

STRENGTHEN SHELTER AND OUTREACH



Ensuring every homeless response worker can afford housing is not just an investment—it's a commitment to dignity and stability in our community.

Connecticut's Shelter and Outreach providers have been historically underfunded. The pandemic and the increase in homelessness in our state, up 14% year over year, have put more pressure on already overstressed service providers and front-line staff. Rising costs, including payroll, health insurance, utilities, and rent, have made matters more dire, further challenging the nonprofits providing critical homeless services.

CT CAN End Homelessness estimates that the homeless workforce sector faces a deficit of at least \$7.4 million annually to pay current workers adequately. This total represents an aggregated sum of individual employee salaries. Addressing this pay gap is essential to the work of preventing and ending homelessness.

CT CAN End Homelessness calculates that 82 percent of homeless response system staff make less than what is needed to afford a one bedroom apartment in CT. The real gap could be much larger. Applying one salary per bedroom is not a fair proxy for all households: caregivers and single parents most likely sustain larger households on one income. Similarly, front line staff in the state's high-cost areas are likely to face an even greater individual wage gap.

CT CAN End Homelessness estimates that ensuring current sector employees can afford a one bedroom unit would require filling a gap of \$7.4 million. This amount does not encompass the holistic picture of investments required to support the workforce, including adequate training. Nor does it address the question of what staffing level is ideal for doing this work - which is beyond current capacity.

An investment of \$7.4 Million annually would ensure front-line homeless response workers can at least afford modest 1 bedroom housing.

To stabilize and strengthen the Homeless Response System, the state should increase rates annually to account for the cost of inflation. To that end, CT CAN End Homelessness also supports the CT Community Nonprofit Alliance's request to increase funding by 5% in FY25 by \$186 Million.

Benefits

- Better equip shelter and outreach providers to support individuals, families, and youth experiencing homelessness
- Provide necessary resources for staff and operational capacity, ensure that service providers can respond to housing crises quickly and effectively, compensate essential workers for essential work, and ultimately ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring.

CITATIONS

Based on the formula from NAEH <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/ct> [PIT Count 2021-23]

