

## Rescue the Homeless Response System

Connecticut is facing unprecedented challenges in our effort to prevent and end homelessness. Our lifesaving and stability restoring system is overburdened, historically underfunded, and confronting a workforce shortage that threatens the state-wide safety net we provide. Rescuing the Homeless Response System, and the critical services it delivers, requires reliable and consistent funding every year. Homeless Response System providers are facing a fiscal cliff, with critical federal funding set to expire.

The legislature should invest **\$50,000,000** to rescue the Homeless Response System. Only through this commitment to investment we can ensure that homelessness is infrequent and short-term, saving lives and public dollars.

### Connecticut has a Homeless Response System in place that needs your help; key elements include:

- ⇒ Homelessness prevention (*eviction prevention, diversion, outreach*)
- ⇒ Crisis services (*diversion, year-round shelter, seasonal shelter, outreach*)
- ⇒ Supportive housing (*rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing*)
- ⇒ Coordinated Access Network (CAN) infrastructure (*Call Center, CAN Backbone Operations oversight, CAN Hubs*)

## 1. Strengthen homeless response organizations and support increased wages for essential frontline homeless response staff.

Our state's ability to prevent and end homelessness rests on the shoulders of over-stressed and chronically under-resourced homeless response organizations and nonprofit workers across the state who assist people in crisis. Our front-line homeless response workers keep our communities safe, saving lives and saving the state money. The Legislature should invest **\$37,046,452** to address chronic underfunding of homeless response nonprofits and ensure adequate wages, with a focus on transforming jobs in the sector into careers of choice, for the front-line homeless response workers who are so critical to ending homelessness, via:

- ⇒ **\$28,155,326** increase in DOH Housing/Homeless Services line
- ⇒ **\$7,713,799** increase in DMHAS Housing/Supports Services line
- ⇒ **\$967,373** increase in DOH Homeless Youth line
- ⇒ **\$209,954** increase in DOH Municipal Housing/Homeless Services line

*This request accounts for direct and non-direct wage inflation and increases in the Consumer Price Index since 2016. Hereafter, increases should be tied to increases in the general price increases in the State of Connecticut.*

# CT CAN END HOMELESSNESS 2023 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



## 2. Annualize funding for the Coordinated Access Network (CAN) Infrastructure.

Coordinated Access Networks organize how homeless services are provided within designated regions to maximize resources, create system efficiencies, track performance, and ensure people resolve their homelessness quickly. Currently, CANs rely on the Department of Housing's discretionary use of Community Investment Account proceeds for funding. As an emergency response system, a more stable and permanent funding source is needed to support its infrastructure. Without funding, thousands of Connecticut residents would be put at immediate risk of homelessness every year.

⇒ **\$5.95 Million** to be added annually to the DOH Housing/Homeless Services line

## 3. Annualize Cold Weather Emergency Response Program Funding.

Connecticut's homeless response providers need an ongoing and permanent source of funding for cold weather emergency services, with a focus on professionalizing staff, paying wages commensurate with the emergency services being administered, and providing enough beds to keep people from freezing outside while having the correct staff-to-client ratio to safely manage our shelters.

⇒ **\$5 Million** to be added annually to the DOH Housing/Homeless Services line

## 4. Invest in a Flexible Funding Subsidy Pool.

The Flexible Funding Subsidy Pool will subsidize housing and provide flexible assistance to help individuals, families, and youth to overcome financial barriers and expedite solutions to homelessness for those experiencing homelessness. Currently these critical services are funded through federal funding which is set to expire in 2023. These programs have been found to reduce the systemic costs of those who are high utilizers of public health and emergency response systems, resulting in both lower costs to the health care system and improved individual health outcomes.

⇒ **\$2 Million** to be added annually to the DOH Housing/Homeless Services line

### CT CAN End Homelessness

*The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH) developed the CT CAN End Homelessness Legislative Agenda. Our Legislative Agenda reflects the input received from homeless response providers, front-line staff, agency partners and people with lived experience of homelessness from across the state. Together, we envision a Connecticut where everyone, no matter their race, income, or background, can live in dignity and peace with a place to call their home.*