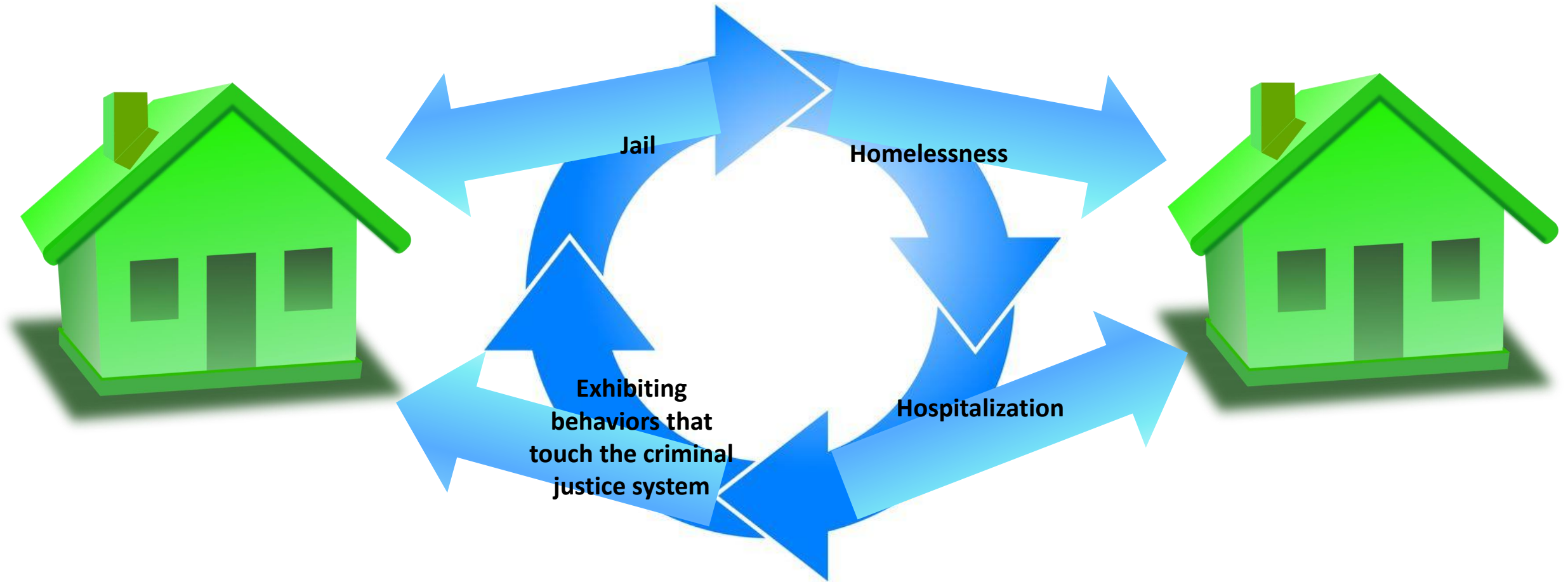
Housing navigation for unsheltered populations as a pathway to housing is critical.



Once housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

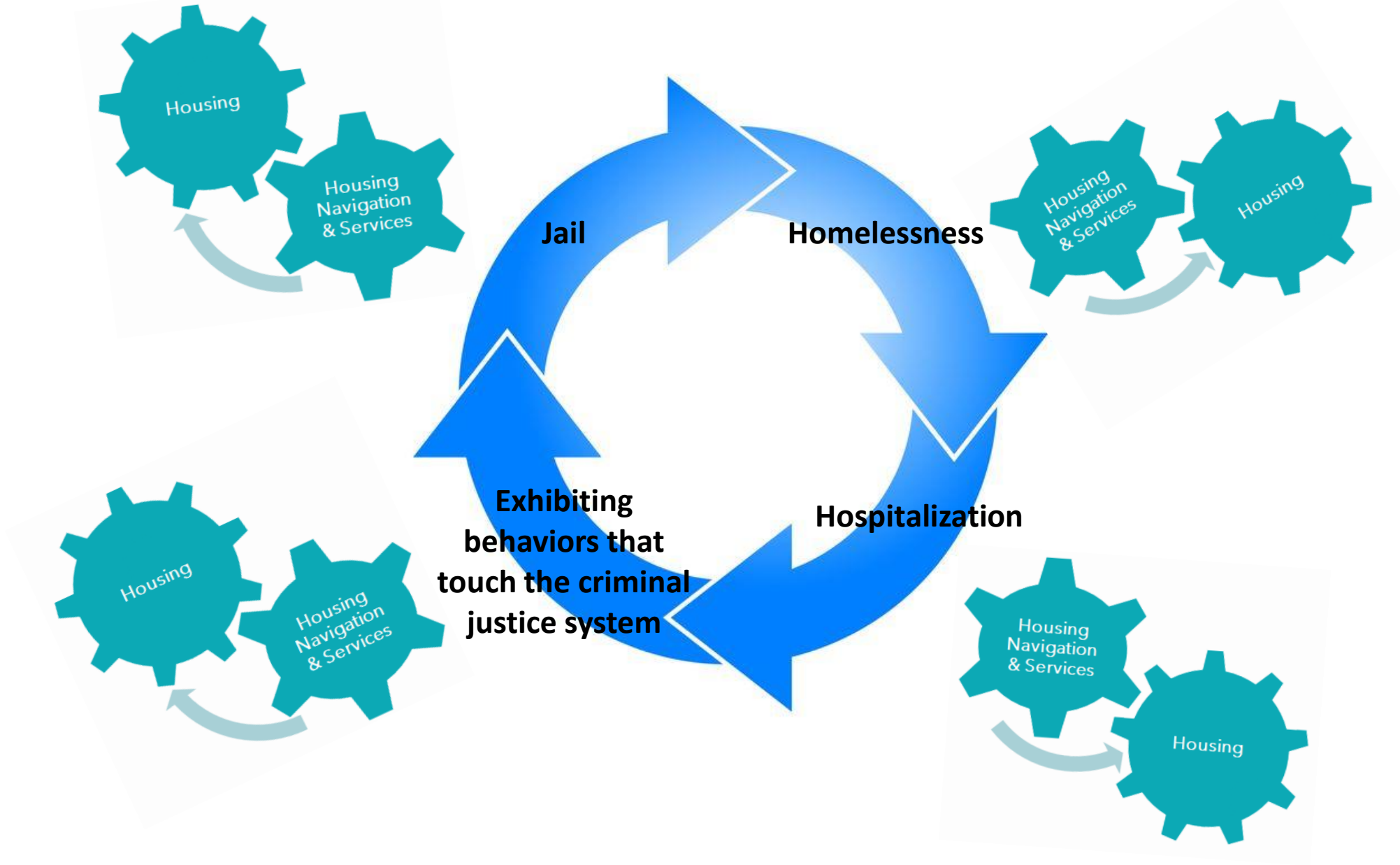
Housing can happen from anywhere in the cycle.



When housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed, and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

ADDING SERVICES BREAKS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Injecting housing navigation is the key to getting people housed.



COORDINATING EFFORTS BREAKS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

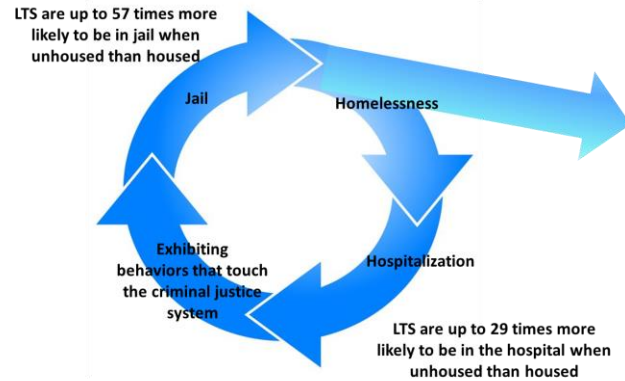
Coordination means those housing efforts will have continuity.

By Name List case coordination: Who is doing what to house and keep housed each person



HOUSING STOPS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Housing is the foundation for stability.



Permanent Supportive Housing is the end goal for this population.

All types are equally successful.

A wide array is important.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

**Ultra Low-Barrier
Recovery
Residences**

**Recovery
Residences**

Housing First

- Scattered Site
- Blended
- Site-Based

**Ultra
Low-Barrier
Housing First**

SERVICES PERMANENTLY END THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Housing is the foundation for stability.
Services make each housing placement a success.



Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

**Ultra Low-Barrier
Recovery
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Housing First
• Scattered Site
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**Ultra
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Permanent
services for
ongoing
success

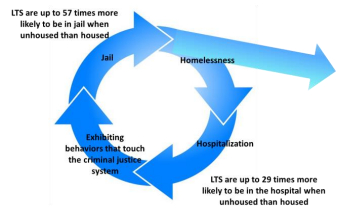
Permanent
services for
ongoing
success

Permanent
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Permanent
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success

**LTS are up to 57 times
more likely to be in jail
and up to 29 times
more likely to be in the hospital
when unhoused than when
housed.**

**Housing this population and
keeping them housed makes sense.**



Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed

Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

39 month Average

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	28.98 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 29 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	11.01 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 11 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed.

12 Month Average (most recent)

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	31.95 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 32 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	11.78 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 12 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed.

Peak

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	57.22 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 57 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed. (Peak: February 2023)
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	29.15 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 29 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed. (Peak: October 2022)

Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

2024 Data	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 204	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024
Same Population (LTS) N =	568	567	555	549	530							
Total on Active List	141	138	131	124	106							
Active List - Jail	14	16	15	16	20							
%	9.93%	11.59%	11.45%	12.90%	18.87%							
Active List - Hospital	4	4	5	4	3							
%	2.84%	2.90%	3.82%	3.23%	2.83%							
Total on Housed List	427	429	424	425	424							
Housed List - Jail	2	1	0	0	0							
%	0.47%	0.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%							
Housed List - Hospital	0	1	1	1	1							
%	0.00%	0.23%	0.24%	0.24%	24.00%							
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	21.13 X	50.39 X	** see note below	** see note below	** see note below							
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	** see note below	12.61 X	15.92 X	13.46 X	11.79 X							
2023 Data	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023
Same Population (LTS) N =	492	493	488	577	577	561	566	561	562	564	563	561
Total on Active List	121	123	121	195	179	162	159	158	154	144	139	140
Active List - Jail	15	19	15	17	17	14	16	14	10	15	13	13
%	12.40%	15.45%	12.40%	8.72%	9.50%	8.64%	10.06%	8.86%	6.49%	10.42%	9.35%	9.29%
Active List - Hospital	6	7	7	8	6	4	4	5	4	4	3	4
%	4.96%	5.69%	5.79%	4.10%	3.35%	2.47%	2.52%	3.16%	2.60%	2.78%	2.16%	2.86%
Total on Housed List	368	370	367	382	390	399	407	403	408	420	424	421
Housed List - Jail	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	0
%	0.54%	0.27%	0.27%	0.26%	0.26%	0.25%	0.24%	0.74%	0.49%	0.24%	0.24%	0.00%
Housed List - Hospital	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
%	0.54%	0.54%	0.54%	0.52%	0.51%	0.25%	0.24%	0.25%	0.25%	0.24%	0.24%	0.00%
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	22.96 X	57.22 X	45.93 X	33.54 X	36.54 X	34.56 X	41.92 X	11.97 X	13.24 X	43.42 X	38.96 X	** see note below
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	9.19 X	10.54 X	10.72 X	7.88 X	6.57 X	9.88 X	10.5 X	12.64 X	10.4 X	11.58 X	9 X	** see note below

Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

2022 Data	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Apr 2022	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	Aug 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022
Same Population (LTS) N =	475	475	474	472	474	477	512	496	502	497	497	492
Total on Active List	138	129	125	123	120	118	147	142	141	127	122	119
Active List - Jail	9	12	15	13	13	16	15	14	15	17	22	20
%	6.50%	9.30%	12%	10.57%	10.83%	13.56%	10.20%	9.86%	10.64%	13.39%	18.03%	16.81%
Active List - Hospital	7	6	4	4	3	4	3	5	8	10	6	5
%	5.07%	4.65%	3.20%	3.25%	2.50%	3.40%	2.04%	3.52%	5.67%	7.87%	4.92%	4.20%
Total on Housed List	337	346	349	349	354	359	365	363	361	370	370	373
Housed List - Jail	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	4	2	2
%	0%	0.29%	0.29%	0.29%	0%	0.56%	0.55%	0.55%	0.55%	1.08%	0.54%	0.54%
Housed List - Hospital	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
%	0.30%	0%	0%	0%	0.28%	0.28%	0.27%	0.28%	0.28%	0.27%	0.54%	0.54%
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	*see note below	32 x	41.4 X	36.5 X	** see note below	24.2 X	18.5 X	17.9 X	19.3 X	12.4 X	33.39 X	31.13 X
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	16.9 x	** see note below	** see note below	** see note below	8.9 x	12.14 X	7.6 X	12.57 X	20.25 X	29.15 X	9.11 X	7.78 X

Key Takeaways



Everyone deserves housing – and if it isn't immediately available everyone deserves to be indoors. Housing is healthcare and a path to wellness.



Chronically Homeless or Long-Term Stayer (LTS) populations ricochet through our most expensive emergency systems when unhoused – especially LTS who are unsheltered. This population all but stops touching any emergency systems once housed.



Collaborative coordination of services and housing navigation is key.



Once we house people even with modest support, they tend to stay housed and not return to homelessness. And they stop ricocheting. It takes relationship work to get to success.