

DECEMBER 19, 2022

FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Announces Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Today, the Biden-Harris Administration released *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, which sets a bold but achievable goal to reduce homelessness 25 percent by 2025. The plan is the most ambitious effort by any administration to prevent people from becoming homeless, address inequities that disproportionately impact underserved communities, including people of color and other marginalized groups, and help cities and states reduce unsheltered homelessness. To reach that goal, *All In* outlines new strategies to prevent homelessness and increase the supply of housing with supportive services. These strategies build on the proven “Housing First” model— an approach where housing is the first step to a better, safer, and healthier life and serves as a platform for providing services so that people can stay housed. *All In* also sets the foundation for new initiatives, including one to reduce unsheltered homelessness in a cohort of geographically diverse communities that is being announced today.

In the plan, President Biden calls on state and local governments to set their own goals for 2025 and to use *All In* as a blueprint for addressing homelessness in their communities. “My plan offers a roadmap for not only getting people into housing but also ensuring that they have access to the support, services, and income that allow them to thrive,” said President Biden. “It is a plan that is grounded in the best evidence and aims to improve equity and strengthen collaboration at all levels.”

All In builds on the Obama-Biden Administration efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness, including the use of proven strategies that led to a significant drop in homelessness between 2010 and 2016. Unfortunately, between 2016 and the beginning of the pandemic, some of those gains were reversed due to a lack of focus on evidence-based strategies and the number of people experiencing homelessness increased 6%. New data released today by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)[PECE1] shows that further increases in homelessness were largely avoided despite the economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic –in large part because of the Biden administration’s robust response, including critical assistance in the American Rescue Plan and a historic economic recovery. According to

HUD data, 582,462 people were experiencing homelessness on a single night in January 2022 – a slight .3% increase since 2020.

Because the Administration kept the national eviction moratorium in place until August 2021 and support from the American Rescue Plan, evictions were prevented and many vulnerable families were able to stay in their homes. The Emergency Rental Assistance program from the American Rescue Plan delivered over 8 million payments to provide rental or utility assistance to individuals at risk for eviction or housing instability. And, the expanded Child Tax Credit helped drive child poverty to record lows in 2021. As a result, eviction filings remained more than 20 percent below historic averages in the 12 months following the expiration of the national eviction moratorium.

In addition, the *House America* initiative, which leverages federal support for state and local governments provided through the American Rescue Plan, is on track to find permanent housing for more than 100,000 people experiencing homelessness and add more than 20,000 units of affordable housing into the pipeline by the end of December. The Department of Veterans Affairs also recently announced that it will likely exceed its goal of providing 38,000 permanent housing placements to homeless veterans by the end of 2022. President Biden's *Housing Supply Action Plan* announced federal actions designed to create more affordable rental housing that will help close the housing supply gap, which is driving up costs and making it more challenging for Americans to find housing.

Despite overall homelessness remaining relatively flat, the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness—including people living in cars and tents—rose by 3%. This recent rise in unsheltered homelessness stems from a number of factors, including: decades of growing income inequality; rising rents and limited housing supply; the pandemic's impact on shelters and other services; criminalization of homelessness that makes it harder for people to find housing and jobs due to arrest and conviction records; and inadequate access to health care (including mental health and substance use treatment) and job training.

Ending unsheltered homelessness will require a coordinated effort to promote healthy and safe communities where all can live in dignity. Effective practices, such as using an emergency management approach to resolve encampments by rapidly moving people into housing with services and supports, are starting to emerge as national models. Although each community is different, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution, these practices could be successfully replicated in communities facing the growing challenge of unsheltered homelessness.

The White House and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) are announcing a new initiative dedicated to partnering with state and local governments to improve and

accelerate their efforts to get people off the streets and into homes. Nineteen federal agencies commit to accelerate implementation of effective state and local strategies that target unsheltered homelessness.

Early next year, the White House and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness will begin working with a cohort of cities and states that will receive:

- **Full-time federal assistance:** A community response team will develop and execute a new local strategy over two years to reduce unsheltered homelessness. The team will be made up of a full-time lead and part-time federal program experts, including a USICH senior regional advisor, who will work in partnership with elected and local leaders, homeless service providers, and people who have prior or current experience of homelessness.
- **Maximum flexibility and regulatory relief:** The community response teams will identify problems and USICH will lead a task force to identify solutions and minimize red tape and bureaucratic processes.
- **Technical support and additional capacity:** The federal government will help participating communities utilize and analyze all available data.
- **Volunteer support:** Agencies will provide volunteers for outreach to people experiencing homelessness and access to peer-to-peer networks to exchange best practices and approaches.

USICH will lead implementation of the overall initiative and will establish a Federal Response Leadership Team to coordinate the overall response, develop tools and guidance, track progress and report to its Council leadership, and elevate issues that cannot be resolved.

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