

# Homelessness in Washington State



2019 Annual Report, pursuant to RCWs 43.185C 045, 170, 220, 340, and RCW 43.63A.311

December 2019

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

**Lisa Brown, Director**

# Acknowledgments

## **Washington State Department of Commerce**

Diane Klontz, assistant director, Community Services and Housing Division

Tedd Kelleher, senior managing director, Housing Assistance Unit

Kathy Kinard, homeless grants manager, Housing Assistance Unit

Kim Justice, executive director, Office of Homeless Youth

Emily Burgess, performance manager, Housing Assistance Unit

Nick Mondau, data systems manager, Housing Assistance Unit

Talia Scott, homeless management information system manager

Kathryn Stayrook, administrative assistant, Housing Assistance Unit

Graham Parrington, management analyst, Community Services and Housing Division

---

Washington State Department of Commerce

Tedd Kelleher, senior managing director  
[tedd.kelleher@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:tedd.kelleher@commerce.wa.gov)

HOUSING ASSISTANCE UNIT

1011 Plum St. SE  
P.O. Box 42525  
Olympia, WA 98504-2525

[www.commerce.wa.gov](http://www.commerce.wa.gov)

For people with disabilities, this report is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 360.725.4000 (TTY 360.586.0772).

# Table of Contents

- Executive Summary.....2**
- Annual Statutory Reporting Requirements .....4**
- Assessing the Current Conditions of Homelessness .....7**
- Challenges to Reducing Homelessness ..... 12**
- Homeless System Performance ..... 14**
- State Plan Accomplishments.....21**
- Planning, Reporting, Auditing and Procuring .....27**
- Appendix A: Organizational Outline .....29**
- Appendix B: Homeless Housing Project Expenditure and Data Report .....31**
- Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports .....32**
- Appendix D: Landlord Sampling Report.....33**
- Appendix E: Point-in-Time Count.....34**

# Executive Summary

This annual report complements the "[State of Washington Homeless Housing Crisis Response System Strategic Plan 2019-2024](#)"<sup>1</sup> updated in 2019 and fulfills reporting requirements outlined in several chapters of the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act, including RCWs 43.185C 045, 170, 220, 340, and RCW 43.63A.311. [Table 1](#) in the "

---

<sup>1</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Homeless Housing Crisis Response System Strategic Plan 2019-2024," (2019), <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Homeless-Housing-Strategic-Plan-2019-2024.pdf>

Annual Statutory Reporting Requirements” section maps the statutory reporting requirements to where data is presented in this report.

## Overview

Despite a strong state economy,<sup>2</sup> growing incomes,<sup>3</sup> and above-average and improving family stability,<sup>4</sup> Washington has the fifth-highest prevalence of homelessness in the nation. The count of people living unsheltered increased every year from 2013 to 2018 and then dropped slightly in 2019 to about 9,600.<sup>5</sup>

Washington is above average and improving in most domains that drive homelessness, with the notable exception of rental price inflation.<sup>6</sup> Rents have increased 48% in the past eight years,<sup>7</sup> primarily due to growing incomes<sup>8</sup> and an undersupply of new units to house Washington’s growing population.<sup>9</sup> Even with above-average income growth for lower-income households in Washington,<sup>10</sup> it has not been enough to keep pace with rent inflation, resulting in more people with already tight budgets facing homelessness. The mismatch between growing rents and incomes has been particularly severe for people with fixed incomes from sources such as Social Security and disability.<sup>11</sup>

Additional investments by the Legislature and performance improvements have moderated the impacts of this mismatch between rents and lower incomes. Washington’s top-tier, performance-based contracting system should continue to yield better outcomes with existing investments, but performance improvements do not add up to significant reductions in homelessness without additional investment and a solution to the undersupply of housing.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Gross Domestic Product by State, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population, percent of population employed

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table S2503

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B09005

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress," (2019), <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Why Is Homelessness Increasing?," (2017), <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/hau-why-homelessness-increase-2017.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B25058

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Median Contract Rents (Table B25058) correlation with median household incomes (Table S2503) by Metropolitan Statistical Area

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, population growth since 2005 (Table B25001) vs. housing unit growth since 2005 (Table DP04)

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B19081, Table B25057

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B25057, Social Security Administration, Supplemental Security Income Program payment amounts

<sup>12</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Homeless Housing Crisis Response System Strategic Plan 2019-2024"

The Housing Opportunities Act (Chapter 85, Laws of 2018) added significant accountability, specific planning requirements and additional transparency. As part of this renewed effort, state and local governments and community partners are actively pursuing:

- Solutions to the housing supply problem
- Improving performance
- Quantifying the necessary level of investment to leave no person living outside

Complementing the Department of Commerce's broad efforts to address adult homelessness, Commerce's Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) continues its cross-systems partnership to work toward all young people having safe and stable homes and the support they need to thrive. The office's work on expanding services, best practices, data collection, performance management and coordinated entry implementation is integrated tightly with and informed by the larger overall effort to address homelessness in Washington.

# Annual Statutory Reporting Requirements

**Table 1: Guide to Annual Reporting Requirements in This Report**

Subsection	Excerpted Reporting Requirements	Location in Report
<b>RCW 43.185C.045: Homeless housing strategic plan—Annual report of department and local governments.</b>		
(1)(a)	"An assessment of the current condition of homelessness in Washington state and the state's performance in meeting the goals in the state homeless housing strategic plan"	Under "Assessing the Current Conditions of Homelessness" Homeless System Performance and State Plan Accomplishments
(1)(b)	"A report on the results of the annual homeless point-in-time census conducted statewide under RCW 43.185C.030"	Appendix E: Point-in-Time Count
(1)(c)	"The amount of federal, state, local, and private funds spent on homelessness assistance, categorized by funding source and the following major assistance types: (i) Emergency shelter; (ii) Homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing; (iii) Permanent housing; (iv) Permanent supportive housing; (v) Transitional housing; (vi) Services only; and (vii) Any other activity in which more than five hundred thousand dollars of category funds were expended;"	Appendix B: Homeless Housing Project Expenditure and Data Report
(1)(d)	"A report on the expenditures, performance, and outcomes of state funds distributed through the consolidated homeless grant program, including the grant recipient, award amount expended, use of the funds, counties served, and households served"	Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports
(1)(e)	"A report on state and local homelessness document recording fee expenditure by county, including the total amount of fee spending, percentage of total spending from fees, number of people served by major assistance type, and amount of expenditures for private rental housing payments required in RCW 36.22.179"	Appendix B: Homeless Housing Project Expenditure and Data Report
(1)(f) and (g)	"(f) A report on the expenditures, performance, and outcomes of the essential needs and housing support program meeting the requirements of RCW 43.185C.220; and (g) A report on the expenditures, performance, and outcomes of the independent youth housing program meeting the requirements of RCW 43.63A.311."	Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports

Subsection	Excerpted Reporting Requirements	Location in Report
(3)	<p>"Any local government receiving state funds for homelessness assistance or state or local homelessness document recording fees under RCW 36.22.178, 36.22.179, or 36.22.1791 must provide an annual report on the current condition of homelessness in its jurisdiction ... the department must produce and post information on the local government's homelessness spending from all sources by project during the prior state fiscal year in a format similar to the department's report under subsection (1)(c) of this section."</p>	<p>Appendix B: Homeless Housing Project Expenditure and Data Report</p>
<b>RCW 43.185C.170: Interagency council on homelessness—Duties—Reports.</b>		
(1)	<p>"The interagency council on homelessness, as defined in RCW 43.185C.010 ... shall report to the appropriate committees of the legislature annually by December 31st on its activities."</p>	<p>In the "Planning, Reporting, Auditing and Procuring " section</p>
<b>RCW 43.185C.220: Essential needs and housing support program—Distribution of funds.</b>		
(7)(c)	<p>"In collaboration with the department of social and health services, submit a report annually to the relevant policy and fiscal committees of the legislature. A preliminary report shall be submitted by December 31, 2011, and must include (c)(i), (iii), and (v) of this subsection. Annual reports must be submitted beginning December 1, 2012, and must include:</p> <p>"(i) A description of the actions the department has taken to achieve the objectives of chapter 36, Laws of 2011 1st sp. sess.;</p> <p>"(ii) The amount of funds used by the department to administer the program;</p> <p>"(iii) Information on the housing status of essential needs and housing support recipients served by housing support entities, and individuals who have requested housing support but did not receive housing support;</p> <p>"(iv) Grantee expenditure data related to administration and services provided under this section; and</p> <p>"(v) Efforts made to partner with other entities and leverage sources or public and private funds;"</p>	<p>Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports</p>
<b>RCW 43.185C.340: Students experiencing homelessness—Grant program to link families with housing—Program goals—Grant process—Requirements—Grantees report to the department.</b>		

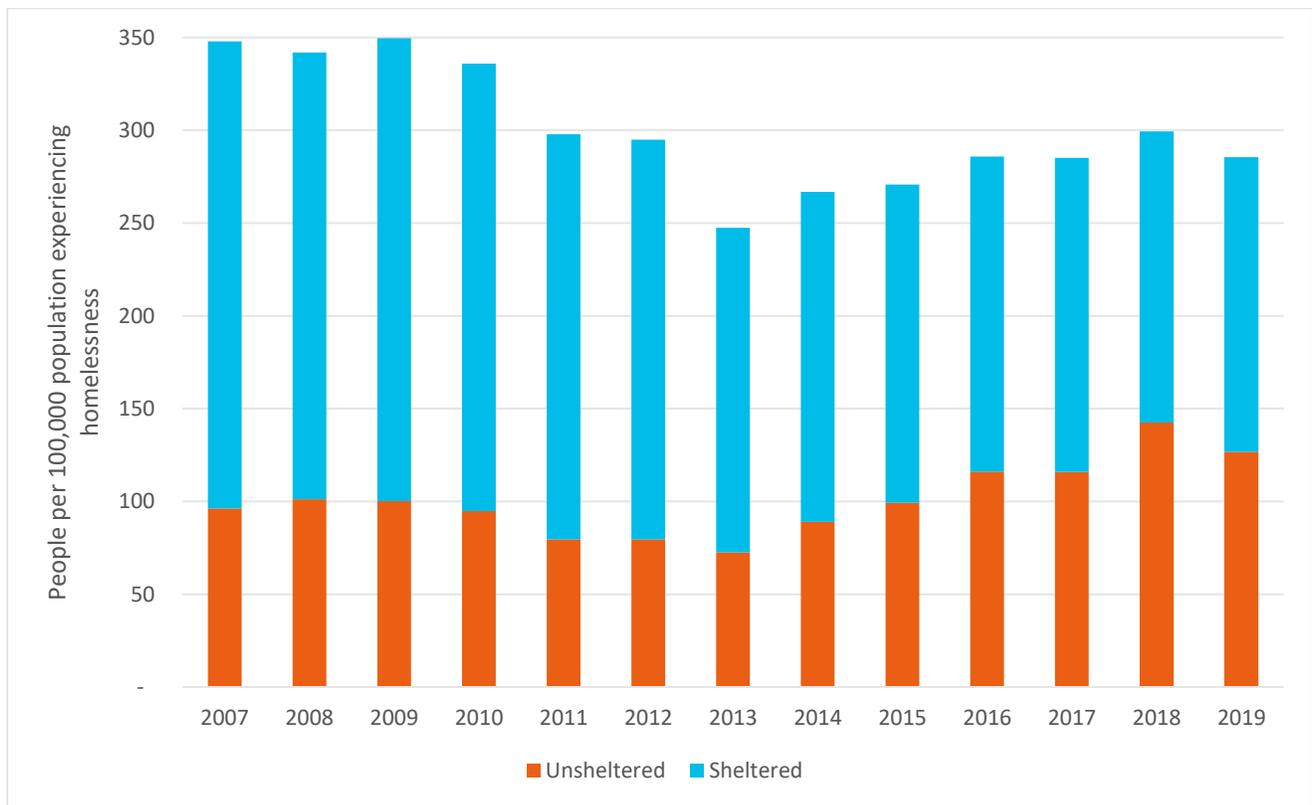
Subsection	Excerpted Reporting Requirements	Location in Report
(8)	<p>"(a) Grantee organizations must compile and report information to the department. The department shall report to the legislature the findings of the grantee, the housing stability of the homeless families, and any related policy recommendations.</p> <p>"(b) Grantees must track and report on the following measures including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Length of time enrolled in the grant program;</li> <li>(ii) Housing destination at program exit;</li> <li>(iii) Type of residence prior to enrollment in the grant program; and</li> <li>(iv) Number of times homeless in the past three years.</li> </ul> <p>(c) Grantees must also include in their reports a narrative description discussing its partnership with school districts as set forth in the memorandum outlined in subsection (4) of this section. Reports must also include the kinds of supports grantees are providing students and families to support academic learning.</p>	Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports
<b>RCW 43.63A.311: Independent youth housing program—Subcontractor organization performance review and report.</b>		
(2)(a) through (f)	<p>The independent youth housing program report must include, at a minimum, an update on the following program performance measures, as well as any other performance measures the department may establish, for enrolled youth in consultation with the department of social and health services, to be measured statewide and by county:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Increases in housing stability;</li> <li>(b) Increases in economic self-sufficiency;</li> <li>(c) Increases in independent living skills;</li> <li>(d) Increases in education and job training attainment;</li> <li>(e) Decreases in the use of all state-funded services over time;</li> </ul>	Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports
(2)(g)	<p>Recommendations to the legislature and to the interagency council on homelessness as described under RCW 43.185C.170 on program improvements and on departmental strategies that might assist the state to reach its goals of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Ensuring that all youth aging out of the state dependency system have access to a decent, appropriate, and affordable home in a healthy safe environment to prevent such youth from experiencing homelessness; and</li> <li>(ii) Reducing each year the percentage of young people eligible for state assistance upon aging out of the state dependency system.</li> </ul>	This content is presented in a separate report that Commerce and the Department of Children, Youth and Families are submitting separately: "Improving Stability for Youth Exiting Systems of Care."

# Assessing the Current Conditions of Homelessness

## Adult and Family Homelessness

Data-driven investments resulting from the 2006 Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act led to declines in homelessness through 2012. However, Washington’s exceptionally strong economic growth without a matching increase in the supply contributed to a 48% rent inflation since 2010, moving the state from having the 12th- to the fifth-highest rents in the nation.<sup>13</sup> Concurrent with these rent increases, the count of people experiencing homelessness in Washington increased 26%, and Washington now has the fifth-highest rate of homelessness in the nation, with almost 10,000 people living unsheltered and more than 11,000 people living in temporary homeless housing.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 1: Changes in Sheltered Versus Unsheltered Homelessness, 2007 to 2019**



Source: Washington Annual Point-in-Time Count

Even though Washington has an exceptionally high rate of homelessness, the prevalence of homelessness in Washington is consistent with the national correlation between rent and homelessness. The correlation between rent levels and homelessness (+0.7) is much stronger than seen with other potential drivers of the increase. For example, the correlation between homelessness

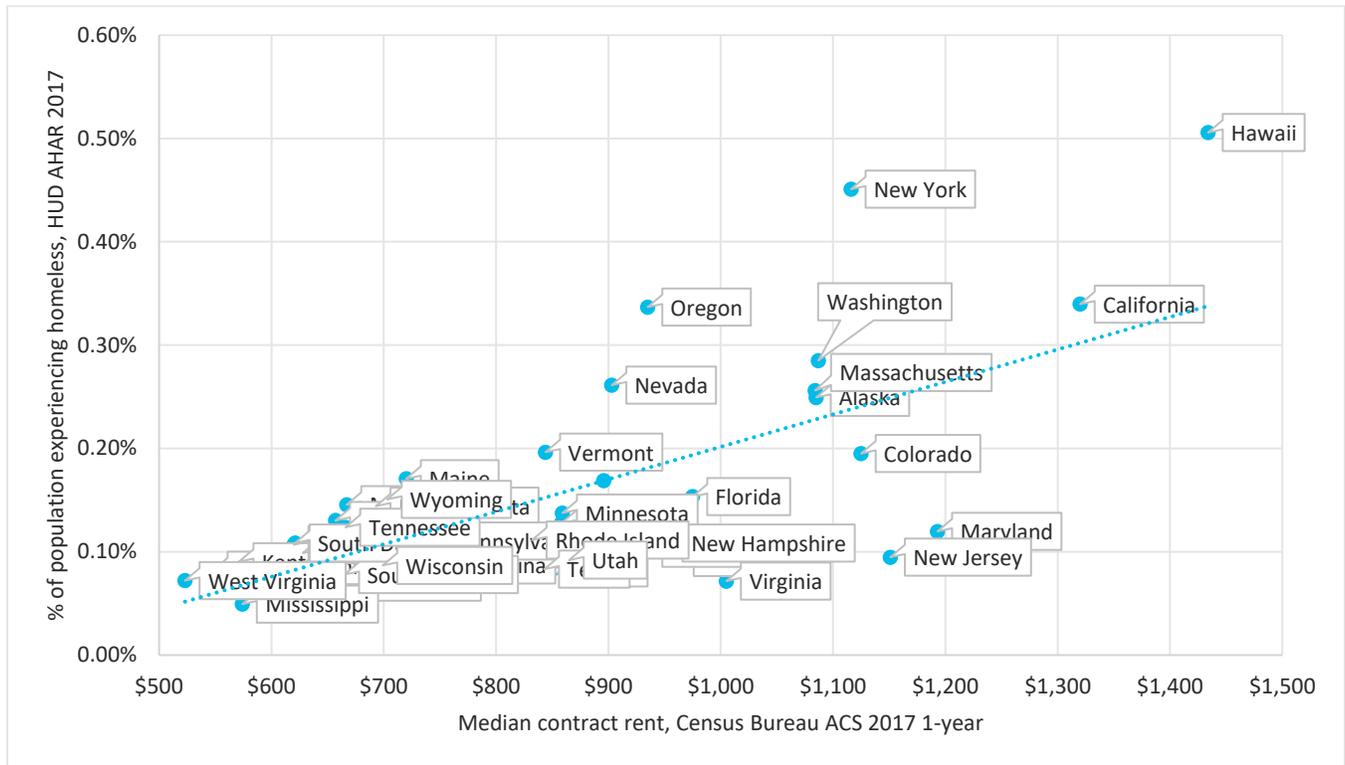
<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B25058

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress"

and the supplemental poverty measure is counterintuitively negligible (+0.2), and states with a higher prevalence of opioid use have a lower prevalence of homelessness.<sup>15</sup> Washington experienced a below-average increase in opiate dependence during this period when compared to other states.<sup>16</sup>

Measures of family structure and stability are top tier in Washington and improving, which could have offset some of the rent-driven increases in homelessness since 2012.<sup>17</sup>

**Figure 2: Median Rent and % of Population Experiencing Homelessness by State**



Sources: Median contract rent, Census Bureau American Community Survey 2016 1-year estimate; 2017 Housing and Urban Development Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

Washington's economic growth has ranked first in the nation for three consecutive years<sup>18</sup> and now has the seventh-highest per capita GDP among states.<sup>19</sup> The lowest incomes (bottom quintile households) in Washington are ranked fifth in the nation,<sup>20</sup> and the supplemental poverty rate is falling (now ranked

<sup>15</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2018 National Survey of Drug Use and Health," (2019), <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018.pdf>  
<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress"  
<sup>17</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Increases in Drug and Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths - United States, 2010-2015," (2016), <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm655051e1.htm>  
<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B09005  
<sup>19</sup> U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Annual GDP by State, 2016, 2017, 2018  
<sup>20</sup> Statista, "Per capita Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States in 2018, by State," <https://www.statista.com/statistics/248063/per-capita-us-real-gross-domestic-product-gdp-by-state/>  
<sup>20</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-year estimate, Table B19081

34th).<sup>21</sup> The percentage of people working has increased as homelessness has increased (now ranked 25th),<sup>22</sup> and the percentage and number of people collecting disability is below the national average and dropping.<sup>23</sup>

## Addressing the Growing Need

Updates to the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (RCW 43.185C) have positioned Washington as a national leader in state-driven performance contracts that have improved the efficiency of the existing investments in the homeless crisis response system. Legislatively required updates to local and state strategic plans include an accounting of how performance and policy changes are expected to reduce homelessness.

The plans will build off transparent research-supported assumptions about the cost per successful intervention and related assumptions about reducing the number of people experiencing homelessness.

Newly available cross-jurisdiction performance data shows that it is possible to dramatically reduce the number of people living outside.<sup>24</sup> The data also shows that a combination of lower rent inflation, improved performance and adequate investment levels can bring Washington's performance in line with higher-performing peer states.

## Youth and Young Adult Homelessness

In Washington state, at least 13,000 young people, ages 12 through 24, are on the street or in unsafe or unstable housing situations.<sup>25</sup> These young people are without a parent or guardian. They are often referred to as "unaccompanied" homelessness.

Young people can experience homelessness for any number of reasons, including family dysfunction or conflict, rejection due to sexual orientation or gender identity, or economic instability that leads to separation from family. Interviews Chapin Hall conducted show that young people link the beginning of their homelessness to earlier disruptions of family and home, including family homelessness and entrance into foster care.<sup>26</sup> In short, young people become homeless when their home is not safe, not supportive or does not exist.

---

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2016, 2017, 2018

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population in states

<sup>23</sup> Social Security Administration, SSI Recipients by State and County, 2016, 2018

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, "The 2019 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress"

<sup>25</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs 2016 Report," <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/hau-ohy-report-2016-update.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Chapin Hall, "Missed Opportunities in Youth Pathways Through Homelessness," (2019), [https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/ChapinHall\\_VoYC\\_Youth-Pathways-FINAL.pdf](https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/ChapinHall_VoYC_Youth-Pathways-FINAL.pdf)

## Some Young People are at Greater Risk of Homelessness

Youth of color experience homelessness at much higher rates than the rest of the youth population. Black youth in Washington make up 24% of the homeless youth population but represent only 6% of the total youth population.<sup>27</sup>

Up to 40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ, while only 3% to 5% of the United States population identifies as LGBTQ.<sup>28</sup>

About 1 in 4 youth who exit foster care and 1 in 3 youth who exit the juvenile or adult justice systems experience homelessness. Nearly 1,200 youth and young adults who exit behavioral health inpatient treatment experience homelessness each year (23% of those exiting).<sup>29</sup>

Youth who have not earned a high school diploma or GED have a 346% higher risk of homelessness than those who have.<sup>30</sup>

## Adolescence Is a Unique Period That Demands a Tailored Approach

Experiencing homelessness during adolescence can have a profound and enduring impact on a person's life. Youth ages 12 through 24 are in a key developmental window during which significant changes happen to them physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially. The adolescent brain is plastic, so to speak, meaning that it is malleable and highly sensitive to its environment. During times of heightened sensitivity (which occur during both early childhood and adolescence), the brain is more vulnerable to damage from physical harms, such as drugs or environmental toxins, or psychological ones, such as trauma and stress.<sup>31</sup> It is also more responsive to positive influences, making interventions that occur during this time significant in their influence on young people's success and stability into adulthood.

The conditions under which young people enter into homelessness require a holistic response rather than one focused on housing alone. That is because young people experiencing homelessness typically lack work experience, have not completed their education, and do not have experience living independently, so they have not developed life skills such as budgeting, housekeeping and job searching. Due to their age, they are also at greater risk of victimization.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Office of Homeless Youth 2016 Report to the Governor and Legislature," <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/hau-ohy-report-2016-update.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ray, N., "Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth: An epidemic of homelessness," (2006), <http://www.thetaskforce.org/lgbt-youth-an-epidemic-of-homelessness/>

<sup>29</sup> Mayfield, Jim et al., "Housing Status of Youth Exiting Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems," (2017), <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/rda/research-reports/housing-status-youth-exiting-foster-care-behavioral-health-and-criminal-justice-systems>

<sup>30</sup> Chapin Hall, "Voices of Youth Count," (2018), <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/>

<sup>31</sup> Steinberg, Laurence, "Age of Opportunity, Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence," (2015)

<sup>32</sup> National Network for Youth, "What Works to End Youth Homelessness?" (2015), <https://www.nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/2015-What-Works-to-End-Youth-Homelessness.pdf>

Commerce's [Office of Homeless Youth](#) addresses youth homelessness through five key components to prepare young people for a bright future:

1. Stable housing
2. Permanent connections
3. Family reconciliation
4. Education and employment
5. Social and emotional well-being

## Washington Can Lead the Way

Working together will ensure that all young people have a safe and stable home and the support they need to thrive. Washington is positioned to lead the nation in making this vision a reality. The establishment of the Office of Homeless Youth in 2015 solidified the state's commitment to take a laser-like approach in addressing this issue. There is a strong movement of leaders, funders and young people working together to end youth and young adult homelessness. Bold initiatives currently underway include:

- The Anchor Community Initiative, an innovative program led by A Way Home Washington, aims to end youth homelessness in four target communities by 2022: Spokane, Walla Walla, Yakima and Pierce counties. The Office of Homeless Youth partnered in this effort, providing \$4 million in grants to these communities to support interventions that drive reductions in youth and young adult homelessness.
- Federal HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grants totaling \$12.5 million are underway in King, Snohomish and the 23 most rural counties in the state.
- The Office of Homeless Youth and Department of Children, Youth and Families are developing a plan for the state to ensure that young people exit systems of care, such as foster care and juvenile justice, into safe and stable housing. This work responds to the legislature's directive in Substitute Senate Bill 6560 from the 2018 legislative session.

Significant progress was made on recommendations proposed in the Office of Homeless Youth's 2016 Report to the Governor and Legislature,<sup>33</sup> including expanded access to the Extended Foster Care Program, increased funding for housing and shelter, and policies to support the academic success of students experiencing homelessness. While progress was made, much work remains. Washington must remain steadfast in its commitment to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness.

---

<sup>33</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs 2016 Report"

# Challenges to Reducing Homelessness

## Overview

There are broader systems and administrative challenges to reducing homelessness in our state. The system challenges, such as institutional discharges into homelessness, rising rents, and lack of affordable housing, coupled with growth management laws, fall outside the capacity of the local homeless crisis response system to make significant changes. Instead, those local crisis response systems work to improve efficiencies that sometimes can only be seen at the margins. Even after performance benchmarks are achieved, modeling shows that existing resources are inadequate to reach the goal of leaving no person left living outside.

## System Challenges

### Increases in Rent

Rental rates might have stopped increasing in most counties and, in some, possibly declined. However, the long-term structural imbalance might result in a chronic undersupply of housing, resulting in higher rents and more homelessness. With chronic, excessive rent inflation, the need for more low-income housing rises and might make it difficult for state and local governments to keep pace with growing needs.

### Lack of Housing

According to a study by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the U.S. has a shortage of 7.4 million affordable rental homes available to extremely low-income renter households, resulting in 35 affordable and available units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.<sup>34</sup> The study also shows that Washington is no exception, with less than the national average. Because of the shortage of affordable and available homes, many lower-income households spend more on housing than they can afford, forcing households to reduce spending on health care, food, transportation, child care and utilities.

## Current Gaps in Youth and Young Adult System Limit Prevention and Pathways out of Homelessness

### Geographic Gaps

Youth and young adults experience homelessness in every region of our state. Despite what many people assume, rates of youth homelessness are similar in rural and urban areas.<sup>35</sup> Yet while there are youth experiencing homelessness in all communities of the state, resources to help them are not always available.

---

<sup>34</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach: The High Cost of Housing," (2018), [http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/OOR\\_2018.pdf](http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/OOR_2018.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Chapin Hall, "Voices of Youth Count," (2018), <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/>

### **Lack of Prevention Services**

Families experiencing conflict or disruption do not have access to the support needed to build resilience and resolve challenges. More robust crisis intervention, family counseling and reconciliation, and access to behavioral health services are needed to prevent young people from having even a single experience of homelessness.

### **Public Systems are a Pipeline to Homelessness**

Young people who are transitioning from public systems of care, such as foster care, inpatient behavioral health treatment and the justice system, are leaving without the proper preparation and support to ensure their safety and stability.

### **Lack of Longer-term Housing Supports for Minors**

Youth under the age of 18 who are unable to return home safely lack stable housing options. Shelters are limited to short-term stays. Host homes provide an option for longer-term support, but there are only a handful of these programs in the state.

## **Administrative Challenges**

### **Coordinated Entry**

Identification and prioritization of people experiencing homelessness are central to efficiently using limited resources. The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has made a positive long-term contribution to this initiative by releasing draft data standards governing the systems and procedures for coordinated entry. Much work remains to bring coordinated entry systems into compliance with the letter and spirit of the required identification, assessment and prioritization processes. Commerce has dedicated resources to work with counties to address identified deficiencies in these systems.

### **Modeling Tools**

Accurately quantifying the impact of performance improvements and investment levels is critical to developing meaningful local and state strategic plans. Existing tools to develop these estimates, built using hidden assumptions and calculations, are hard to use and understand, given the inherent complexity of modeling the flow of people through a system. Commerce has developed non-proprietary modeling tools with transparent underlying calculations and assumptions and has helped local planning processes understand and use these tools to develop local plan estimates of unmet need.

# Homeless System Performance

## Homeless System Performance Goals and Targets

Performance measures help evaluate the effectiveness of Homeless Crisis Response Systems as they work toward ending homelessness. Commerce has identified the following as the most critical homeless system performance measures:

- Prioritizing Unsheltered Homeless Households and Households Fleeing Violence
- Increasing Exits to Permanent Housing
- Reducing Returns to Homelessness
- Reducing the Length of Time Homeless

In July 2017, Commerce introduced housing outcome performance improvement requirements to the Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG). Commerce provided grantees with a menu of performance measures specific to the intervention type (see the "2018 Strategic Plan Goals, Timeline and Accountability" section). For each intervention type CHG funds, grantees adopted the required performance measure(s) and at least one secondary performance measure. Using local data, they chose short-term improvement goals.

In addition to the housing outcome performance improvement requirements, grantees have continuing prioritization requirements that were established in January 2016. Grantees are required to prioritize unsheltered homeless households and households fleeing violence for services and projects. Compliance with this requirement can be demonstrated by increasing the percentage of unsheltered homeless households and households fleeing violence served or achieving unsheltered functional zero for at least two sub-populations. Unsheltered functional zero means the average number of housing placements keeps pace with the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness as measured by the Point-in-Time Count (PIT). Additionally, grantees that are serving high levels of people in priority status, but have not achieved unsheltered functional zero, may assert that the county or region has met a high-performance threshold.

**Table 2: Intervention Types, Performance Measures and Performance Targets**

Intervention Type	Performance Measure (required measures are bold)	Performance Target
Emergency Shelter	<b>Increase % exits to permanent housing</b>	<b>At Least 50%</b>
	Reduce the median length of stay	20 Days or Less
	Reduce the average length of stay	20 Days or Less
	Reduce % return to homelessness in two years	Less than 10%
Transitional Housing	<b>Increase % exits to permanent housing</b>	<b>At Least 80%</b>
	Reduce the median length of stay	90 Days or Less
	<b>Reduce the average length of stay</b>	<b>90 days or less</b>
	<b>Reduce % return to homelessness in two years</b>	<b>Less than 5%</b>
Rapid Re-Housing	Increase % exits to permanent housing	At least 80%
	Reduce % return to homelessness in two years	Less than 5%
Targeted Prevention	Reduce the number of newly homeless	Reduce number
	Increase % served coming from institutional setting or temporarily staying with family or friends (doubled up)	At least 80%
	Increase % served with past homelessness	At least 80%
Permanent Supportive Housing	Increase % exits to or retention of permanent housing	At least 95%

## Communicating Performance

Commerce analyzes homeless system performance quarterly and annually to assess the degree to which systems are making progress on their benchmarks. Performance outcomes are communicated through the “Washington State Homeless System Performance Reports.” The reports provide information on critical homeless system performance measures and other contextual information about a community’s homeless crisis response system.

The purpose of the reports is to:

- Identify evidence-based housing interventions that efficiently move people experiencing homelessness into permanent destinations
- Provide communities with information regarding their progress towards locally established performance benchmarks
- Evaluate if improvement strategies are having the intended impact
- Highlight data quality

The County Report Card and Year-to-Year Comparison<sup>36</sup> provide annual performance outcome results for Washington state as a whole and each county. Data from all homeless housing projects that participate in HMIS are included in these reports.

Dashboards<sup>37</sup> provide performance outcome results for counties as a whole, for each agency, and each project, each quarter. The dashboards are organized by different types of interventions, and each dashboard includes a data quality component to help direct service providers ensure their data is accurate and complete. At this time, only counties that in the Balance of State Continuum of Care are included in project-type dashboards.

## Data Sources

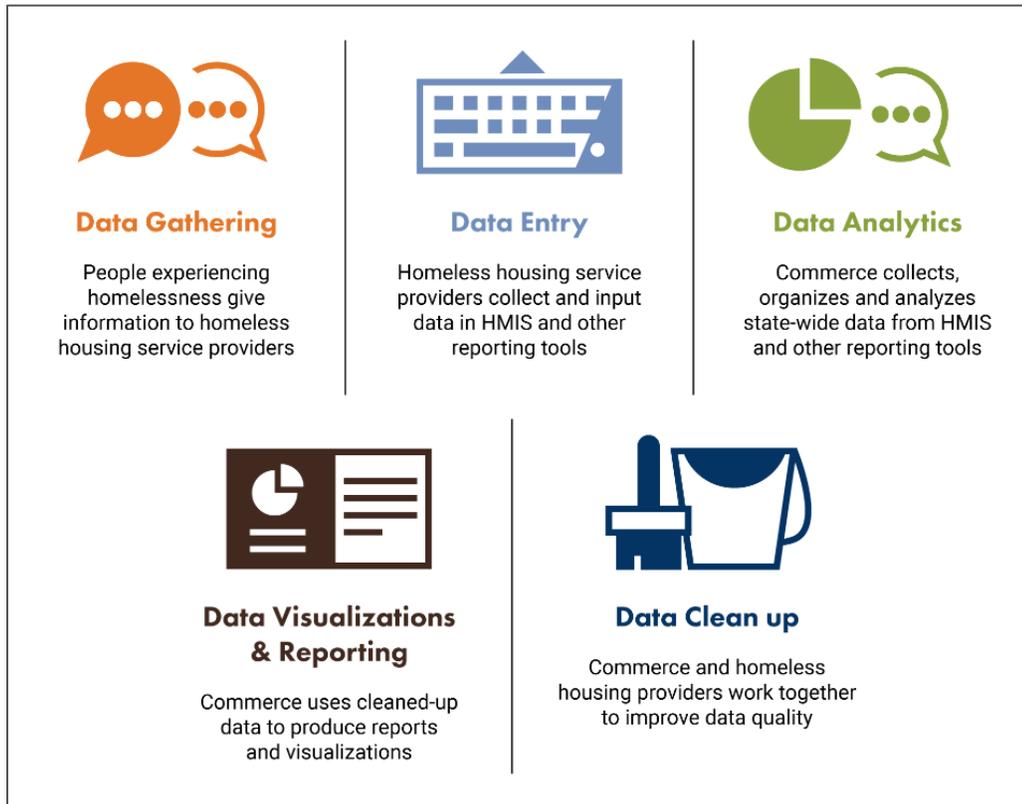
The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is the data source for most of the information used in the “Washington State Homeless System Performance Reports.” Homeless housing service providers use HMIS to collect and manage data gathered while providing housing assistance to people experiencing homelessness. Other data sources include the annual County Expenditure Report and the annual Point-In-Time Count.

---

<sup>36</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, “Washington State Homeless System Performance: County Report Cards,” <https://public.tableau.com/profile/comhau#!/vizhome/WashingtonStateHomelessSystemPerformanceCountyReportCardsSF/Y2018/ReportCard>

<sup>37</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, “Commerce Housing Assistance Unit,” <https://public.tableau.com/profile/comhau#!/>

**Figure 3: Illustration of HMIS Data Reporting**



## Performance Monitoring

Commerce conducted monitoring of housing outcome performance requirements for the period of July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, the first year of the CHG contract period. At initial monitoring, all 30 CHG grantees met at least one housing outcome performance benchmark or target.

Commerce conducted the monitoring of prioritization requirements for the period of Oct. 1, 2017, to Sept. 30, 2018.

Nineteen grantees were required to submit action plans regarding prioritization requirements, which included instructions to:

- Review their data to make sure the results reflect what has happened
- Prepare and submit to Commerce an explanation for why this may have happened and what efforts will be made to address it
- Grantees representing rural communities were encouraged to consider an evaluation of Unsheltered Functional Zero to meet the prioritization requirement.

Commerce provided data analysis, investigation and technical assistance to grantees who requested it to prepare their action plans. The most significant contributors not meeting the performance requirements were poor data quality, and lack of prioritization processes.

Grantees submitted action plans that included improvement strategies such as:

- Data quality improvement plans
- Revisions of coordinated entry prioritization policies and processes
- Reallocation of funds from Homelessness Prevention to Rapid Re-Housing or targeting homelessness prevention services
- Expansion of street outreach services
- Development of low-barrier housing projects
- Shifting Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) resources to prioritize homeless and unsheltered households

## System Demonstration Grant

In July 2017, Commerce selected a limited number of grantees for the System Demonstration Grant. The System Demonstration Grant (SDG) is an opportunity to administer existing allocations with increased flexibility. For example, SDG grantees do not have specific program-level requirements for documentation, prescribed forms and procedures. Eligible applicants were county governments with one or more sub-grantees that have established system performance measures in current sub-grant agreements. King, Peirce and Snohomish counties were eligible and selected as SDG grantees for the 2017-2019 contract period.

In addition to the requirement to prioritize unsheltered homeless households and households fleeing violence for services and projects, SDG grantees are required to maintain performance measures to help evaluate their effectiveness:

- HUD Homeless System Performance measures or a variation of these measures must be included in sub-grantee agreements with applicable targets or benchmarks.
- Sub-grantee agreements or a performance management plan must describe the frequency of performance monitoring.
- Sub-grantee agreements or a performance management plan must describe actions taken if the performance expectations are not met.

Commerce conducted monitoring of performance management activities for the period of July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018, the first year of the SDG contract period. SDG grantees provided the following to demonstrate compliance:

- Evidence of communicating performance outcomes with sub-grantees through web-based dashboards, reports or other means
- Evidence of performance monitoring

- A description of performance monitoring outcomes, including the number of projects with performance issues and specific actions taken (e.g., development of technical assistance plans, reduction in funding, etc.)
- A description of performance improvement strategies currently deployed or in development

## Homeless System Performance Successes: Prioritization

Since 2016, Washington has had a statewide target for ensuring that the state’s resources are used to address the crisis of unsheltered homelessness. Grantees are required to prioritize unsheltered homeless households and households fleeing violence for services and projects. Commerce reached out to six communities that exceeded the state target, including four that not only met the target in 2017 but also then improved on their performance in 2018. Commerce staff interviewed them to hear what had made the difference. In all cases, the changes were the result of a conscientious effort by the community—but not necessarily one designed specifically to increase services to unsheltered people and people fleeing violence. Some successful efforts focused on improving targeting to serve people at higher risk, lowering barriers to shelter and program entry, or engaging in an overall system change such as diversion, which resulted in greater services to unsheltered people. Elements that these communities reported making a difference on the prioritization target included:

- Bringing focus to targeting unsheltered people and reviewing outcomes regularly
- Significantly expanding outreach targeting and outreach partners
- Narrowing the definition of eligibility for support from the crisis response system to just those who are literally homeless or fleeing domestic violence
- Repurposing prevention funding to other needs
- Focusing coordinated entry on targeting help to those who are the highest need/highest vulnerability
- Reducing entry barriers into shelter and housing
- Implementing diversion as a system strategy, reducing those with lower needs who enter the crisis response system

Some communities reported they faced resistance to these changes, but in all cases, local leadership made a strong case and were able to push through the changes. Some cited concerns that targeting resources for higher need clients would decrease success, but those communities reported no decreases in their outcomes.

Overall, Commerce learned that a concerted effort to reduce barriers, increase access, and target resources to higher-need people can impact the number of unsheltered people served.

## Strategies to Improve System Performance

Every community has different resources, strengths, and challenges and will need to take different actions to improve performance results. However, there are high-impact strategies that can improve

performance in all communities. Nationally recognized strategies detailed below are best practices in homeless housing services and are a Consolidated Homeless Grant requirement or allowable activity.

**Table 3: Best Practice Strategies**

Strategies for Improvement	Prioritize Unsheltered Homeless Households	Increase Exits to Permanent Housing	Reduce Returns to Homelessness	Reduce the Length of Time Homeless
Lower Barriers to Coordinated and Project Entry	X	X		X
Deploy Progressive Engagement Service Models System-Wide		X	X	X
Link Street Outreach to Coordinated Entry	X	X		X
Provide Housing Focused Case Management		X	X	X
Lower Barriers to Project Participation	X	X		X
Provide Housing Search and Placement Services		X	X	X
Target Homeless Prevention Assistance			X	

# State Plan Accomplishments

## Homeless Strategic Plan Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

In 2005, the Washington State Legislature passed the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act (RCW 43.185C). The act outlined bold policies to address homelessness and directs Commerce to “prepare and publish a five-year homeless housing strategic plan which must outline statewide goals and performance measures.”

**Figure 4: Homelessness Strategic Plan Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles**



Commerce completed the 2019-2024 Washington Homeless Housing Crisis Strategic Plan in 2019. To learn more, visit <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>.

# 2018 Strategic Plan Goals, Timeline and Accountability

Accomplishments from the plan published in 2018 are outlined below.

## Goal 1: Effective and Efficient Coordinated Access and Assessment for Services and Housing

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>Improved implementation of coordinated entry, outreach and statewide by-name list</b>		
1.1.1 Continue technical assistance to counties working to refine their coordinated entry systems and outreach strategies.	On-going	Completed state guidelines, <sup>38</sup> delivered training and started coordinated entry assessments and technical assistance.
1.1.2 Develop a project plan for an active statewide by-name list in the state's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).	2018	After participating in HUD-sponsored technical assistance and coordinating a statewide advisory team to work with the new HMIS data standards, Commerce will need more time to implement this activity.
1.1.3 Continue to evaluate and score coordinated entry systems, including adding additional performance measures of coordinated entry and accessibility.	2019	Commerce is completing a performance plan in 2019 that will include recommendations for continuing coordinated entry system evaluation.
1.1.4 Expand coordinated entry requirement for all homeless housing programs managed by recipients of, and sub-recipients of, Commerce homeless funding.	Completed	Grant guidelines <sup>39</sup> and contracts updated.
1.1.5 Revise the Consolidated Homeless Grants to include the new federal Department of Housing and Urban Development coordinated entry requirements in the 2018-2019 grants.	Completed	Grant guidelines <sup>40</sup> and contracts updated.

<sup>38</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Washington State Coordinated Entry Guidelines," (March 2019), <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/3rwdm9w1wdquncuucfbnubt0aqhsd0wf>

<sup>39</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Guidelines for the Consolidated Homeless Grant, Version 1," (July 2019), <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/sddzidhjn9zvb2zao5fes3rpwbc399o>

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

## Goal 2: Effective and Efficient Crisis Response System

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>2.1 Promote evidenced-based housing interventions that efficiently move people experiencing homelessness into permanent destinations.</b>		
2.1.1 Publish homeless system performance county report card.	Annually	Completed and posted to Commerce website (see footnote 11).
2.1.1 Publish homeless system project report with project-level performance measures.	Quarterly	Completed and posted to Commerce website (see footnote 11).
2.1.3 Program training on trauma-informed services, mental health first aid, low-barrier conversion, harm reduction, fair housing, progressive engagement, best practices in serving survivors of domestic violence and coordinated entry.	On-going	Trainers procured for trauma-informed services and mental health first aid and offered statewide to grantees. Technical assistance provided by Commerce staff on low-barrier access, harm reduction, coordinated entry and progressive engagement. 2019-2022 training plan and budget approved to continue and expand training to grantees.
2.1.4 Explore contracting the next biennial 2019-2021 Consolidated Homeless Grant funds competitively based on performance.	2018	Commerce postponed this action and will need to seek a consultant to support an analysis, as well as consider legal implications related to state law.
2.1.5 Explore promoting local prioritization of locally controlled housing funding for priority populations in the 2019 homeless grants awarded from Commerce.	2018	Commerce implemented homeless system performance requirements.
2.1.6 Align homeless grant requirements with system performance measures and benchmarks and require systems receiving Commerce funds to prioritize serving people who are unsheltered.	Completed	Consolidated Homeless Grant contract statement of work updated with these requirements.
2.1.7 Require systems receiving Commerce funds to use a service model that includes evidence-based best practices.	Completed	Consolidated Homeless Grant guidelines and contract requirements updated (see footnote 13).
2.1.8 Provide local homeless plan academy for county/local governments and introduce a local plan modeling tool.	Completed	Technical assistance procured and made available to all county/local governments through December 2019. Local plan guidance <sup>41</sup> and modeling tool completed and technical assistance provided.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>

### Goal 3: Identify Policy Changes and Resources Necessary to House All People Living Unsheltered

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>3.1 Improve county data reporting</b>		
3.1.1 Contractually require data quality improvements in the submission of Homeless Management Information System data and annual report submissions by Consolidated Homeless Grantees.	2019	Minimum data quality standards in grant guidelines
3.1.2 Contractually require best practices in administering the Point-In-Time count.	2018	Commerce postponed this work and will work with the Continuums of Care to complete this goal.
3.1.3 Expand participation in statewide by-name list in HMIS in cooperation with the Department of Social and Health Services and other entities in contact with people experiencing homelessness.	2018	After participating in HUD-sponsored technical assistance and coordinating a statewide advisory team to work with the new HMIS data standards, Commerce will need more time to implement this activity.
<b>3.2 Develop unmet need estimate to house all people living unsheltered</b>		
3.2.1: Propose law and policy changes to support cross-agency data sharing capacity.	Ongoing	State agencies explored changes to existing law and determined existing legal authority was sufficient to implement proposed sharing initiatives.
3.2.2: Work with state agencies to determine the counts of unsheltered people whose housing is the direct responsibility of state agencies.	Ongoing	The State Advisory Council and the Interagency Council on Homelessness are continuing to explore in what circumstances state agencies should be directly responsible for housing people under their care.
3.3.3: Develop unmet count based on statewide by-name lists in the Homeless Management Information System.	Ongoing	In-depth assessments of local coordinated entry systems completed in 2019 have shown that additional policy and process improvements must be completed before coordinated entry by-name lists can practically be used to assess unmet needs.
3.2.4: Supplement Point-In-Time count with count derived from administrative data collected from the Department of Social and Health Services.	Ongoing	Posted to Commerce website <sup>42</sup> .

<sup>42</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Snapshot of Homelessness in Washington State for July, 2018," <https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/9fwvumoiyzkw81hn64lw9wvpfj3azkqa>

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
3.2.5: Estimate policy and resource changes in resources necessary to leave no person living outside, based on contracted system performance targets and updated enumerations of people living outside.	January 2018	2019-2024 state homeless housing strategic plan includes resource gap allocations.

## Goal 4: Quantify What Would Reduce the Number of New People Becoming Homeless

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>4.1 Facilitate identification of policy and resource changes that would reduce the number of new people becoming homeless</b>		
4.1.1 Engage local governments and service providers to solicit ideas on interventions and policy changes that would reduce the number of new people becoming homeless.	2018	Commerce solicited feedback on intervention effectiveness and published resulting citations and estimates of impact in the updated strategic plan.
4.1.2: Review literature to quantify the impact of upstream interventions that could reduce the number of people at risk of becoming homeless by increasing incomes, improving family stability and reducing behavioral health problems.		Commerce solicited feedback on intervention effectiveness and published resulting citations and estimates of impact in the updated strategic plan.

## Goal 5: Transparent Accounting of State and Local Recording Fee Funds

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>5.1: Publish county report cards</b>		
5.1.1: Compile data from the Homeless Management Information System, contract compliance, spending and other data sources to develop county report cards.	Annually	Completed and posted to Commerce website (see footnote 11).
<b>5.2: Publish spending and performance data for all projects funded by state and local recording fees</b>		
5.2.1: Commerce drafts annual report and presents to the Interagency Council on Homelessness and the State Advisory Council on Homelessness.	Annually	Completed and <a href="#">posted</a> to Commerce website.
<b>5.3: Ensure access to all homeless data</b>		
5.3.1: Require counties that are not able to export client data to the state Homeless Management Information System by December 2016 to use the state Homeless Management Information System for direct data entry. Provide technical assistance to all data integration counties.	In progress	Requirement deferred in deference to higher-priority HMIS system improvement work.

## Goal 6: Fair and equitable resource distribution

Actions in Support of the Strategy	Timeline	Accountability
<b>6.1: Staff development on system disparities</b>		
6.1.1: Identify a training plan for staff development.	2018	Staff completed two-day racial equity training.
<b>6.2 Examine system disparities</b>		
6.2.1 Identify components and timeframe for completing the work.	2018	The Housing Assistance Unit created a Racial Equity Team and is working with a consultant to launch a work plan. Results will be included in future state homeless housing strategic plan updates.
<b>6.3 Produce recommendations</b>		
6.3.1 Include remedies in the future State Homeless Housing Strategic Plan update.	2018	Commerce Local Plan <a href="#">Guidance</a> requires that counties update local plans to address racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness by initially completing an analysis with state data in a racial equity tool. This information was due to Commerce in December 2019.

# Planning, Reporting, Auditing and Procuring

## State Strategic Plan and Local Homeless Plans

- Commerce produced an updated 2019-2024 State Homeless Housing Strategic Plan<sup>43</sup> in 2019 and will publish intermittent updates through 2024.
- Commerce released Local Homeless Plan guidance in December 2018 and secured a technical assistance provider for local governments; updated plans are due from local governments to Commerce by December 2019.
- Commerce will evaluate and post Local Homeless Plans on the Commerce website and will provide technical assistance to local governments whose plans do not meet state guidance.

## State and Federal Reporting

Annually, Commerce completes, at a minimum, seven reports required in RCW 43.185C and 11 reports to the federal government on homeless housing expenditures and program data. More information about these reports is on our website:

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/rwaar1byzlxp1obrb2cikhnlmq1rg2jr>

## Audits

The Washington State Office of Financial Management is procuring an independent expenditure review of state funds received under RCW 36.22.179(1) beginning in February 2020.

More information on state audits and examinations of Commerce's management of the homeless funding and programming is on our website: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>

## Procurement

### HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Emergency Solutions Grant

Annually, Commerce completes an action plan to secure federal HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance and Emergency Solutions Grant homeless housing funding. The annual action plan and 5-year Consolidated Plan for ESG and HOME TBRA funding is on the following webpage:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/community-development-block-grants/cdbg-consolidated-plan-action-plan/>

### Balance of State Continuum of Care

In addition, Commerce applies for Continuum of Care (CoC) funding on behalf of the Balance of State (BoS). HUD awarded the BoS CoC all its renewal projects for FFY 2019, including three new projects through the 2018 CoC competition, for a total of \$8,049,065. Those new projects will start around the

---

<sup>43</sup> Washington State Department of Commerce, "Homeless Housing Crisis Response System Strategic Plan 2019-2024"

middle of 2019 and be eligible for renewal on an annual basis. The BoS also received \$4.63 million in YHDP funding for two years. Those projects will start in October 2019, and services will be in almost every BoS county. Roughly, half of those funds will be renewable on an annual basis in the CoC competition, starting in 2020. More information on the CoC funding is located on the following webpage: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/continuum-of-care/>

**Table 3: Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) Grant Funds**

FFY 2019 Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)	FFY 2019 HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)	FFY 2018 BoS CoC Program	FFY 2018 BoS CoC Program Bonus Funds	FFY 2017 BoS Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP)
\$5,465,582	\$2,359,780	\$8,049,065	\$752,421	\$4,630,000

## Interagency Council on Homelessness

In 2019, the Interagency Council on Homelessness work included development and review of the state’s updated strategic plans, cross-agency implementation of the Foundation Community Supports program, and implementation of the [Trueblood settlement](#).<sup>44</sup> Additional details on the work of the Council can be found here: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/about-us/boards-and-commissions/homeless-councils/>

---

<sup>44</sup> Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, "Trueblood et al v. Washington State DSHS," <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/bha/trueblood-et-al-v-washington-state-dshs>

# Appendix A: Organizational Outline

## Overview

The Department of Commerce Housing Assistance Unit is divided into several offices in response to legislative requirements and responsibilities.

**Table 5: Offices Within the Housing Assistance Unit**

Housing Assistance Unit				
Office of Family & Adult Homelessness	Office of Homeless Youth Prevention & Protection Programs	Office of Supportive Housing	Performance Office	Balance of State Continuum of Care and Reporting Office

## Office of Family and Adult Homelessness

The Office of Family and Adult Homelessness (OFAH) administers state and federal fund sources granted to local governments and nonprofits.

**Table 6: Fund Sources of Office of Family and Adult Homelessness Managed Grants**

Grant	Fund Source
Consolidated Homeless Grant	Housing surcharge/document recording fee
Housing and Essential Needs	General fund state
Homeless Student Stability Program	General fund state
HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance	Federal
Emergency Solutions Grant	Federal

You can learn more about the OFAH on the Commerce website:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/office-of-family-and-adult-homelessness/>

## Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs

The Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) Prevention and Protection Programs administers state fund sources granted to local governments and nonprofits. These include:

- Crisis Residential Centers
- HOPE Centers
- Independent Youth Housing Program

- Street Youth Services
- Young Adult Shelter
- Youth Adult Housing Program

You can learn more about the OHY on the Commerce website: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/office-of-youth-homelessness/>

## Office of Supportive Housing

The Office of Supportive Housing administers the Landlord Mitigation Program and HUD 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration Grant. You can learn more about the Landlord Mitigation Program on the Commerce website at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/landlord-fund-programs/> and the HUD 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration Grant at [www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/hud-section-811-rental-assistance/](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/hud-section-811-rental-assistance/).

## Performance Office

The Performance Office produces the Homeless System Performance Reports and County Report Cards, Dashboards on homeless interventions, and more. This office also leads compliance efforts with the low-barrier and coordinated entry requirements for Consolidated Homeless Grant grantees. You can learn more about how this office provides information on the homeless system performance on the Commerce website at <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/homeless-system-performance/>.

## Balance of State Continuum of Care and Reporting Office

The Balance of State Continuum of Care and Reporting Office works with 34 counties represented in the Balance of Washington State Continuum of Care to submit a consolidated application for funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. You can read more about the Balance of State Continuum of Care on the Commerce website at <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/continuum-of-care/>.

## Homeless Management Information System

In addition, this office administers the state's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). It provides front-end solutions for the Balance of State and King County Continuums, as well as data integration technology to bring the other continuum data into the statewide database. HMIS is the data source for most of the information used in Commerce's performance reports. Homeless housing service providers use HMIS to collect and manage data gathered while providing housing assistance to people experiencing homelessness. You can read more about HMIS on the following webpage: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/hmis/>.

## Appendix B: Homeless Housing Project Expenditure and Data Report

RCW 43.185C.045 requires that each county in Washington report all expenditures by funding sources (federal, state and local) for homeless housing projects in their community. Commerce combines expenditures data with Homeless Management Information System data to create an even more comprehensive report that not only reports expenditures but also links it to outcomes.

In state fiscal year 2019, 1,992 projects spent \$311,086,070 assisting 137,721 households who were homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. The table below summarizes the number of beds and cost per intervention.

**Table 7: Homeless Housing Project Expenditures for State Fiscal Year 2019**

Service Type	Beds	Total Expenditures	Cost per day per Household	Cost per successful exit per Household
Rapid Rehousing	5,089	\$43,889,354	\$30.74	\$10,096
Emergency Shelter	11,054	\$68,442,099	\$36.77	\$11,114
Transitional Housing	4,427	\$22,916,031	\$28.98	\$15,805
Homeless Prevention	15,058	\$38,880,842	\$16.55	\$4,202
Permanent Supportive Housing	11,745	\$78,132,749	\$30.21	n/a
Other Permanent Housing	4,512	\$15,006,433	\$12.23	n/a
Street Outreach	7,196	\$7,604,282	n/a	n/a
Services Only	20,935	\$17,248,385	n/a	n/a

You can find the state fiscal year 2019 homeless housing project expenditure and data report on the following webpage: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>

You can find out how the Performance Office uses the expenditure and data on the following webpage: [www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/homeless-system-performance/](http://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/homeless-system-performance/).

# Appendix C: State-Funded Homeless Housing Reports

Several RCWs require Commerce to report on expenditures, performance, and outcomes of state funds for the following:

- Consolidated Homeless Grant: RCW 43.285C.045
- Housing and Essential Needs: RCW 43.185C.220
- Homeless Student Stability Program: RCW 43.185C.340
- Independent Youth Housing program: RCW 43.63A.311

Commerce reports include the grant recipient and service area, expenditures, interventions and number of households assisted. They may also include additional specific information required in each RCW.

You can find the state fiscal year 2019 state-funded homeless housing reports on the following webpage: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>

## Appendix D: Landlord Sampling Report

RCW 43.185C.240 requires that Commerce develop a sampling method to obtain data and report by county on the following:

- Type of landlord receiving services
- Number of households
- Number of people in households
- Number of payments
- Total of payments
- Number of households receiving eviction prevention payments
- Number of people in households receiving eviction prevention payments
- Number of eviction prevention payments
- Total of eviction prevention payments

You can find the state fiscal year 2018 Landlord Sampling Report on the following webpage:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/state-strategic-plan-annual-report-and-audits/>.

## Appendix E: Point-in-Time Count

RCW 43.185c.045 requires that Commerce report on the annual homeless point-in-time census conducted under RCW 43.185C.030. Each county is required to conduct an annual one-day survey of people who are without permanent housing. The 2019 count took place on Jan. 24, 2019, and the results were released in May 2019.

Count results by county are located on the Commerce website at <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/homelessness/annual-point-time-count/>.