
CALLING FOR AN END TO FAMILY HOMELESSNESS IN VERMONT

In support of the national goal of Ending Child and Family Homelessness by 2020, The State of Vermont endorses the following three-part strategy.

A. ADOPT the "*Family Connection*" framework developed by the Interagency Council on Homelessness. Support four key components of an effective homeless Continuum of Care.

1. Develop a [coordinated entry system](#) to assess needs and connect families to [targeted prevention](#) and temporary shelter as needed in each community.

2. Ensure **interventions and assistance are tailored to the needs of families.**

- Provide assistance to [rapidly re-house](#) homeless families.
- Increase access to [affordable housing](#) and help communities target resources.
- Direct [service-intensive housing interventions](#) to the highest need households.

3. [Connect families to benefits, employment, and community-based services needed to sustain housing.](#) Promote stability and positive education outcomes for children and youth by ensuring coordination between local homeless Continuum of Care, homeless education liaisons, runaway and homeless youth programs and organizations providing early education and intervention, such as Head Start.

4. Develop and build upon **evidence-based practices** for serving homeless families and families at risk for homelessness.

B. Bring Together supportive services, housing, and rental assistance to improve housing stability for families, children, landlords and communities.

1. Create a Section 8 **rental subsidy preference** for homeless families participating in Supportive Housing programs.

2. Foster **local partnerships** between service providers and property managers around concrete initiatives such as Rapid Re-Housing, Supportive Housing, and apartments set-aside for the homeless.

3. Encourage **local admissions preferences** for homeless families applying for subsidized housing.

C. CONSTRUCT and rehabilitate rental housing affordable to households with extremely low incomes, and accessible to families and individuals who have experienced homelessness.

1. Promote significant public and private development of rental housing...

a. Work with the Agency of Human Services, local housing and service providers, and continuums of care to prioritize local housing needs and resource allocation.

e. Identify increased development and rental assistance resources paired with support services for family housing, similar to recent initiatives targeted to veterans.

b. Integrate housing with services and rental assistance for the homeless into mixed-income affordable housing development.

f. Encourage communities to support building new rental housing. Encourage municipalities and regional planning commissions to examine their plans for housing with a goal of reducing barriers to appropriately sited housing.

c. Use housing needs and homelessness data to target development and set production goals.

d. Explore alternative and compact designs for new housing, public policy requirements, and State or publically donated property and land to reduce construction and operating costs, thereby addressing the supply gap.

g. Engage in strategies that move current renters to homeownership and improve the rental market for potential renters.

2. ...And Encourage Improvements to Distressed Rental Stock.

a. Work with state and local government to increase the supply of apartments meeting rental habitability standards.

b. Develop a strategy and funding sources to provide incentives and technical assistance to private landlords who bring apartments up to quality standards and into service at affordable rents.