



Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

Reduce the Average Length of Homelessness

Goal Leader:

David C. Woll, Jr., Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development

Overview

Goal Statement

- Reduce the average length of homelessness in communities by an average of 3 days by the end of FY 2019.

Challenge

- Today's housing affordability crisis creates a more difficult environment for people experiencing homelessness to get back into housing. This is especially true in communities that have experienced an increase in unsheltered homelessness.
- Rural communities face unique barriers when combating homelessness, including serving large and dispersed geographic regions. Continuum of Care (CoC) program requirements and eligible activities should include greater consideration for rural community needs.

Opportunity

- HUD will support technical assistance (TA) and explore regulatory and legislative fixes to allow communities to customize their solutions to ending homelessness. HUD will use strategies learned from the more than 77 communities and three states that have effectively ended veteran homelessness to target CoC and other HUD-assisted housing resources to those with the highest need.

Leadership

Core Team:

David C. Woll, Jr., Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Community Planning and Development

Jemine Bryon, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Special Needs
Office of Community Planning and Development

Norm Suchar, Director
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs
Office of Community Planning and Development

Goal Structure & Strategies

HUD aims to more quickly help Americans who become homeless to ensure such experiences are brief and non-recurring. We will coordinate with local communities, businesses, and philanthropic organizations to target homeless resources and other mainstream housing resources to the most vulnerable populations.

The proof exists that we can end homelessness. To date, more than 77 communities and three states have declared an effective end to veteran homelessness; four communities have ended chronic homelessness.

HUD will push to continue this movement by applying lessons learned from the work on veteran homelessness, and best practices from local communities that are rolling out innovative, cost-effective solutions on a national scale. Knowledge will be shared across communities through several targeted TA efforts, each customized to serve the target community and population.

Summary of Progress – FY19 Q4

The technical assistance initiatives outlined in the FY20 Annual Performance Plan (APP) are proceeding. HUD is providing targeted community technical assistance to implement initiatives for households moving from permanent supportive housing to other subsidized rental assistance, as well as for unsheltered and rural populations.

HUD has been able to consolidate many functions in the CoC Program competition to reduce burdens on applicants, and continues to look for more opportunities to streamline activities. A number of changes were made in the FY 2018 and 2019 CoC NOFAs. Initial accomplishments are highlighted in a write-up related to CAP Goal 6 and posted on the HUD Exchange:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HUD-CoC-Re-Imagining.pdf>.

Over Q4, HUD has been focused on conducting the annual CoC competition and making awards for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Cohort 3 and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) grants.

FY18-19 APG Summary of Progress

HUD's FY18-19 APG was to reduce the average length of homelessness in communities by an average of three days from FY 2018 to the end of FY 2020.

This is a long-term indicator with many factors contributing to its success. In FY19, HUD received corrected data for FY17 for one major CoC along with the FY18 data; the national average length of homelessness had increased for FY17 with this new data included. However, it did decrease by 6 days from FY17 to FY18, showing a positive trend. HUD will not have data for FY19 until August 2020. HUD continues to work with its federal, state, and local partners to decrease the average length of homelessness.

Key Milestones

Create an unsheltered homelessness strategy that targets technical assistance and other resources to communities that have had large increases in unsheltered homelessness.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Comments
Publish Notice for Further Comment on the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Interim Rule.	9/30/2020	Delayed	Y	The notice has nearly completed HUD's internal clearance process. However, the anticipated publication date has been delayed due to capacity challenges. HUD anticipates that it will be published by the end of FY20.
Publish Emergency Solutions Grants Final Rule.	9/30/2020	Delayed	Y	This due date has been pushed back from April 2019. HUD is still working to finalize the ESG Final Rule and anticipates publication in FY20.
Based on analysis of data on those experiencing unsheltered homelessness, publish a policy brief that will help communities understand the challenges of the population and identify solutions to address their needs.	12/31/2019	On Track	N	This work is on track.

Key Milestones

Implement cost-effective strategies across Continuums of Care (CoCs) and other HUD-assisted housing resources that target resources to those with the highest need.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Comments
Start providing targeted community technical assistance (TA) to implement initiatives for households moving from permanent supportive housing to other subsidized rental assistance.	3/1/2019	Complete	N	The selected communities are currently receiving TA.
Publish case studies and best practices from targeted TA communities.	9/30/2020	On Track	N	Case studies and best practices will be published as they are completed.

Key Milestones

Build capacity in rural communities to coordinate services and increase access for persons experiencing homelessness.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Comments
Consolidate many functions in the CoC Program Competition to reduce burden on applicants.	5/31/2018	Complete	N	The NOFA for FY 2018 was published on June 6, 2018. This NOFA contained many consolidated functions, and HUD has continued streamlining efforts for the CoC Program.
Publish matrix of rural resources available across all federal agencies.	3/31/2019	Complete	N	Matrix was issued April 30.
For the FY20 CoC Program application, assess questions to ensure that they take into account rural circumstances.	12/31/2019	On Track	N	This work is on track.

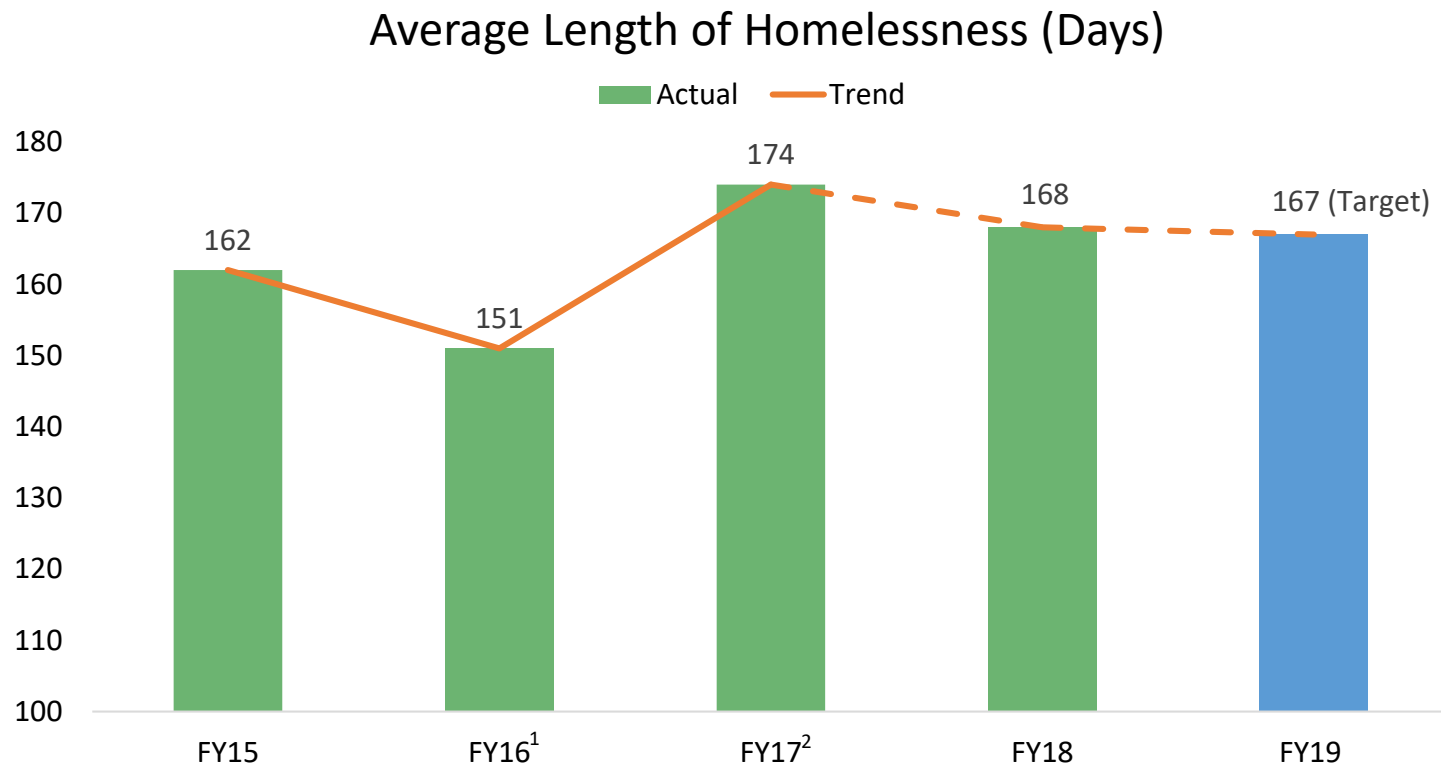
Key Milestones

Target HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) to the most vulnerable veterans experiencing homelessness.

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Change from last quarter	Comments
Have criteria and structure in place to reallocate HUD-VASH vouchers to meet current needs among veterans.	12/31/2018	Paused	N	HUD has the authority to reallocate HUD-VASH vouchers from PHAs that voluntarily declare they no longer have a need or for PHAs with low utilization rates. However, at this time HUD has paused its efforts related to reallocation of existing vouchers, pending further assessment. HUD is focusing on changes to better target the allocation of new vouchers.

Key Indicators – Average Length of Homelessness

This measure tracks the national average length of homelessness in CoCs. This represents the weighted average across approximately 400 CoCs for all projects within their community.



¹ FY 2016 Los Angeles data was adjusted, affecting the national average by one day. This resulted in a new figure of 151 for FY2016.
² In FY17, HUD excluded the system performance measures data from Los Angeles due to known data quality errors resulting from a change in HMIS vendor. Los Angeles resubmitted data for FY17 in FY18 and HUD has revised the national number to include this new data.

Data Accuracy and Reliability

Length of homelessness

- Description: Average length of time persons experience homelessness. At this time, only persons experiencing sheltered homelessness are included in this measure; future data submissions will include persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness as well.
- Data source: Data collected in each Continuum of Care's (CoC's) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Data is reported as "System Performance Measures" into the Homelessness Data Exchange (HDX).
- Calculation method: Each CoC is required to collect data and report to HUD annually on specific system performance measures. These measures are based on a set of programming specifications HUD provided to communities to ensure consistency: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4483/system-performance-measures-tools/>.
- Data quality (limitations/advantages of the data): Data is relatively comprehensive as CoCs must report data regardless of funding source. The data is limited by how many projects report their data in HMIS and how accurate their data quality is. HUD requires each CoC to track null and missing value information as well as other data quality concerns. The rates of data quality issues per each response element that impacts the system performance measures is submitted to HUD at the time that the measures are submitted. HUD reviews this and includes the data quality piece in its larger evaluation of the system performance measures.
- Validation, verification, and improvement of measure: HUD includes the System Performance Measures in its annual CoC Program Competition, along with data quality and HMIS bed coverage information. This creates incentives to have accurate data as well as to show improved outcomes. Because this process is relatively new (only 2 reporting cycles to date with system performance measures), HUD knows there are data quality concerns, both with the data entered into HMIS as well as with the reporting features of the CoCs' HMIS. HUD will continue to include this as a scoring factor and will incorporate it into more reporting requirements. HUD will provide more resources to improve data quality. HUD provided programming specifications to ensure consistency and will provide more resources to help CoCs test the accuracy of their systems to pull the data.

Additional Information

Contributing Programs

Organizations:

- HUD Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs
- HUD Office of Public and Indian Housing
- HUD Office of Multifamily Housing Programs
- US Interagency Council on Homelessness
- US Department of Veteran Affairs

HUD Program Activities:

- Continuum of Care Program
- Emergency Solutions Grants Program
- HUD-VA Supportive Housing Program
- Public Housing
- Housing Choice Vouchers
- Multifamily Housing Programs

Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations

HUD works closely with local communities through the CoC Program to support tailored programs that best meet a community's needs.