

# Homelessness in Connecticut 2019



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## THE PROBLEM

**Despite measurable progress in reducing homelessness, there are still far too many people experiencing serious housing instability and homelessness in Connecticut, including many children.**

Between October 2017 and September 2018, **73% of families** that entered an emergency shelter program were headed by women of color.

Connecticut now has a registry of all households experiencing homelessness in our state called the By Name List (BNL). As of 5/21/19, there are:

**1,605**

individuals (excluding youth under 25)

**295 families with 494 children.** Of the children we have ages for, **101 are under 6 years old.**

**217**

unaccompanied youth under the age of 25

The BNL includes all households experiencing homelessness that have been assessed by the Coordinated Access Networks (CANs). This assessment takes place upon identification via outreach or after a family or individual has been in shelter for more than two weeks.

## THE PROGRESS

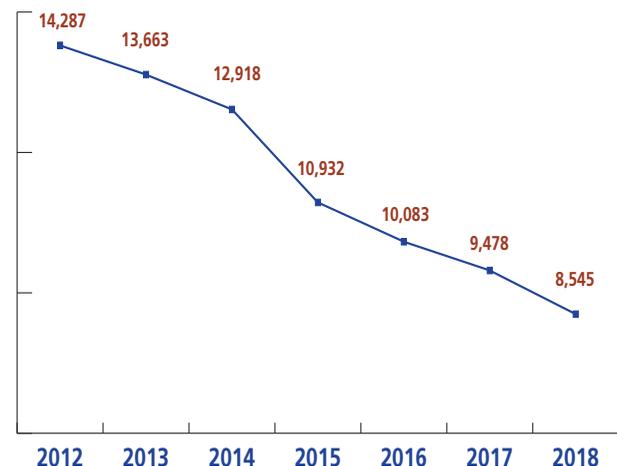
**With continued commitment and the right resources, we can make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.**

Long-standing statewide leadership and collaboration, improvements in the state's homelessness response system, and consistent public investments have led to a **significant decline** in the number of Connecticut residents experiencing homelessness.

Since 2016, the number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness (long term homelessness with a disability) has **decreased by 66%.**

In Federal Fiscal Year 2018, the homelessness response system (Coordinated Access Networks) received over **68,000** calls for housing assistance, resolved nearly **41,000** through 2-1-1, diverted **4,300** households from shelter, and provided targeted housing assistance to nearly **1,700** households.

**Since 2012, the number of people utilizing Connecticut's shelter system has decreased by 40%.**



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## THE RESOURCES

### How has Connecticut reduced its homelessness numbers so significantly over the last decade?

**Collective impact** through the Reaching Home Campaign has provided backbone support and advocacy to bring together over 200 participants around a common agenda, shared measures, mutually reinforcing activities, and continuous communication.

**Coordinated Access** has organized how homeless services are provided, enabling communities to triage cases, match the type of assistance based on needs and strengths, and help people resolve their homelessness quickly. People facing a housing crisis can access community resources through a single “front door” by calling 2-1-1. Regional Coordinated Access Networks (CANs) have led to local cooperation to provide quick access to housing and services for those who need them.

**Supportive housing** combines **safe, secure rental housing** that is affordable, independent, and permanent with **voluntary support services** for people experiencing homelessness and with disabilities. It's a proven, cost effective solution for keeping highly vulnerable people stable in their housing. It can **cut system costs by 70% and has a 99% success rate.**

**Rapid re-housing** provides short-term rental assistance and housing stabilization supports aimed at assisting people experiencing homelessness in exiting shelter and returning to permanent housing as quickly as possible. **86%** of rapidly re-housed households do not return to shelter within 3 years.

**Outreach & engagement and diversion** from homelessness are also critical tools for the system.

## THE SOLUTION

The goal of the Reaching Home Campaign is to make homelessness in Connecticut rare, brief, and nonrecurring by 2023. To achieve this goal, we must:

- Ensure identification of all people experiencing homelessness, that no one experiences unsheltered homelessness, and that people don't enter homelessness in the first place. This will require comprehensive, coordinated approaches for homelessness prevention, outreach and diversion that include strong partnerships with criminal justice, child welfare, education, workforce, early childhood, and health care systems and mainstream mental health services.
- Continue to increase the number of people exiting homelessness into stable housing and reduce the length of time people stay in homelessness. Success depends on the preservation and expansion of critical financial resources we've developed in the state for supportive and affordable housing, rapid re-housing, the Homeless Youth Program, and Coordinated Access Networks. **We must have the resources and capacity to triage and connect people to permanent housing options.**
- **Strengthen supports to individuals and families** that help them maintain housing stability by fostering income growth and employment success, so that they don't ever have to return to homelessness again.
- Learn from and meaningfully partner with people who have experienced homelessness, with a focus on racial equity.

*The Reaching Home Campaign is guided by a statewide Coordinating Committee and staffed by the Partnership for Strong Communities.*

Sources:

1. Connecticut Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
2. Connecticut By-Name List (BNL)