



**ST. LOUIS
COUNTY
CONTINUUM
OF CARE
ANNUAL
REPORT**

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LETTER FROM THE ST LOUIS COUNTY HOUSING AND HOMELESS PROGRAMS UNIT

Dear community members,

We are excited to be sharing our first official St. Louis County Continuum of Care (CoC) Annual Heading Home Advisory Council (HHAC) Report! The data, needs and disparities are serious. We are working steadfast across the CoC with all of you to address and co-create systemic changes through a holistic lens that centers the voices of people with lived experience.

I am incredibly grateful to work with such a dedicated team (all of you) who want to do things differently; to truly shift the narrative of what so many of our relatives and community members face - to be able to meet people where they are at on many levels in addition to where they are living (whether that be outside, shelter, supportive, or permanent housing).

While the past two years have been and continue to be beyond heavy, there is hope and successes to lift up and celebrate to keep moving us forward. It is our wish that you will find a balance within this report that reflects the reality of our community; hardship, inequities, and systemic oppression as well as the incredible effort of passionate advocates, service providers and developers driving change. We have a lot of work to do but I am inspired and excited by the good things to come in partnership and solidarity with you all.

With deep gratitude,
Laura Birnbaum



Members of the SLC Housing & Homeless Programs

- Laura Birnbaum
- Courtney Cochran
- Stacy Radosevich
- Kevin Radzak
- Tawney Carlson

SLC Housing & Homeless Programs Team Values statement

We follow and believe in Housing First, Community First and harm reduction principles. We move forward in our work with cultural humility and are always striving to be culturally responsive and trauma informed.

Members of SLC CoC Governance Board Heading Home Advisory Council (HHAC)

- Salaam Witherspoon
- Elizabeth Sorenson
- Shelly Lynn Holmes
- Angie Neal
- Kimberly Scanlon
- Pam Hughes
- Kassie Helgerson
- Theresa Drift
- Pat Leary
- Paul Pederson
- Kristy Ekhart
- Katy O'Sullivan
- Victoria Nugent
- Deb Holleman

With a big thank you to members of HHAC who recently stepped down, but served a huge role in the sustainability of our CoC including

- Nathan Thompson
- Cynthia Finley
- Heather Lindula
- David O'Leary



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We know that American Indian people, People of African Heritage, Black, Indigenous and People of Color disproportionately experience homelessness and housing instability due to systemic racism and oppression. It is of the utmost importance that we acknowledge the lands that we reside on and the trauma that has and continues to occur in order to better serve in a culturally responsive, trauma informed and person-centered approach as we work to end homelessness. We collectively acknowledge that St. Louis County is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. Our buildings reside on land that was cared for and called home by the Ojibwe people, before them the Dakota and Northern Cheyenne people, and other Native peoples from time immemorial. Ceded by the Ojibwe in an 1854 treaty, this land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region. We recognize and continually support and advocate for the sovereignty of the Native nations in this territory and beyond.

We acknowledge the collective and historical trauma Indigenous People, People of African Heritage, Black, and People of Color have endured and experienced as a result of systemic racism, and we acknowledge our own ignorance and complicity. We have all inherited the repercussions of this unjust system and the impacts and outcomes have rippled forward to what we feel and experience today, including but not limited to the work we do to support people experiencing homelessness and housing instability. We pause for a moment of silence to acknowledge the human lives lost as a result: Amir Locke, Daunte Wright, Isaac McGhie, Elmer Jackson, Elias Clayton, Ahmed Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Estavon Eliofoff and countless other lives of People of African Heritage, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We hold them in our hearts, we honor their lives, and we commit to doing all we can to dismantle racist systems of oppression in our communities, and within ourselves.

By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty and will work to hold the St. Louis County Heading Home Advisory Council and our work accountable to American Indian peoples and nations as well as those communities most impacted by homelessness.

SHELTERED & UNSHELTERED HOMELESSNESS



- 1033 unduplicated individuals accessed emergency shelter throughout 2021.
- No unsheltered PIT count in 2021, but numbers steadily trending upwards in SLC CoC with a 25 percent increase in homelessness from 2015-2020, with the most growth in unsheltered homelessness.
- 348 sheltered homeless individuals counted during 2021 PIT count.
- For winter season 2020-2021, The Duluth Warming Center saw 566 unique individuals enter the warming center and 82 hotel vouchers were accessed for emergency warming center use in Northern St. Louis County.

HIC COUNT

Project Type	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Permanent Supportive Housing	Other Permanent Housing	Total Bed Count
Total Year Round Beds	222	180	70	537	468	1477

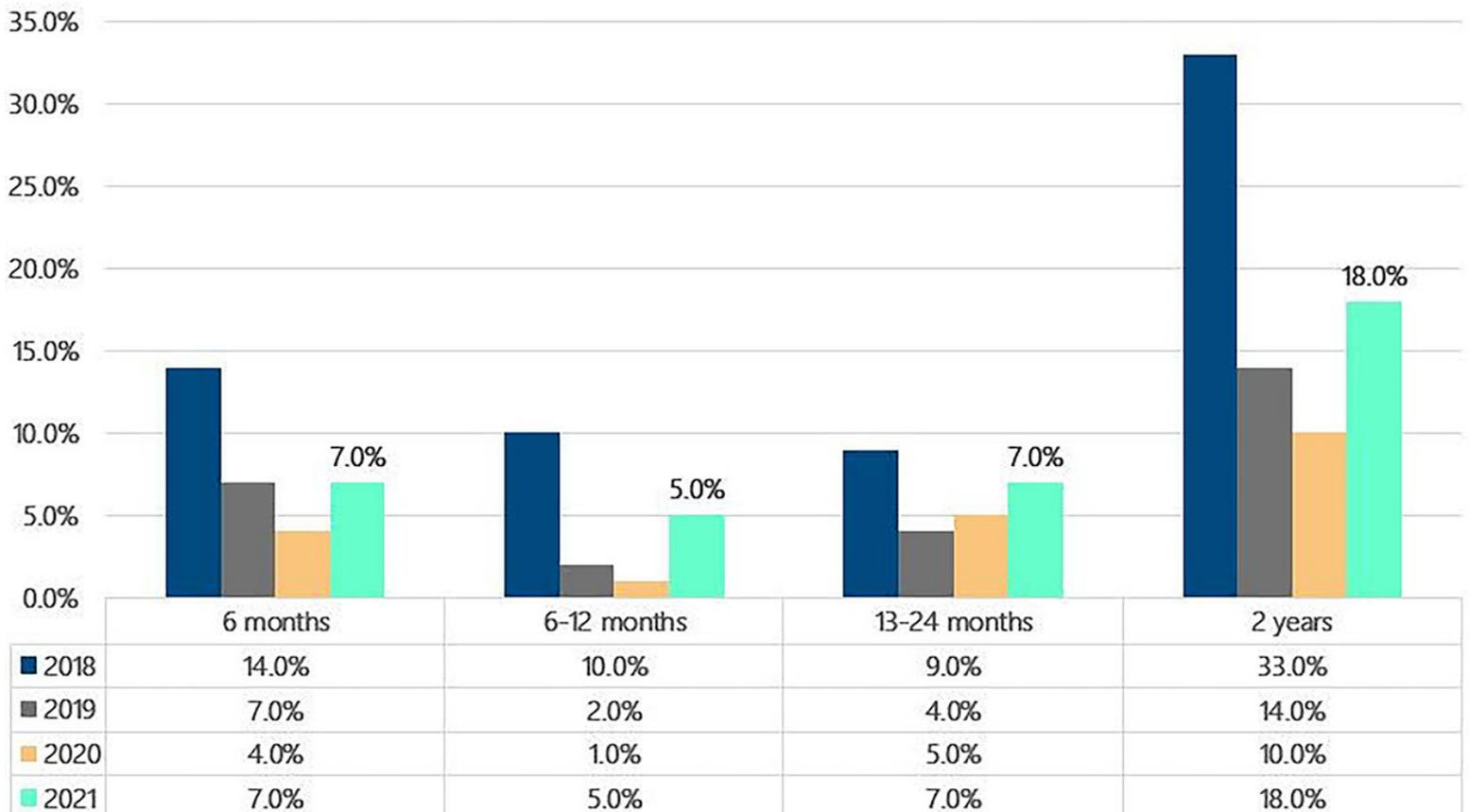
LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS

CY Length of Time Homeless	Current Year Average LOT	Current Year Median LOT
Persons in Emergency Shelter and Safe Haven	51	19
Persons in Emergency Shelter, Safe Haven, and Transitional Housing	114	28



Average length of time homeless increased slightly from 2020 for those in emergency shelter and decreased for those in transitional housing.

RETURNS TO HOMELESSNESS



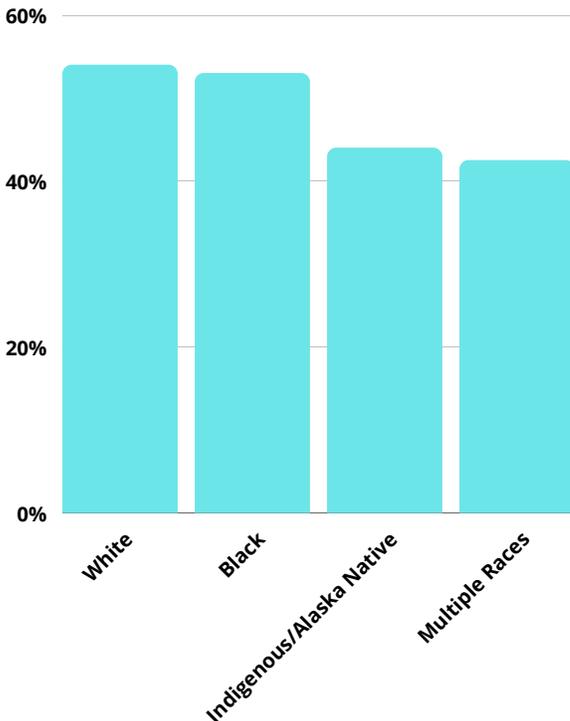
SOURCES: HMIS LENGTH OF TIME HOMELESS REPORT; HUD SPM REPORT

RETURNS TO HOMELESSNESS CONT'D

	Total Number of Persons Exited	Returns to Homelessness between 0 and 365 days	Percentage of Returns between 0 and 365 days
Exits from ES	106	7	6.60%
Exits from TH	81	4	4.94%
Exits from All PH	192	10	5.21%
Exits from HP	549	12	2.19%

SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENT INTO PERMANENT HOUSING:

In 2021, 91% of people in PH retained or exited to PH. This has been a steady number year-to-year for SLC CoC.



IMPROVED EXITS TO PH FOR BIPOC HOUSEHOLDS

- White: 54%
- Black: 53%
- Indigenous/Alaska Native: 44%
- Multiple races: 42.5%

SOURCES: HUD SPM REPORT; HMIS RETURNS TO HOMELESSNESS REPORT; HMIS CORE HOMELESS REPORT

ST. LOUIS COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE

In 2021, St. Louis County Continuum of Care (SLC CoC) participated in the HUD FY2021 Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). St. Louis County received full funding for the 28 renewal grants that were included in the Community Collaborative Application submitted to HUD. SLC CoC did not receive funding for two new grant applications included in the FY2021 Collaborative Application submission. The total SLC CoC grant award for FY2021 was \$613,922. SLC CoC also saw a number of program transfers in 2021 with Duluth & Virginia Housing Authorities transferring project administration to the long-term nonprofit service providers. As a part of this change, CHUM converted the former Shelter Plus Care scattered-site Rental Assistance to 32 units of site-based rental assistance for the newly opened St. Francis Apartments. SLC CoC submitted a collaborative application for HUD's Youth homelessness Demonstration Project grant but did not receive funding this year.

COORDINATED ENTRY SYSTEM

The gateway to the homeless response system and housing prevention in St. Louis County is the Coordinated Entry System. All households who are at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness call 2-1-1. At that time, if they are at risk of losing their housing but able to maintain with some assistance, they are referred to the county triage in their area to begin applying for assistance. A household who is experiencing homelessness or in housing but unable to maintain with some assistance are scheduled an appointment with an assessor in their area. Housing case managers meet with the household, complete the assessment, and begin the process of applying for benefits, provide housing applications and enter the household into HMIS to be entered onto the priority list. As units become available, the priority list managers make the referrals to the program openings.

- 2425 unduplicated persons on SLC CoC Priority list throughout 2021
- 540 individuals were housed in Transitional or Permanent Housing via CES in 2021
- In 2021, roughly 1015 households experiencing homelessness were added to the priority list.

Coordinated Entry 211 data and Rental Assistance 2021 Summary

- Metro 211 scheduled Homeless Assessments = 1287
 - Metro 211 Prevention Referrals = 357
 - Metro 211 Shelter referrals = 412
 - Metro 211 DV referrals = 52

Family Homeless Prevention Assistance Program (FHPAP) 10/1/2021-9/30/2023

Funded through Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA)

Allows for households up to 200% Federal Poverty Guidelines

FHPAP assists families with or without children, single adults, and unaccompanied youth who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. The purpose of the program is to support a comprehensive system to prevent homelessness and to assist people experiencing homelessness. The goals of FHPAP are to:

1. Prevent homelessness
2. Minimize the number of homelessness
3. Eliminate repeated episodes of homelessness.

In St. Louis County, community discussions have established that FHPAP be utilized for rent/deposits and utilities to stabilize households who have experienced a crisis that led to housing instability.

Landlord Incentives Program (LIP) 9/1/2017-8/31/22 5 year pilot

Funded through Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA)

The Landlord Risk Mitigation Pilot grant provides funds to engage targeted landlords in St. Louis County to provide an opportunity for housing. The targeted populations are Homeless singles, families, and youth with a criminal history preventing them from obtaining housing. The program provides a limited claim opportunity (max \$2,000) after use of the tenant damage deposit to mitigate damaged property cost or rental arrears. Community partners are The Salvation Army in Duluth and Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Association (AEOA) in north St. Louis County.

Funds received by MHFA

- Service/Admin contracts = \$94,230
- Claim allotment = \$88,643
- Claims expended = \$13,184.15 >14.8%
- Households served = 34

COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) funds 9/1/2020-2/28/2021

Funded through Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA)
This grant allowed for Household income up to 300% Federal Poverty Guidelines

- Total Assistance allocated: \$1,628,994.52
- Households served 1,087

**FHPAP 7/1/2019-9/31/2021
(27 months)**

**Prevention Households = 502
Rapid Re-Housing Households = 122**

RentHelpMN 3/18/21-1/28/2022

Funded through Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA)

This grant allowed for household income of less than 80% Area Median Income

- Submitted Applications = 2,844
- Requested Assistance = \$12,854,500

Housing Supports

- SLC currently has 23 board and lodge sites and 12 Long Term Homeless Supportive Providers which provides housing for 644 individuals.
- The LTH Program continues to expand. October of 2020 SLC had 154 beds. We currently have 261 beds with more on the way. By July of 2022 we will have had 8 new LTH providers begin services within the past year. The beds provided by these new providers and expansions by existing providers will add an additional 41 beds which expand housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness in SLC.
- The number of Housing Stabilization Services providers is also increasing- these services provide important tenancy sustaining and transition services to individuals to help them find and maintain their housing as well as a much-needed revenue stream for providers for the important work they are doing.

UCare Foundation Grant

- The purpose of the grant project was to provide financial support through an emergency housing fund to individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness who also have behavioral health needs such as mental illness and/or chemical dependency.
- 110 households were served in 2021
- \$95,000 of direct assistance funds were depleted by July of 2021. Payments were made directly to vendors for rent, back rent owed, utilities, security deposits and related fees. These funds were a source of last resort and supported the 110 households to maintain housing or obtain housing when previously living in transition/experiencing homelessness.

Housing with Supports for Adults with Serious Mental Illness (HSASMI)

- HSASMI is a collaborative DHS grant program in northern St. Louis County with partners; Bois Forte, Range Transitional Housing, AEOA, Kanerva Consulting and ACCRA.
- 140 unique households served. All households served were either leaving an institution or segregated setting and would have been/were homeless upon discharge, had experienced long-term transition (for one year or more, or more than four times in the past three years), or were at imminent risk of homelessness.
- Services included outreach, housing transition, tenancy sustaining and connection to behavioral health services and supports.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Housing Grant

- The overarching purpose of the SLC Substance Use Disorders Project (SUD) is to support the coordination and collaboration between SUD providers and Coordinated Entry (CE) providers; including increased training opportunities and technical assistance to link persons in transition experiencing substance use disorders to support services and expedite the process to access and maintain safe housing following Housing First and harm reduction principles. This is a county-wide grant with partners; CHUM, Bois Forte, HDC, Salvation Army and Range Transitional Housing.
- 316 people served in 2021. People served included veterans, people who have experienced long-term and chronic transition/homelessness, people who are justice-involved, victims/survivors of domestic violence and people with disabilities

REACHING FUNCTIONAL ZERO IN VETERAN'S HOMELESSNESS

It is our Mission at the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) to end Veteran homelessness in Minnesota. MACV embraces the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) vision to end Veteran homelessness. This objective is accompanied by criteria and benchmarks for communities that strive to achieve this goal. The goals for communities include: identifying all Veterans experiencing homelessness; providing shelter immediately to an unsheltered Veteran who wants it; providing service-intensive transitional housing only in limited instances; having the capacity to help Veterans swiftly move into permanent housing; and having the resources, plans and partnerships to assist Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the future.

Last year we were reflecting over 25 homeless veterans on the Minnesota Homeless Veteran Registry (HVR) within Saint Louis County (SLC) – the HVR is the states by name veteran list. In the past year, MACV collaborated with all of our partners to help each veteran address their barriers and develop a housing plan that would work for the veteran. Through hours of hard work by our staff and community partners, we were able to take those names off of the HVR and Priority List one by one. When removing a veteran off of the list it indicated that the veteran was moving into housing and had a stability plan in place to address the above parameters to help maintain stable housing and not slip back into homelessness. In order to achieve Functional Zero, we were required to meet benchmarks established by USICH. Having SLC meeting the USICH benchmarks, we are able to celebrate due to the dedicated work within the Saint Louis County CoC. There is still a lot of work to do moving forward with 5 names left on our lists. Currently 8 of the 10 CoCs in Minnesota have successfully declared functional zero, leaving two CoC's – Hennepin and Ramsey. MACV and our partners are aggressively attacking those CoC's in order to become the 5th state to reach the status of Functional Zero.



REAP

We are thrilled to be part of a Statewide Racial Equity Accountability Project (REAP). Our REAP Leadership team is comprised of nine individuals from across St. Louis County who are currently serving as our CoC's community advisory and action group to help ensure that racial disparities in the homeless response system are reduced and ultimately ended. The team is learning from stakeholders and mapping out individual conversations to have with people with lived experience to ensure the group's goals are well informed and align with real need.

Members include:

Justin Reid, John Williams, Jerald Mitchell, Babette Sandman, Jordon Johnson, Louisa Eckstine, Nathaniel Coward, Salaam Witherspoon, and Seraphia Gravelle.

The REAP Leadership team's co-created values are: Liberation, healing, forgiveness, storytelling, trust, vulnerability, equity, persistence



ACRONYM GUIDE

Acronym

Definition

1. AEOA	1. Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency
2. BIPOC	2. Black, Indigenous, and people of color
3. CE/ CES	3. Coordinated Entry/Coordinated Entry System
4. CHAP	4. COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program
5. CHUM	5. Churches United in Ministry
6. CoC	6. Continuum of Care
7. CY	7. Current Year
8. DHS	8. Department of Human Services
9. DV	9. Domestic Violence
10. ES	10. Emergency Shelter
11. FHPAP	11. Family Homeless Prevention Assistance Program
12. HDC	12. Human Development Center
13. HHAC	13. Heading Home Advisory Council
14. HHP	14. Housing and Homeless Programs
15. HIC	15. Housing Inventory Count
16. HMIS	16. Homeless Management Information System
17. HSASMI	17. Housing with Supports for Adults with Serious Mental Illness
18. HUD	18. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
19. LIP	19. Landlord Incentives Program
20. LOT	20. Length of Time
21. LTH	21. Long Term Homeless
22. MACV	22. Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
23. MHFA	23. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency
24. NOFO	24. Notice of Funding Opportunity
25. PH	25. Permanent Housing
26. PIT	26. Point in Time Count
27. REAP	27. Racial Equity Accountability Project
28. SLC	28. St. Louis County (Minnesota)
29. SPM	29. Supplemental Poverty Measure
30. SUD	30. Substance Use Disorder
31. TH	31. Transitional Housing
