The National Alliance to End Homelessness Presents: Interim Strategies For Responding To Unsheltered Homelessness

Wednesday, February 12





# National Alliance to End Homelessness Statements for Participation

The Alliance works to ensure that diverse voices are welcomed and included as facilitators, attendees, and guests in all forums.

The organization has a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination or abusive behavior. The Alliance is committed to ensuring that all its events are safe and respectful for all participants.

Participants acknowledge that any form of discrimination, violence, or abusive behavior may result in removal from all forums depending on the situation.

If any discrimination is witnessed or experienced during the webinar, or if you feel unsafe, please notify any member of the Alliance staff.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness strives to create a diverse, inclusive, accepting, and safe space for everyone.



## Housekeeping





## Acknowledging Our Current Context

Please view the chat for instructions on how to join our email and advocacy lists to stay updated and advocate for the resources needed to end homelessness in your community.



# WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THIS GUIDANCE?

Promoting Effectives, Safety, Health, and Dignity in the Homeless Response System

#### The Context of Unsheltered Homelessness

Permanent housing— paired with individualized services—remains the only real solution to ending homelessness. But during a long-standing affordable housing and accessible services crisis, the Alliance recognizes that communities may need to consider other temporary strategies and approaches to address the immediate needs of unsheltered homelessness while working towards those long-term solutions.



Unsheltered homelessness continues to rise in many communities.



Communities lack adequate housing and sheltering options.



Each year, communities can only allocate scarce resources.



Public pressure can lead to cycles of encampment evictions and displacement.



## Guidance Topline Messages

Interim strategies should be grounded in evidence-based practices, such as low-barrier and housing-focused approaches.

No interim strategy should be coercive.

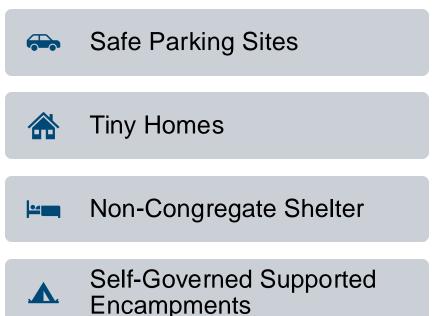
Investing in any of these interim strategies should only happen in conjunction with continued efforts to expand permanent solutions.

Permanent housing strategies remain both an immediate and the sole long-term solution to homelessness.



## Examples of Interim Strategies

While the Alliance does not endorse any specific interim strategy, we hope to provide guidelines around alternative options that communities are actively considering and pursuing in the short-term. These strategies should not involve harmful encampment sweeps or other punitive measures, and the community should continue to pursue and invest in evidence-based solutions that aim to uphold the dignity of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.





### **Quick Poll**

What is your community's current investment in interim strategies?

- Haven't discussed any strategies
- Are in the planning stages to invest in these strategies
- Have moderate investments in these strategies
- Have significant investments in these strategies



## Fundamental System Principles

Integrate Housing Problem Solving

Directly House People from the Streets

Remove Barriers from Existing Shelters

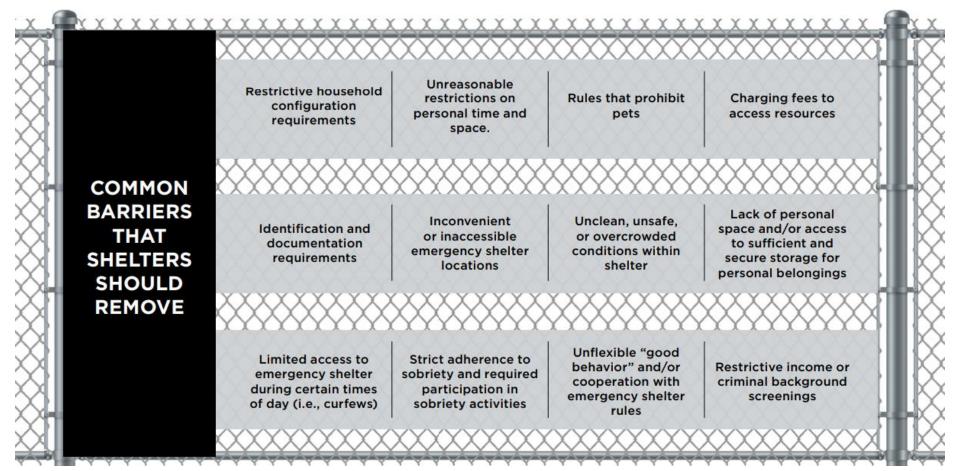
Treat Interim Strategies as Temporary

Engage People with Lived Experience

Integrate Efforts into the CoC

Create Plans to Sunset Strategies







## Universal Design Principles: Space & Safety

Maintain Accessibility (Physical, Language, etc.)

**Ensure Safety & Security** 

Provide Sufficient Space & Storage

Integrate Pet-Friendly Practices

Accommodate All Types of Households



## Universal Design Principles: Health + Wellness

**Ensure Adequate Sanitation** 

Provide Accessible Bathroom Facilities

Ensure Access to Clean Food & Water

Provide Proper Storage for Medication

Train Staff to Prevent Overdoses

Prepare for Extreme Weather



## Considerations for Program Design Elements

Provide Immediate and Low-Barrier Access

Integrate Housing-Focused Strategies

Ensure Culturally Appropriate Programming and Policy

Invest in Adequate Staffing and Case Management



## Considerations for Program Design Elements

Consider the Needs of People With Substance Use Disorder

Identify Key Data Elements to Measure Performance

Integrate Strategies for Other Sub Populations

Ensure Sites are in Geographically Accessible and Strategic Areas



#### Conclusion

These strategies are not a substitute for moving unsheltered persons directly into permanent housing and should only be considered as a way to create healthier and safer spaces for people to reside temporarily until their permanent housing is secured.



### **Quick Poll**

#### What should subsequent guidance address?

- Additional details on recommended policies and protocols
- Emerging practices for improving effectiveness
- Financing mechanisms for these strategies
- More guidance on systems-level planning
- Other



#### We Want to Hear From You!

#### Let Us Know in the Chat

- What are emerging effective community practices?
- Where are there policy/practice/research gaps?

#### **Connect with Us**

 Email <u>avandenberg@naeh.org</u> if you have any sample protocols, guidance, or other documents & examples of programs and strategies you find effective in your community.

