Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services

Pennsylvania's Interagency Council on Homelessness

COSCDA Annual Conference
Monday, October 5, 2026

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

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Meet Your Presenter

Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services

Greg Barchuk, Chief Homelessness Officer

- With PA DHS since June 2026
- Previously with ICF (HUD TA Provider) and local county government
- Focus areas include Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS), CoC governance, equity, and data analysis
- Previous work in mental/behavioral health, intellectual/developmental disabilities, disaster response
- 20-year Pennsylvania resident



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Agenda

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- Landscape of Homelessness in PA
- PA Funding and Programs
- Historical Context
  - Executive Order 2024-03
  - Housing Action Plan
  - Creation of the ICH
- ICH Structure
  - Purpose and Goals
  - Membership Structure
  - Initial Roadmap
  - Next Steps

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Landscape of Homelessness in PA

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- Commonwealth communities identified **14,834 Pennsylvanians experiencing homelessness** on a single night in 2025 (an increase of 5% compared to 2024), including **2,882 unsheltered Pennsylvanians** that night

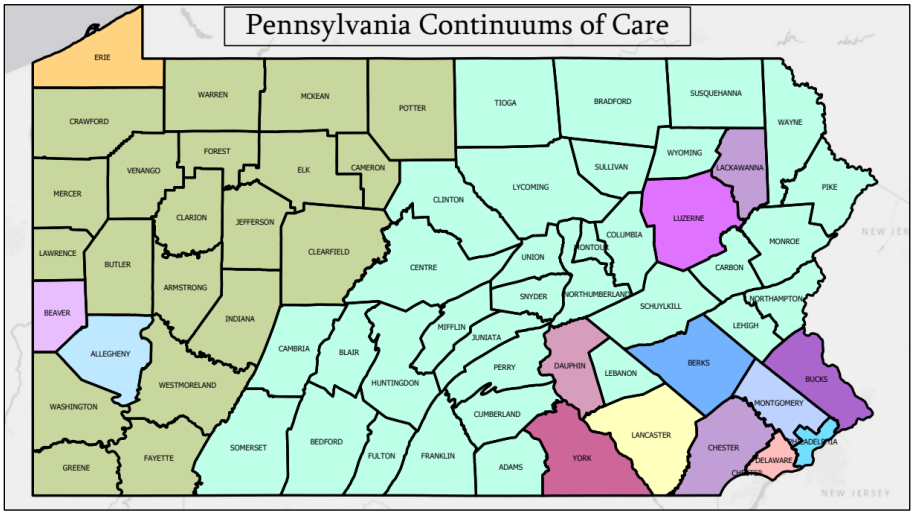
- Homelessness is managed by **16 different Continuums of Care** (CoCs) across the state, including two Balance of State CoCs (Eastern PA and Western PA) managed by the Commonwealth's Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

- Homeless response efforts are provided by over **two dozen different programs** at the federal, state, and public/private levels (*in addition to local funding/programs)

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Pennsylvania Continuums of Care

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Funding and Programs

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	Preventing Homelessness	Services for Unhoused*	Supportive Housing	Affordable Housing
Federal & State Funding	Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network (PLAN)			
	Homeless Assistance Program (HAP)			
	Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH)			
	Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)			
	PA VetConnect Program			
	Home4Good Joint Initiative			
	Emergency Shelter Allowance (ESA)			
	Community Services Block Grant CSBG)			
	ReEntrants Attaining Community Housing (REACH)			
	Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV)			
	Regional Continuums of Care (COCs)			
	Veterans Temporary Assistance (VTA) Program			
	Housing Assistance Program (HAP)			
		Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH)		
Public-Private Partnership			Shared Housing and Resource Exchange (SHARE)	
			Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity (ECHO)	
			811 Project Rental Assistance Housing	
Federal Funding				HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)
				Whole Home Repairs
State Funding	Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)			
	Pennsylvania Homeowner Assistance Fund (PAHAF)			
	Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)			
	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)			
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)			
	SSI/SSDi Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR)			
	PHARE			

*Emergency Shelter, Case Management, Street Outreach, Supportive Services, Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing, Short-Term Rental Assistance

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Historical Context

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On Sept. 12, 2024, **Governor Josh Shapiro** signed an executive order to **create a Housing Action Plan** to:

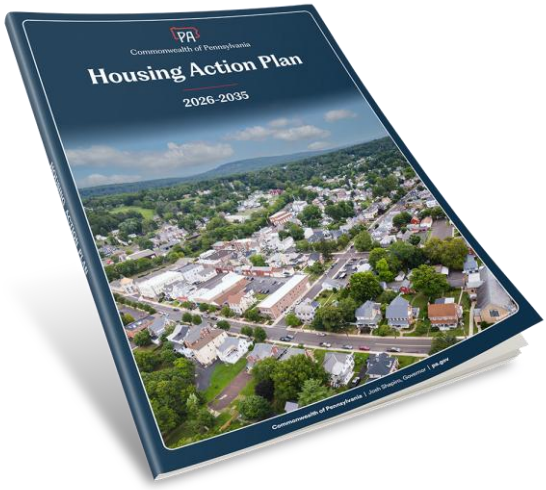
- Address our **housing shortage**
- Reduce **homelessness**, and
- Expand **housing options** affordable to working Pennsylvanians



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The result is **a unified statewide vision**, grounded in evidence and experience, with **five goals and 28 actionable initiatives**.



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Housing Action Plan: Primary Areas of Focus

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Build and Preserve Pennsylvania's Housing Stock

Expand Housing Opportunity for All Pennsylvanians

Provide Pathways to Housing Stabilization and Sustainability

Modernize Pennsylvania's Housing Development Regulations

Achieve Operational Excellence Across State and Local Government

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Strategic Initiatives

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- Align Homelessness Support Programs and Help Pennsylvanians Transition into Safe, Stable Housing
- Established an Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)
- Connect Unsheltered Medicaid Recipients to Stable Housing and Services through the Investments in Health initiative



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Housing Action Plan / ICH Priorities

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Increase funding for the Homeless Assistance Program and allow for expanded services to prevent and address homelessness

Increase Homeless Management Information System **data sharing**

Provide communities with the tools and resources to development and implement sustainable and humane strategies to **address encampments**

Research and identify nationwide best practices related to the intersection of rights of way, access to transportation, and individuals experiencing homelessness

Increase funding for **domestic violence prevention**

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Pennsylvania Interagency Council on Homelessness

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Purpose

- Inform policies and best practices to address homelessness
- Strengthen the coordination of services for the unhoused across the Commonwealth

Goals

- Build upon the work from the Housing Action Plan and assess opportunities to prevent homelessness
- Establish measurable goals to guide the transition from homelessness to stable housing
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing housing programs and recommend evidence-based improvements
- Enhance interagency and community-level coordination

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ICH Membership Structure

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- Initial ICH membership was based on **diversity of perspectives** and **coordination among Commonwealth agencies** involved in homelessness response
- Chaired jointly by Governor's Office (Policy and Planning Secretary **Akbar Hossain**) and DHS Secretary **Dr. Valerie Arkoosh**

Commonwealth government-affiliated seats (15)

- Governor's Office
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
- Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
- Department of Health
- Department of Aging
- Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs (DDAP)
- Department of Education (PDE)
- Department of Transportation (PennDOT)
- Department of Military & Veteran Affairs (DMVA)
- Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Department of Labor and Industry (L&I)
- Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)
- Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA)
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

Family and youth homelessness seats (2)

Continuum of Care seats (5)

- Central PA
- Northeastern PA (NEPA)
- Southwestern PA (SWPA)
- Southeastern PA (SEPA)

Community organization seats (5)

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ICH Initial Roadmap

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Stage 1: Access	Stage 2: Services	Stage 3: Stability	Stage 4: Independence	Foundation for Local and State Government
• Resource Navigation	• Shelter and Coordinated Entry Capacity • Mental Health and Substance Use Services	• Reentrants, Recidivism, and Diversion • Children, Youth, and Families • Affordable Housing Shortage	• Employment and Training	• Data Collection & Sharing • Partnerships & Technical Assistance

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Early Observations and Next Steps

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- **Because homelessness is spread across so many Commonwealth agencies, no one party has singular "ownership" of the ICH**
  - Creation of a planning committee
  - Creation of a new role in DHS, Chief Homelessness Officer
- **Focus on current landscape and immediate needs**
  - Increase HMIS participation
  - Improve shelter utilization
  - Develop resources and tools for communities addressing encampments and other residents experiencing unsheltered homelessness
- **Evaluate ICH structure**
  - Charter and membership structure
  - Goals and outcomes



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THANK YOU!

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