

Vermont's Plan to End Homelessness

Approved by the Vermont Council on Homelessness
December 20, 2012

Introduction from Governor Peter Shumlin

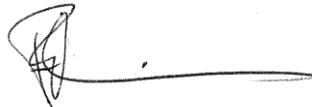
By any measure, too many of our fellow Vermonters are without housing today. We know that homelessness can be encountered across all age and demographic groups, and that, like poverty, it can impact veterans, workers in low-wage jobs, persons struggling with substance abuse or mental health crises, victims of domestic violence, and almost any other vulnerable population one could name. The dislocation caused by homelessness seriously compounds other challenges that our friends, family members and neighbors encounter when trying to address those root causes.

Since taking office, I have been deeply concerned with housing the homeless. In the same way that the causes of the problem are varied, so too are the solutions. As a state, we have made great strides over the past two years developing targeted programs that make housing more affordable and provide effective services to sustain people in their homes. Lasting success will require sustained political support. We must continue to increase both the availability of housing and the delivery of services to those who are homeless. While ending homelessness is no simple feat to be achieved in a single year, this plan outlines our strategy to reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness in Vermont.

For many, homelessness may be the result of a short-term financial crisis. Others, following multiple or extended episodes of homelessness, may have come to believe or accept that homelessness is part of their past, present and future. We should not accept homelessness as an inevitable or permanent condition.

I wish to thank the Vermont Council on Homelessness and members of the Council's sub-committee who have worked to develop this comprehensive plan to address such an important issue for our state.

Sincerely,

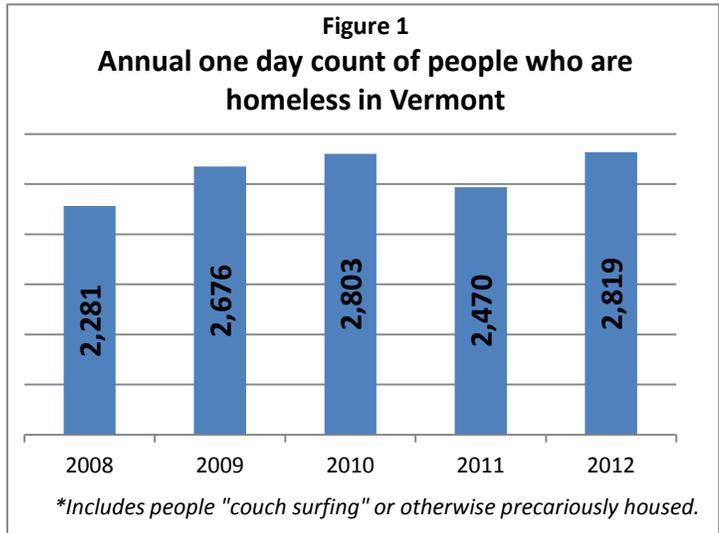
A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'P' followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor

Introduction

Homelessness occurs when people are unable to acquire or maintain housing they can afford. The root causes are many and varied and misconceptions abound. The experience is traumatizing, especially for children who may see adverse effects on their education and development. The primary concern for those experiencing homeless, whether an individual or a family, is securing affordable housing and the necessary services to address the issues that put their housing at risk.¹

On top of the many ways homelessness traumatizes the individuals involved; it also has a high cost for society. The federal government has stated, “Homelessness comes at a very high cost – to individuals, communities, and systems of care. A growing body of research demonstrates that communities save money by providing permanent supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness. In short, it is proven to be more cost effective to provide permanent supportive housing than to leave someone on the streets or in shelters. The research shows that providing housing to someone experiencing chronic homelessness results in reduced utilization of publicly funded services such as police, hospital, emergency and impatient services, and the correctional systems.” (Source: SAMHSA)



This plan was developed with one goal in mind: to end homelessness. It was written by the Vermont Council on Homelessness, which has recommended that the Governor adopt the plan and its proposed actions. The Council was created by gubernatorial Executive Order (see Appendix 1), and the appointed members are included Appendix 2.

While the primary goal is to end homelessness, we are sadly realistic that there will continue to be instances where someone may temporarily be without housing, and we will work to make any such instances rare and brief. To ensure that the primary goal of ending homelessness becomes reality, the Council is aiming to reduce the number of people who are currently homeless by 5 percent in its first year. This modest goal matches Vermont Agency of Human Services’ (AHS) goal stated in its draft Strategic Plan to reduce homelessness by 5 percent.

The Council’s efforts to reduce and end homelessness are up against macroeconomic realities like widespread poverty, soaring health care costs and a range of employment barriers. The Council will use this plan and other tools in its diligent work to overcome those barriers and support low-income people’s efforts to transition from poverty to economic security. Additionally, at the time this report is being written, there are considerable pressures on the federal budget and it is likely that additional cuts to important federal housing benefits like rental assistance and construction funding for affordable housing will continue to be reduced.

¹ This plan uses the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) definitions of “homeless” and “at-risk of homelessness” as our guide, knowing that there is no single definition that could include all people who may experience homelessness. These definitions are included in Appendix 3. Specific programs serving people who are homeless may use these – or different – definitions.

As figure 1 shows, in 2012, on a single day in January the state’s network of homeless shelters and service providers counted over 2,800 people who were homeless or “precariously housed” (meaning temporarily staying with others but without a permanent home.) Because this is the first year of the plan, and the January

2013 count is not yet available, the Council aims to see the 5 percent reduction by January 2014. By reducing the number of Vermonters who experience homelessness, the Council also hopes to reduce the average length of stay in the state’s shelters. As can be seen in Figure 2, this stay has risen over the past decade, and for many households with additional barriers to finding affordable housing (such as families needing larger units or people who need handicap accessible housing), this average length of stay can stretch for months.

As stated above, there are 2,800 people who are homeless on any given day in Vermont. Each of them has their own housing or service needs. Based on the last count, and shown in

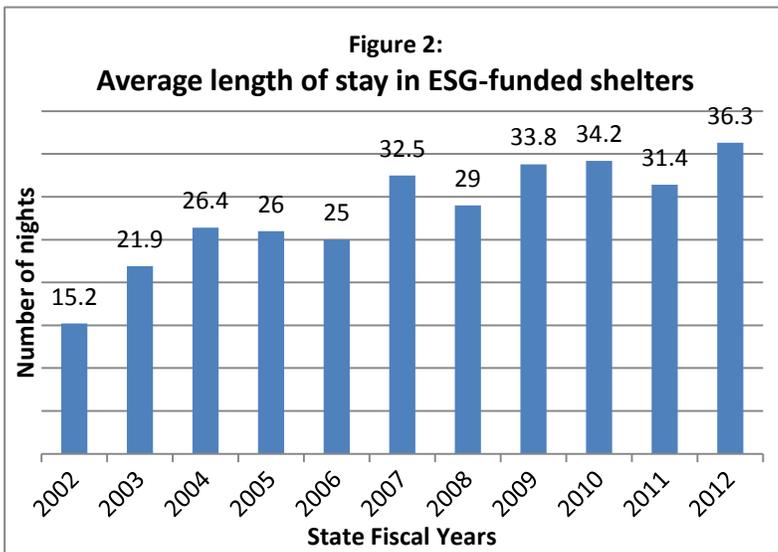
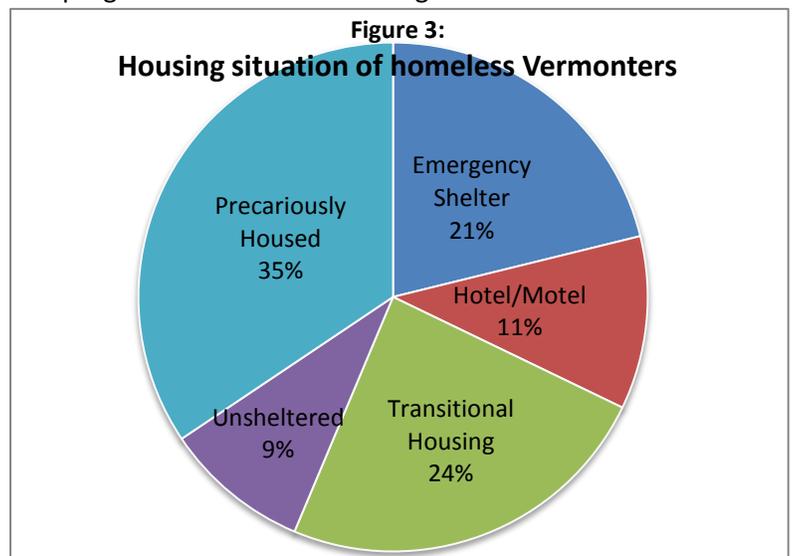


Figure 3, we know that about 21% were in Emergency Shelter, 24% were living in Transitional Housing, 11% were staying in a state funded hotel or motel, and 9% were unsheltered. Unlike similar statistics from more urban states, Vermont’s profile of homelessness looks somewhat different and almost half of those counted were families (as opposed to single individuals), which included 270 children.

This plan includes goals to direct the Council’s work, strategies and action items to reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness, and indicators to measure progress. Success will also hinge on the continued commitment of resources that support the creation of affordable homes and supportive services. After all, there is not enough safe, affordable, accessible housing free from discrimination in the state. And, there are many parts of the state with long waits for supportive services or people who may not receive the services they need to prevent their homelessness. In addition to the barriers that people who are homeless face when trying to become re-housed, some people face additional barriers due to their personal history, diagnosis, age, or other factors that can limit the opportunities to become re-housed.



While Vermont can be proud of its history of serving the state’s most vulnerable efficiently and effectively, it also has long known that there are additional actions that can and should take place to support the Council’s goal of ending homelessness. In an attempt to ensure continual progress is made towards this goal, the Council has identified certain strategies and action items in this plan that it will address in 2013 and beyond. Selecting a manageable number of strategies to tackle first, and acknowledging that so many more worthy strategies must await attention was a difficult process and the Council has a plan to revisit the strategies and action steps in this plan annually. Many of the strategies to address in 2013 are initially the responsibility of AHS although to end homelessness more state, federal, local, and private partners must be engaged. The strategies identified for the near future includes some of those partners, and the Council will continue to actively engage additional partners

in the formation of strategies, and implementation of action steps. That said, the other sections (goals to end homelessness, currently supported models and practices to embrace), are all long term visions that will be reviewed every five years by the Council. As required by the Executive Order, the Council will report to the Governor by July 1 of each year on the progress made on the key indicators identified in the plan and will identify the next year's strategies and action items chosen for attention.

Goals to end homelessness

The primary, over-arching goal of this plan is to:

1. Reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness.

The Council has also identified these major goals:

2. Prevent homelessness and retain successful housing placements.

Homelessness is an inherently traumatic experience and therefore a goal of this plan is to prevent all households from experiencing homelessness. To stop the increase of Vermonters who become homeless every year, we must also focus on retaining housing for at-risk households who have never been homeless and those who have recently transitioned from homelessness to stable housing.

3. Strengthen services that alleviate and prevent homelessness.

Despite the fact that some households have multiple agencies working towards their success, there are still times when there are gaps in eligibility, timing, or benefit thresholds in services for some households. We must work to identify and fix these situations, while ensuring continuity and efficient delivery of services.

4. Increase the number of available homes affordable to renter households earning 30% of the Area Median Income or less.

Vermont has a shortage of available and affordable housing and has some of the lowest vacancy rates in the nation. Housing is very expensive compared to wages, especially for the lowest income Vermonters who are most likely to become homeless. We must continue to create more affordable housing opportunities for those most in need, and also address the significant gap between the rental prices in units with some government assistance and the rents affordable to people with no or very limited incomes.

5. Increase the economic security of households at risk of homelessness.

As mentioned previously, there are larger economic forces at work that can lead to homelessness including employment that is unstable or unemployment; low benefit levels; low wage jobs; high health care costs; education, transportation, and child care costs; and generational poverty. This plan will work to help bolster the economic security of Vermonters so they can better weather those realities with a goal of creating fully integrated and livable communities.

Resource levels

The Council on Homelessness supports *at least* maintaining existing levels of funding for housing, homelessness, and homeless prevention efforts. State policy makers should always seek to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing programs. For example, the state should reduce reliance on hotels and motels and move towards affordable permanent housing which often requires ongoing rental assistance.

Currently supported models

The majority of Vermont's existing shelter and services programs for the homeless participate in a regional Continuum of Care. Local Continuums of Care are regionally based networks of homeless shelter and service agencies that meet regularly to plan for and address homelessness locally to ensure coordinated approaches. Among other roles, these groups are charged with identifying potential gaps in their local systems. By relying on local agencies and residents as key players in addressing homelessness, local needs are brought to the forefront and solutions are tailored to the community's needs. The Council recognizes that the following models are currently available in much of the state and have done a lot to address and alleviate homelessness:

- Coordinated services and financial assistance that prevents homelessness and rapidly re-house those who become homeless. These are primarily funded through federal and state programs, although also supplemented with private resources. Examples are programs providing rental and utility arrearage, security deposits or other funds that help overcome a barrier to accessing housing. This also often includes housing search and retention activities.
- Outreach that can demonstrate it is effective at engaging people with services, connecting people with mainstream benefits, providing emergency services (especially during harsh weather), or which ultimately results in successful housing placements.
- Emergency shelter capacity that includes available case management that continues after someone finds housing and ensures more successful long term outcomes. Crisis-based emergency shelter works best when it is responsive to the unique needs that occur seasonally (cold weather), regionally, and when working with populations who have special needs (survivors of domestic violence, for example).
- Supportive services that help people transition from homelessness to housing and/or serve those at-risk in their housing to prevent homelessness. Examples include case management, housing support, and housing stabilization. Ideally this offers long-term voluntary relationships with tenants and housing providers to support housing retention.
- Transitional housing that provides a bridge between homelessness and permanent housing for those who need opportunities for independence while still being offered comprehensive services.
- Permanent supportive housing that provides optional long term individualized services for the length of the lease.
- Housing that is affordable and available for the most vulnerable Vermonters without the supportive services provided in permanent supportive housing. Some people who are homeless do not have ongoing service needs or do not choose to accept services, but do need housing that adjusts based on their individual incomes. Some examples include federally and state funded rental assistance programs that are income sensitive.

Practices to embrace

Vermont has a long history of providing leadership in innovative, person-centered housing and service options. As it looks to continue to address homelessness in the state, it must continue to work to address the following concepts to ensure that its existing and new programs are exemplary.

- Adopt an overarching goal to not re-traumatize people or exacerbate an already stressful situation. This includes the idea that "benefit cliffs" should be eliminated so that households working toward self-sufficiency are not penalized or forced to make untenable choices.
- Be respectful in language and practice so that all programs and policies are designed to minimize unnecessary disruptions to the lives of the households being served. This includes:
 - A genuine desire to respect the choices of people who are (or were) homeless;

- Solicit and respond to the needs and suggestions of people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or were formerly homeless.
- Encourage the development and/or evaluation of more programs by people who are/were homeless; and
- Create a clear delineation of roles between any housing and support staff that fosters an ongoing commitment to positive relationships, respectful communication, and plans that are informed and directed by the person who is homeless.
- Provide the necessary financial resources so that programs can operate to their fullest capacity to achieve desired outcomes. This includes the efficient use of limited funding and adapting programs and policies to changing needs locally. Typically the main sources of funding are federal and state resources, but funding from private and local funds can be a critical component as well.
- Embrace the concept of continuous improvement which requires the ability to self evaluate. This need for transparency and being open to performance review based on accurate data is crucial for programs and policies to adapt to changing trends and effective outcomes.
- Coordinate efforts with other resources within the continuum’s spectrum of programs in a community. By working in cooperation with the existing framework of housing and service options available, there are opportunities for innovative partnerships and ensuring that no one falls through the cracks.
- Support regionally targeted housing and service options best suited to local needs while at the same time ensuring some consistency statewide so that no one region of the state is unduly burdened with unmet need.

Current strategies

The Council has identified the following strategies as ones that it will tackle first, followed by a list of strategies that it will tackle next as a part of this plan before it is updated in conjunction with the state’s Consolidated Plan, undertaken by Vermont’s Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development. Any overlapping action items between these strategies will not result in duplicate effort, but will be coordinated and communicated through the Council.

1. Increase the number of units affordable to people who are extremely low-income, especially those who are homeless.
 - *Action items to address this strategy:*
 - i. Develop the foundation of a housing production strategy which would include:
 1. Regular discussions between housing and supportive service agencies to discuss how best to implement this strategy, including determining for whom the housing would be created, where, and how to fund.
 2. Set goals for a multi-year housing strategy to increase housing for people who are homeless.
 3. Identify other necessary action items to address this strategy.
2. Align and coordinate existing homelessness prevention, housing retention and rapid re-housing activities under a clear and common objective, regardless of funding source with the goal of flexibly meeting the needs of the person instead of the program. This will include standard definitions, reporting and performance measurement.
 - *Action items to address this strategy:*
 - i. Create standard program definitions for activities such as: case management; financial sustainability; housing support or retention specialist; length of service follow up after housing is secured; and “stable housing.”
 - ii. Try to determine and encourage maximum case loads so that the defined role of case management can be implemented effectively.
 - iii. Consider implementing the following:
 1. Increasing state funded rental assistance;

2. Expanding and enhancing financial capacity building services and asset building strategies;
 3. A supportive housing program for families with children.
 - iv. Draft uniform reporting standards that measure outcomes for these programs.
 - v. Report the drafted standards to community partners for discussion.
3. Expand the capacity of programs to provide voluntary supportive services once households move into permanent housing.
 - *Action items to address this strategy:*
 - i. Work with local service providers to document barriers to providing services for one year.
 - ii. Ask housing recipients about their needs after services end during a lease term.
 - iii. Talk with housing providers about what their needs are after supportive services end during a lease term.
 - iv. Quantify the resources needed to achieve this goal of providing services for at least a year once households move into permanent housing.
 - v. Report on findings of the activities above to community partners.

Future strategies

The Council will identify specific action items for these strategies once they are selected as a current year's strategies. As stated above, this listing will be revised every five years in coordination with the state's Consolidated Plan for housing activities.

1. Support local transitional and permanent supportive housing designed to best suit local needs. This can include supporting "housing first" programs throughout the state², increasing the production and availability of affordable cottage style housing, and many other models.
2. Develop incentives for landlords to rent to households with significant barriers to housing.
3. Expedite Supplemental Security Income and Supplemental Security Disability Income applications for all eligible applicants.
4. Develop an accountability system around discharge planning and relocation planning which prevents institutions from discharging into homelessness.
5. Address issues with federal and state benefit program eligibility that inadvertently increases the likelihood of homelessness.
6. Create a short-term disability contingency fund to keep people in housing if they lose employment income due to illness.
7. Enhance services to General Assistance (GA) recipients and others at risk of homelessness, including education and employment assessments.

Summary of Strategies					
→ Goals to end homelessness →	Reduce homelessness	Prevention & Retention	Strengthen services	Increase housing	Increase econ. security
↓ Strategies to address ↓					
2013					
Increase housing for extremely low income, especially homeless	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinate prevention, retention, re-housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Expand service capacity	✓		✓		
2014 to 2018					
Transitional and permanent housing	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Incentives to landlords	✓			✓	
Expedite SSI/SSDI	✓				✓
Discharge planning	✓	✓	✓		
Address benefit cliffs	✓	✓			✓
Create short term disability fund	✓	✓			✓
Enhance services through GA	✓	✓	✓		✓
Expand peer-run models	✓		✓	✓	
Increase income support programs	✓	✓			✓
Integrate asset development	✓	✓			✓

² "Housing first" programs provide people with permanent housing and then combine that housing with supportive treatment services in the areas of mental and physical health, substance abuse, education, and employment.

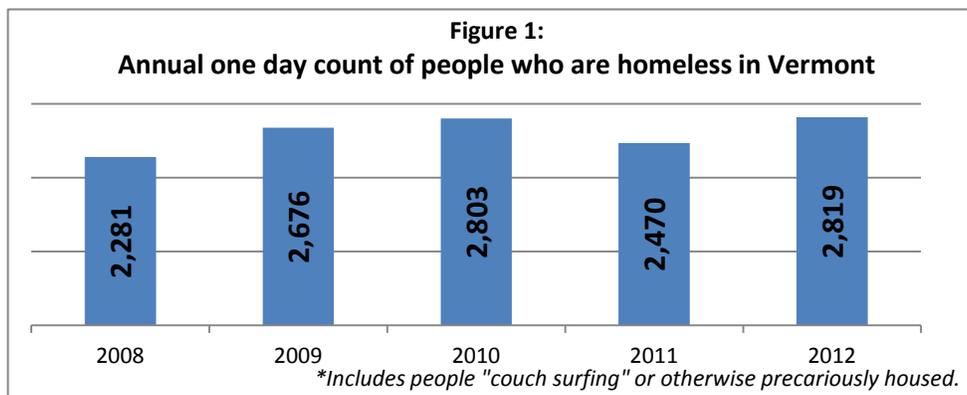
8. Expand peer-run self-help housing models.
9. Support efforts to increase income support programs (such as TANF, SSI, GA, and others) to reflect real need.
10. Integrate asset development and financial empowerment practices into homelessness and housing services to help people move towards financial stability faster and long-term.

Indicators of progress

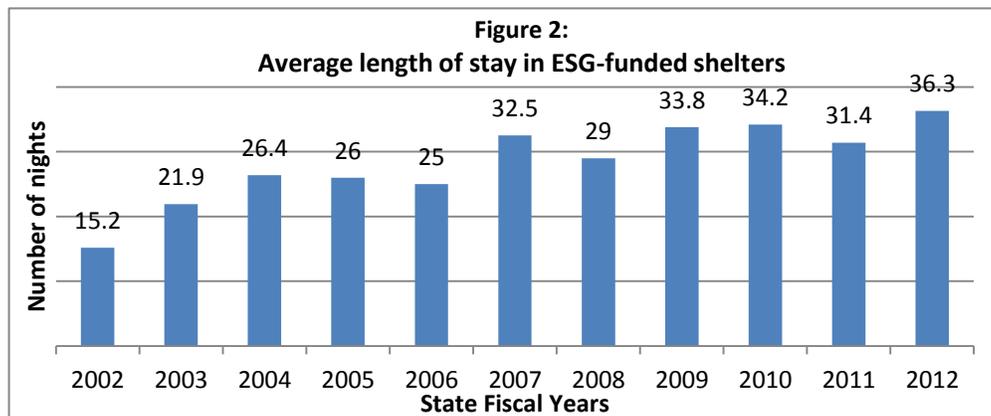
To measure progress towards these goals, the Council will annually monitor the following indicators and report on them and to what extent the Council’s efforts have impacted the outcomes. While small sample sizes will undoubtedly mean annual fluctuations for indicators, the state should monitor long-term trends to watch for progress.

Goal 1: reduce the incidence and duration of homelessness

Reducing the number of people who are identified as homeless during an annual count, homelessness will be reduced throughout the state.



A reduction in the average duration of homelessness will be measured through length of stay data from the state's Emergency Solutions Grant funded shelters.



Goal 2: Prevent homelessness and retain successful housing placements

Increasing the successful outcomes for the people who were at risk of homelessness but who ultimately had their housing stabilize, will lower the number of Vermonters who become homeless.

- *Indicator to include, but not yet available:* Number of people who were at risk of homeless and served by a homeless prevention program but did not re-appear in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as being homeless. While not everyone who is homeless or at risk are included in an HMIS system, it is the best proxy available.

Increasing the number of people who were homeless and secured housing for at least a year will lower the number of Vermonters with unmet housing needs.

- *Indicator to include, but not yet available:* Number of people who were homeless but became housed and did not re-appear in the HMIS system as being homeless within a year. While not everyone who is homeless or at risk are included in an HMIS system, it is the best proxy available.

Goal 3: Strengthen services that alleviate and prevent homelessness

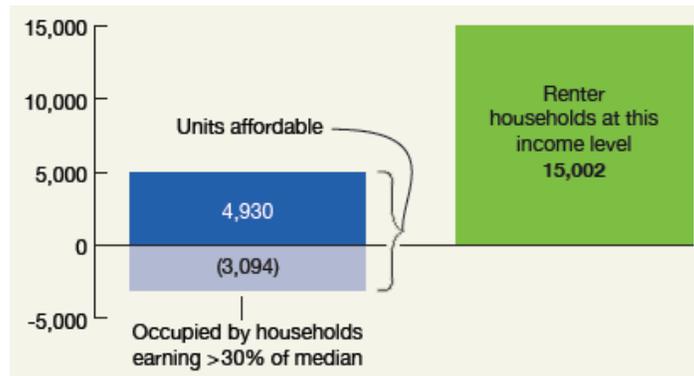
Increasing the supportive services available to Vermonters who need them will help more people achieve self sufficiency and prevent or end homelessness.

- *Indicator to include, but not yet available:* the number of people served by various programs that fund services. To be identified.

Goal 4: Increase the housing units affordable and available to extremely low income renters

Having an adequate supply of rental units affordable to extremely low income households will help ensure that there are units available, and this will help to make homelessness rare and brief.

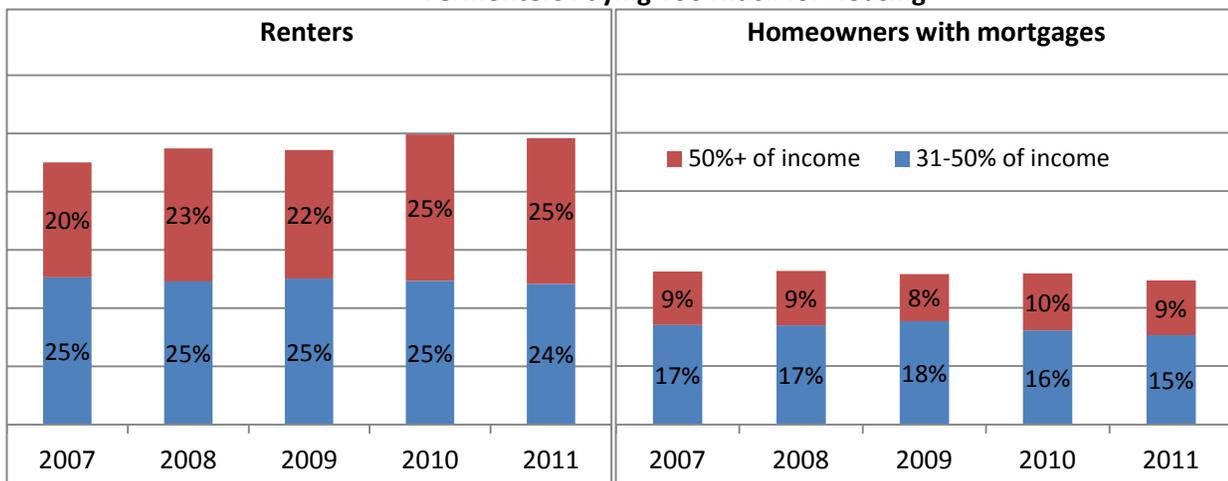
Figure 4: Rental units affordable for households at 30% or less of median income



Goal 5: Increase the economic security of households at risk of homelessness

Increasing the economic security of households at risk of homelessness will reduce the number of households who will become homeless in the future.

Figure 5: Vermonters Paying Too Much for Housing



Data action agenda

Addressing the needs of people who are homeless typically begins with detailed conversations about the prevalence of the need, demographic characteristics of those involved, how to quantify the unmet demand and how to measure the efficiency or effectiveness of programs. All of these are important factors to consider, yet the state and its providers are continually frustrated by the lack of consistent, reliable, and comprehensive data. There are many tools used to collect data, and the Council will create a team to address these or work with existing data committees where appropriate. For all of the following items, the Council will involve people who are homeless or formerly homeless.

1. There are questions about the accuracy of the annual Point in Time count. The data collection tool should be modified to be more user-friendly, there should be a robust training program to educate community providers and partners throughout the state, and data integrity must be pursued in all respects.
 - a. Action: a subcommittee of the Council was formed in 2012 to begin to address these needs and will remain active through 2013 to implement changes, collect feedback, and work towards continual improvement.
2. There is a need for in-depth analysis of the characteristics of people who are homeless throughout the state. By studying the number of homelessness episodes, service engagements, and housing outcomes for households, the state can begin to understand the paths through the system of care. At the same time, the state must always consider the legal and personal implications of collecting sensitive data from people who have been traumatized and every possible effort must be made to ensure the confidentiality of this information, as well as keeping a low barrier to access programs that doesn't delay or deny assistance because of data requirements.
 - a. Action: work with the data committees of the two Continuums of Care in the state to prioritize the reports to be generated from the HMIS that collect this information, and support their ability to generate needed reports.
3. Both state-level funding and local providers administering programs must ensure they are efficient stewards of public funding while also creating real and meaningful change. As the state continues to embrace results based accountability, the state and providers must work together to create performance measures that are reasonable, measureable, and uniform while also sharing the results with the public as appropriate.
 - a. Action: State and quasi-state agencies that administer programs designed to serve the homeless or prevent homelessness should attempt to collect the same Universal Data Elements that are required of HUD-funded homeless programs with the goal of then reporting to the public aggregated data reports that can inform planning and programmatic decisions.
 - b. Action: These same state and quasi-state agencies that use performance measures as a part of their contracting process should share the results of those programs' measures with the public, as well as any plans to implement performance-based contracting. The goal being that Council could provide feedback on the measures, results, and future program data needed to implement this plan.

APPENDIX I – Executive Order 03-12

WHEREAS, homelessness has been a persistent and growing problem within Vermont for 30 years; and

WHEREAS, homelessness assaults the human dignity of any individual affected, including children, young adults, working families, and veterans; and

WHEREAS, both the financial and human costs of homelessness strain public services including health care, mental health care, and education; and

WHEREAS, Vermont has a commitment to the quality of life for all of its citizens; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT I, Peter Shumlin, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor, do hereby re-establish and re-constitute the Vermont Council on Homelessness.

1. Composition and Appointments

Members of the Council shall be appointed by the Governor for three years terms until their successors are appointed and qualified.

Members shall include: the Secretary of Human Services or designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health or designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living or designee; the Commissioner of Corrections or designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or designee; the Commissioner of the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development or designee; the Commissioner of Education or designee; the Executive Director of the Vermont State Housing Authority or designee; the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency or designee; the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board or designee; and

Six (6) representatives of entities engaged in preventing or addressing homelessness including representatives of shelter providers and the Continuum of Care;

Two (2) persons who have experienced homelessness and who are not otherwise included in another category;

Two (2) housing providers;

Two (2) at large members with a strong commitment to fighting homelessness.

2. Council Charge

The responsibilities of the council shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Developing a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Vermont which shall include annual targets for reducing the number of homeless people in Vermont and shall set forth plans to implement specific initiative, including those developed at Governor Shumlin's June 2011 Summit on Homelessness;
- B. Monitoring and revising the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness as necessary; and
- C. Reporting to the Governor on July 1 of each calendar year regarding: (1) recommendations to the Administration regarding resource, policy, and regulatory changes necessary to accomplish the goals of the Plan, and (2) progress made under the Plan.

3. Council Progress

The Governor shall appoint the Chair of the Council. The Council shall meet no less than quarterly. The Council shall establish sub-committees.

The Council shall be attached to the Agency of Human Services for administrative support. To the extent fund permit, community members shall receive reimbursement of expenses and a per diem pursuant to 32 V.S. A. § 1010(e).

4. Effective Date

This Order shall take effect upon signing and expire on December 21, 2022. This Order supersedes and replaces Executive Order 05-06 (codified as No. 33-15).

Dated January 25, 2012.

Peter Shumlin

Governor

APPENDIX II – Vermont Council on Homelessness Members

State Agencies

Angus Chaney, Chair - Agency of Human Services
Commissioner - Dept. of Mental Health
Will Rowe - Dept. of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living
Karen Lawson - Dept. of Corrections
Dave Yacovone - Dept. for Children and Families
Jennifer Hollar - Dept. of Economic, Housing & Community Development
Mike Mulcahy - Dept. of Education

Quasi-State Entities

Richard Williams - Vermont State Housing Authority
Sarah Carpenter - Vermont Housing Finance Agency
Gustave Seelig - Vermont Housing and Conservation Board

Six representatives of entities engaged in preventing or addressing homelessness including representatives of shelter providers and the Continuum of Care

Michelle Fay - Umbrella
Elizabeth Ready - John Graham Shelter
Richard McInerney - Springfield Supported Housing Program
Mark Redmond - Spectrum Youth & Family Services
Deborah Hall - Rutland County Housing Coalition
Rachel Batterson - Vermont Legal Aid

Two persons who have experienced homelessness

Laura Ziegler - Another Way
Jack Kearnan - Vermont Interfaith Action

Two housing providers

Brenda Torpy - Champlain Housing Trust
Connie Snow - Windsor & Windham Housing Trust

Two at large members with a strong commitment to fighting homelessness

Rita Markley - Committee On Temporary Shelter
Linda Ryan - Samaritan House

APPENDIX III – Definitions

“**Homeless**” is defined here as household meeting criteria in one of the following categories:

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning: (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground; (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
- (2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that: (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance; (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;
- (3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who: (i) Are defined as homeless under another federal program; (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance; (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or
- (4) Any individual or family who: (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual’s or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; (ii) Has no other residence; and (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

“**At Risk of Homelessness**” in this is defined here as: An individual or family with an annual income below 30% of median family income for the county who lacks sufficient resources or support networks immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place defined in Category 1 of the “homeless” definition; AND who meets one of the following conditions:

- Has moved because of economic reasons 2 or more times during the preceding 60 days; OR
- Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship; OR
- Has been notified they will lose their housing within 21 days; OR
- Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost is not paid for by charitable organizations or by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals; OR
- Lives in an SRO or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than 2 persons; OR
- Is exiting a publicly funded institution or system of care.

APPENDIX IV – References

- SAMHSA:** <http://homeless.samhsa.gov/Channel/Cost-of-Homelessness-631.aspx>
- Figure 1:** Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness and Chittenden County Homeless Alliance’s one night census of people who were homeless on January 26, 2012. Also called the “Point in Time count.”
- Figure 2:** Data collected from the Point in Time count (above).
- Figure 3:** Data collected from the Point in Time count (above).
- Figure 4:** VHFA analysis of estimates provided by Nielsen Claritas and the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2005-7, Tables B25063 and B25122.
- Figure 5:** US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 1 year estimates, tables B25070 and B25091.