

Homeless Outreach in Connecticut

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Pre-Pandemic Homeless Outreach

- Before the pandemic, Homeless Outreach was the weakest homeless component in Connecticut
- DOH only had one outreach contract, funded by a shelter that converted its operation to homeless outreach
- The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) funded the majority of homeless outreach
- DMHAS utilized PATH funding to provide outreach
- State funds dedicated to outreach were ineffective, especially in rural areas



Pandemic Homeless Outreach

- COVID highlighted the need for a functional homeless outreach program.
- DOH dedicated a portion of its ESG-CV funding to create more homeless outreach teams
- DOH competitively bid the funding to providers in the state
- Funding was allocated to each of CT's Coordinated Access Networks, including rural areas
- Outreach outcomes were improved




Post-Pandemic Homeless Outreach

- Due to the success of the COVID funding for homeless outreach, DOH noted the importance of expanding outreach to reach the unsheltered population
- HUD's SNOFO for unsheltered homeless, including rural provided a unique opportunity
- The CT Balance of State CoC applied for funding for the unsheltered SNOFO which focused on homeless outreach, PSH for those engaged with homeless outreach and additional access points for unsheltered households to engage in the homeless service system.
- CT Balance of State was awarded funding to continue this work

Connecticut Statewide Street Outreach Guidelines

Street Outreach Vision

The primary goal of Street Outreach is to support people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in achieving some form of permanent, sustainable housing. Teams may use techniques and resources to build trusted relationships and relieve discomfort and risks of living unsheltered, but these efforts are made with permanent housing as the end goal, rather than simply seeking to alleviate the burdens of living on the streets.



Connecticut Statewide Street Outreach Guidelines

Street Outreach Goals

Projects in the State of Connecticut focus on achieving goals that support this vision, including:

1. Quickly connecting people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to safe housing, income, and critical health/behavioral healthcare and other supports, using a Housing First approach;
2. Identifying people living in unsheltered locations and helping them to maximize safety and reduce harm;
3. Minimizing service gaps or duplication;
4. Using available resources strategically to end unsheltered homelessness for as many people as possible, prioritizing those who are most vulnerable and/or have been homeless the longest;
5. Preparing and supporting people to meet tenancy obligations associated with housing;
6. Providing a warm handoff and aftercare (as needed and available) to connect people to supports in the community that will assist with housing stability

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Street Outreach Outcomes

Street Outreach projects focused on the goals above will produce a number of positive client outcomes, including the following:

- Unsheltered clients, especially those who are most vulnerable, move into housing
- Clients do not experience homelessness one day longer than necessary
- Clients get supports that help them reduce harm of their current living situation AND prepare them to meet tenancy obligations
- Newly housed clients get support to adjust to their new surroundings