

The Dutchess County Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness

Goals and Strategies

Below are the key goals identified by the group who authored this plan for ending homelessness in Dutchess County:

1. Homelessness Prevention: Increase resources for prevention efforts as the first line of defense in combating homelessness
2. Housing: Expand the availability of safe and affordable housing throughout Dutchess County
3. Supportive Services: Strengthen community supports for formerly homeless individuals and families to ensure housing stability
4. Community Engagement: Increase the investment and involvement of community members in ending homelessness in Dutchess County

Goal #1: Homelessness Prevention: *Increase resources for prevention efforts as the first line of defense in combating homelessness.*

Recommended strategies for the prevention of homelessness:

- Enhance and coordinate a system whereby those at greatest risk of homelessness are identified prior to entering the homeless service system and provide them with appropriate services to ensure that housing stability is maintained
- Maintain and enhance existing homelessness prevention programs to ensure that educational programming, financial literacy and job training is available to all those identified as at risk of homelessness
- Expand training programs targeted to both tenants and landlords that demonstrate reasonable expectations for both parties and offer access to programs and services to better facilitate the landlord-tenant relationship
- Continue efforts to coordinate medical, psychiatric and drug/alcohol treatment discharges so that housing is obtained prior to discharge
- Develop a public-policy campaign to examine local, state and federal policies and their effects on the homeless, impoverished persons and on the overall quality of life in Dutchess County
- Evaluate the outcomes of Dutchess County's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and make modifications to the program design as necessary

Goal #2: Housing: *Expand the availability of safe and affordable housing throughout Dutchess County.*

Recommendations for maintaining and expanding permanent supportive housing programs:

- Advocate for increased federal and state support for subsidized rental assistance, including increasing the availability of Shelter Plus Care, Housing Choice, Section 202 Housing for Seniors, and other supportive housing rental subsidies
- Investigate opportunities for site-based and scattered-site housing in rural communities
- Develop low-demand permanent housing programs for chronically homeless persons
- Expand appropriate housing for special needs populations leaving institutional care to ensure an appropriate transition from an institution to the community
- Develop additional housing options for individuals diverted from, or reentering the community from the criminal justice system
- Advocate for changes to zoning regulations prohibiting the expansion of rooming house/SRO housing for low income/homeless individuals
- Develop additional transitional housing for victims of domestic violence
- Establish a taskforce to explore and monitor effects of senior population on homeless service system in an effort to proactively meet the needs of this aging population
- Enhance rental assistance for households on public assistance
- Create additional affordable housing options for seniors, including HUD Section 202—Housing for Seniors

Recommendations for addressing youth homelessness:

- Expand emergency shelter and transitional housing, with supportive services, for youths age 18-24
- Create a transitional housing program for pregnant and parenting youth
- In conjunction with the juvenile justice/criminal justice system, create a transitional housing program specifically targeted to young, non-violent offenders in an effort to curtail recidivism and introduce ex-offenders to better opportunities

Recommendations for improving housing opportunities for low- to moderate income households:

- Explore inclusionary and incentive zoning as opportunities for developing affordable home-ownership opportunities for low- to moderate-income families
- Establish a local affordable housing trust fund as a means of creating additional low- to moderate-income housing
- Explore the opportunity for establishing a community land bank to streamline property reuse activities
- Reform zoning ordinances throughout Dutchess County to allow for the development of additional affordable, multifamily and rental housing units

Goal #3: Supportive Services: *Strengthen community supports for formerly homeless individuals and families to ensure housing stability.*

Recommended strategies for strengthening supportive services:

- Provide comprehensive work supports, including job training for low-wage workers that leads to meaningful employment opportunities
- Expand high-quality comprehensive case management supports available to formerly homeless persons, or those at risk of homelessness, with necessary life skills for maintaining permanent housing
- Identify and developing a new, user-friendly location for screenings for emergency shelter
- Investigate strategies to increase transportation options for homeless and impoverished Dutchess County residents, particularly those living in the rural areas of the County
- Maintain and expand funding for the treatment and supportive services needed for formerly homeless households to maintain their housing, including treatment for substance use and mental-health disorders, HIV/AIDS, job training and education, and medical and dental care

Goal #4: Community Relations and Engagement: *Engage the Dutchess County community, including the business, education, and faith communities, in the campaign to end homelessness.*

Recommendations for developing community relations and engagement:

- Develop an education program addressing neighborhood concerns about affordable and special needs housing, as well concerns regarding the high concentration of homeless services in the City of Poughkeepsie
- Through continued work with the school-based homeless liaison committee, develop a shared understanding of McKinney-Vento's requirements for schools, how they apply to the Dutchess County education system and how a consistent and coordinated response can be implemented
- Expand meaningful volunteer, mentorship and employee incentive housing programs with the business community
- Establish new methods, including the use of new technologies, for reaching out to neighborhood organizations, community groups and the faith community to increase support for homeless and affordable housing issues
- Review and modify zoning laws that limit the capacity to develop multifamily housing
- Beginning public recognition as November at Homelessness Awareness Month