



Local Coordination to Support People with Disabilities Experiencing Homelessness

The disability network is an integral partner in the homelessness response system. Like the disability network, the homelessness response system brings together various resources and program models to meet people where they are, integrate supportive services, and provide the right intervention(s) in the right amount of time to end their experience of homelessness.

Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, Continuums of Care across California provided housing and services to 335,406 individuals experiencing homelessness. Of those¹:

- 47% reported a disabling condition,
- 19% reported a significant chronic health condition,
- 24% indicated a significant mental health condition, and
- 17% reported a physical disability.

These numbers highlight the value and importance of collaboration across systems to serve mutual consumers.

Homelessness Response System

In each community, the Continuum of Care (CoC) sits at the center of the homelessness response system. Continuums of Care (CoCs) are administrative entities defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—all but three of the 44 CoCs in California are geographically defined by counties or collections of counties—that coordinate homelessness services, administer some federal and state funding, and operate Homeless Management Information Systems and Coordinated Entry Systems.

CoCs are organized in different ways. Many CoC lead agencies are local governments, some are nonprofit coordinating entities, and others are joint-power authorities between city and county governments. The needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness span many systems—housing, healthcare, social welfare, employment,

¹California Interagency Council on Homelessness's Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS). note persons may be counted more than once in each category totaling more than 100%

education, criminal justice—but the extent to which these systems coordinate with homelessness services varies.²

The CoC is led by a board with representatives from community stakeholders, which may include local government agencies, public housing authorities, nonprofit organizations, private service providers, health care, landlords, businesses, and agencies within the aging and disability network. The CoC program is designed to promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness; improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness; improve data collection and performance measurement; and allow each community to tailor its programs to the strengths and challenges in assisting individuals and families experiencing homelessness within that community.

Nonprofit providers	Faith-based organizations	Victim services providers	Local government
Public housing agencies	School districts and Higher education	Aging and Disability Network	Social services providers
Behavioral health providers	Local health jurisdictions	Employers	Emergency responders
Affordable housing developers	Law enforcement	People with lived experience	Advocates

Continuum of Care and Coordinated Entry

The CoC sits at the core of an effective homelessness response system by funding housing and services projects within a community focused on moving people to stable housing and maximizing self-sufficiency.

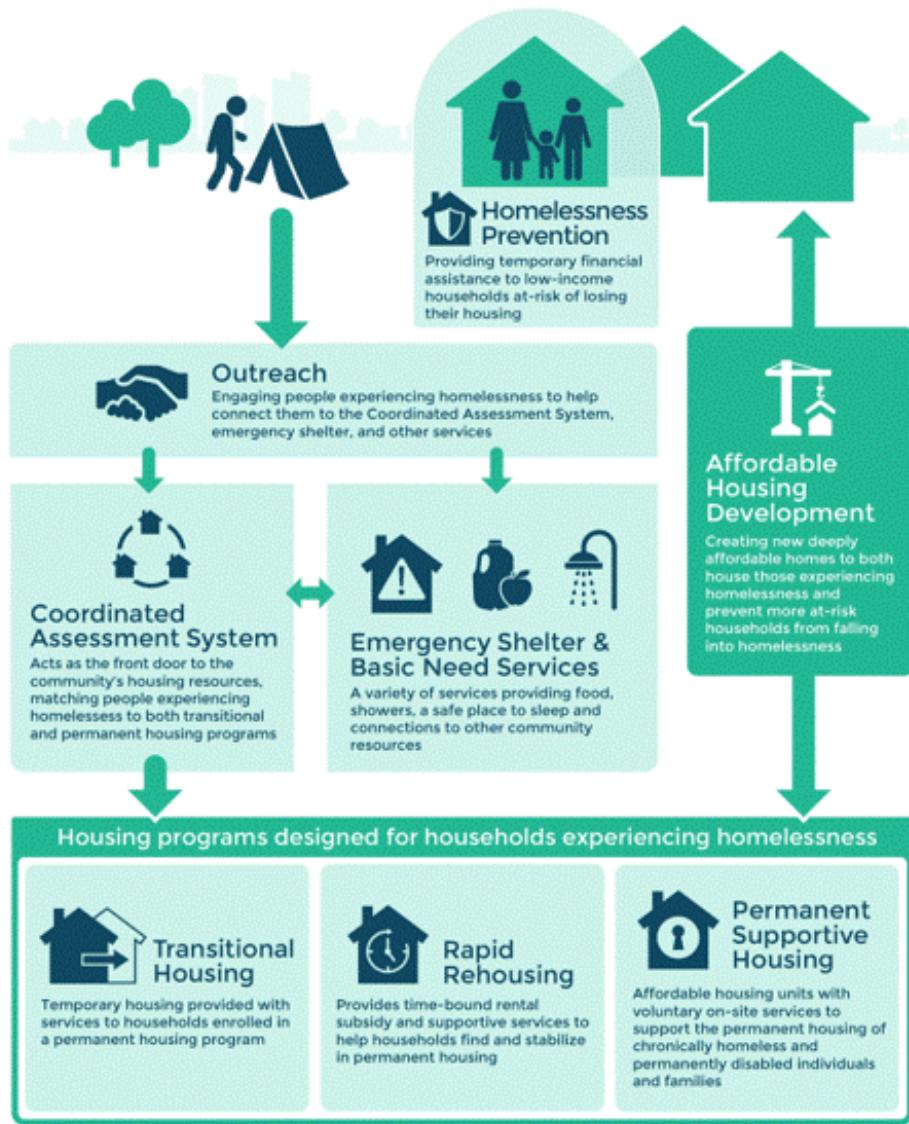
CoC funds may be used for projects under five program components: permanent housing, transitional housing, supportive services only, a Homeless Management Information System, and homeless prevention in some cases.

CoCs conduct a Point-in-Time (PIT) count of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness on a single night in January. The PIT Count is a nationwide effort mandated by HUD and is reported to Congress in the [Annual Homeless Assessment Report \(AHAR\)](#). The report reflects a single-night snapshot of homelessness in America and provides national, state, CoC level, and Housing Inventory Count (HIC) estimates. This information is used to allocate state and federal resources and assist communities in local planning.

² [Statewide Homelessness Assessment \(July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021\) Report to the Legislature \(ca.gov\)](#)

The *Supportive Housing System Map*³ represents housing and supportive services that may be funded through a Continuum of Care. This may include homelessness prevention to support those who are at imminent risk of homelessness and outreach with people experiencing homelessness to connect individuals to Coordinated Entry to access housing and supportive services that may include transitional housing, rapid rehousing, or permanent supportive housing. Also depicted is the construction of new affordable housing which leads to long-term housing stability.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SYSTEM MAP



HUD also requires that CoC programs design and use a Coordinated Entry process (CE) in their service area. CE is a shared, standardized process developed by each CoC to connect people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness with services and

³ Image Credit: Cesar Ramirez for Destination: Home Silicon Valley

resources available in their community and is intended to assist communities in prioritizing people who are most in need of assistance.

California is a Housing First state and requires programs that receive state homelessness funds to utilize a Housing First approach. Housing First prioritizes getting individuals and families into their choice of stable and permanent housing quickly and without conditions or requirements and focuses on reducing barriers to obtain and secure housing. Housing First recognizes that safe and stable housing enables individuals to focus on and achieve other longer-term aspirations⁴.

While the CE process is standardized within a CoC service area, the process varies from one CoC to another. Although the process is unique to each CoC service area, each CE process shares the following:

- Low barrier entry point(s) either through a single access point (e.g., 2-1-1) or several coordinated entry points, such as local service providers (e.g., aging and disability network providers)
- Standardized assessment process
- Referrals to match people to services and supports
- Prioritization based on eligibility and vulnerability
- Shared data system

According to the CoC Program Interim Rule which focuses on regulatory implementation, there are four categories of homelessness⁵:

- [Literally Homeless](#)
- [Imminent Risk of Homelessness](#)
- [Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes](#) (unaccompanied youth under 25)
- [Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence](#)

Through CE, persons experiencing homelessness will participate in an assessment, which is intended to ensure resources are allocated to those most in need. During the assessment process, disability status may determine eligibility for specific housing projects and the immediacy of prioritization. For example, permanent supportive housing funded by the CoC may require verification of disability for entry into the project.

HUD's definition of disability states an individual must have one or more of the following:

⁴WIC Section 8255.d.1

⁵ <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/coc-esg-virtual-binders/coc-esg-homeless-eligibility/four-categories/>

- A physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury that:
 - Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration;
 - Substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; and
 - Could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions.
- A developmental disability, as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002).

Coordinated Entry is intended to allow individuals to access all necessary services through a single entry point, to develop clearer and more effective coordination of services across the community, and to more quickly match individuals with the services that they need.

Collaboration with the CoC

Collaboration between the disability network and the homelessness response system is an opportunity to leverage expertise, mobilize resources, expand the network, and serve persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness.

Leverage Expertise

Multiple opportunities exist to get started. Taking the time to invest and build relationships is key. Consider:

- Participating in the Point-in-Time count which usually takes place in January.
- Analyzing your own data to identify trends and gaps in services and resources for persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness.
- Attending regular CoC meetings to share the resources and services provided by your organization and learn more about available resources in your community.
- Identifying strengths and benefits of adding a disability-led program as a CoC partner.
- Using your voice and sharing knowledge of person-centered community living and employment services, how to serve individuals with disabilities, disability-related rights, fair housing law, effective communication strategies, and reasonable accommodations.
- Leveraging your knowledge around the unique needs of individuals with disability to support the homeless response systems to build the capacity to serve people with disabilities.

Mobilize Resources

To maximize limited resources and capacity within the homelessness response system and provider agencies, Independent Living Centers (ILC), Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), and others can provide direct support by:

- Assisting individuals with disabilities in completing CoC assessments and applications by becoming a CES access point.
- Being a conduit of information, such as sharing notifications about housing vouchers and other services as they become available.
- Educating persons experiencing homelessness on how to access housing.
- Providing assistive technology and home modifications to support people with disabilities in maintaining and achieving their housing goals.
- Providing services that support persons experiencing homelessness post-housing for them to meet goals related to community living, employment, and in other aspects of life.
- Provide needed resources for career development and employment as a road out of poverty so that individuals with disabilities can gain and maintain stable housing.

Expand the Network

By expanding the network, communities create a shared commitment to expand housing for persons with disabilities experiencing homelessness. Opportunities include:

- Building relationships and referrals that increase access to wraparound services for mutually served populations.
- Developing expertise in navigating the homelessness response system.
- Educating homelessness service providers about the unique needs and barriers faced by persons with disabilities.
- Establishing relationships with local leaders.
- Look into formal partnerships or agreements to create and expand accessible and affordable housing and supportive services.

Make the Connection

Stable, secure housing reinforces the success of independent living and vocational rehabilitation services. Connecting with the CoC in your area expands and grows the support system for persons with disabilities, getting and keeping them housed.

Like CoC service areas, the ILCs and Department of Rehabilitation's Vocational Rehabilitation (DOR VR) offices are not always defined by geography (county lines). The table below maps the ILC and DOR VR offices with the local CoC. Many CoCs host monthly meetings that are open to the public and are listed on their websites. The California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) website has a listing of [CoC Points of Contact](#) for inquiries about services for people experiencing homelessness. Visit

the [California Department of Rehabilitation's Contact Us web page](#) to find your local DOR VR office, ILC, Blind Field Offices, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services.

County(ies) Served	ILC Website	CoC Website	DOR District Office
Alameda	The Center for Independent Living (CIL) Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL)	Everyone Home Alameda	Greater East Bay
Alpine El Dorado Placer	Placer Independent Resource Services	Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care. El Dorado Opportunity Knocks Board Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras	Northern Sierra
Amador Calaveras Mariposa San Joaquin Stanislaus Tuolumne	Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living	Central Sierra Continuum of Care San Joaquin Continuum of Care Stanislaus Community System of Care	San Joaquin Valley Northern Sierra
Butte Glenn Lassen Modoc Plumas Shasta	Disability Action Center	Butte Countywide Continuum of Care NorCal Continuum of Care Dos Rios Continuum of Care	Redwood Empire Northern Sierra

County(ies) Served	ILC Website	CoC Website	DOF District Office
Siskiyou Tehama		Tehama County Continuum of Care	
Colusa Nevada Sierra Sutter Yuba	FREED Center for Independent Living	Dos Rios Continuum of Care Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras Plumas-Sierra Counties Continuum of Care Consortium Continuum of Care Sutter - Yuba Homeless	Northern Sierra
Contra Costa Solano	Independent Living Resources in Solano & Contra Costa County	Contra Costa Continuum of Care Community Action Partnership - Solano Joint Powers Authority	Greater East Bay
Del Norte Humboldt Trinity	Tri-County Independent Living (TCIL)	NorCal Continuum of Care Humboldt Housing & Homelessness Coalition Dos Rios Continuum of Care	Redwood Empire
Fresno Kings Tulare Madera Merced	Resources for Independence Central Valley	Fresno Madera Continuum of Care on Homelessness Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance Merced City and County Continuum of Care	San Joaquin Valley

County(ies) Served	ILC Website	CoC Website	DOR District Office
Imperial San Diego	Access to Independence	Imperial Valley Continuum of Care Council Regional Task Force on Homeless (RTFH)	Inland Empire San Diego
Inyo Mono San Bernardino	Rolling Start	Eastern Sierra Continuum of Care San Bernardino County Homeless Partnership	Inland Empire
Kern	Independent Living Center of Kern County	Bakersfield-Kern Regional Homeless Collaborative	San Joaquin
Los Angeles	Disabled Resources Center, Inc. Communities Actively Living Independent & Free Disability Community Resource Center Independent Living Center of Southern California Service Center for Independent Life Southern California Resource Services for Independent Living (scrs-ilc.org)	Pasadena Partnership to End Homelessness	Van Nuys/Foothills Orange/San Gabriel
Marin	Marin Center for Independent Living	Marin Health and Human Services Homeless Policy Steering Committee	San Francisco

County(ies) Served	ILC Website	CoC Website	DOF District Office
Mendocino Lake Napa Sonoma	<u>Disability Services & Legal Center</u>	<u>Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care</u> <u>Napa City and County Continuum of Care</u> <u>Lake County Continuum of Care, California</u> <u>Sonoma County Homeless Coalition</u>	Redwood Empire
Monterey San Benito Santa Cruz	<u>Central Coast Center for Independent Living</u>	<u>The Coalition of Homeless Service Providers</u> <u>Santa Cruz County Housing for Health Partnership</u>	San Jose
Orange	<u>Dayle McIntosh Center</u>	<u>Orange County Continuum of Care</u>	Orange/San Gabriel
Riverside	<u>Community Access Center</u>	<u>Riverside County Continuum of Care</u>	Inland Empire
Sacramento Yolo	<u>Resources for Independent Living</u>	<u>Sacramento Steps Forward</u> <u>Yolo County Homeless and Poverty Action Coalition (HPAC)</u>	Northern Sierra
San Francisco	<u>Independent Living Resource Center of San Francisco (ILRCSF)</u>	<u>San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing</u>	San Francisco

County(ies) Served	ILC Website	CoC Website	DOR District Office
San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara Ventura	Independent Living Resource Center of Santa Barbara	County of San Luis Obispo Homeless Services Oversight Council Santa Barbara County Continuum of Care Program Ventura County Continuum of Care Alliance	Santa Barbara
San Mateo	Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities (CID)	San Mateo County Continuum of Care	San Francisco
Santa Clara	Silicon Valley Independent Living Center	County of Santa Clara Office of Supportive Housing	San Jose

This resource was developed in collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), in accordance with the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#) activities to educate Continuum of Care (CoC) organizations across California to connect individuals with disabilities to DOR employment services that can be provided to people with disabilities who are being served within the homelessness response systems' housing and services programs(1.4.9) and increase awareness and knowledge of DOR employment staff about Cal ICH...homelessness services and support for cross-coordination of services for individuals experiencing homelessness (1.4.16).

Updated: March 2024