Yakima County Department of Human Services Annual Report

January 2024

Current Condition of Homelessness in Yakima County:

The following table shows the number of households and individuals counted during PIT 2023:

Category	Individuals	Households
Currently Homeless	540	449
Not Currently Homeless	151	119
Total surveyed	691	568

Summary

This report is broken up by Households and Individuals.

	Individuals	Households
	2023	**2023**
Unsheltered	221	216
Encampments	98	81
Emergency Shelter	221	152
Transitional Housing	87	63
Total	**627**	**512**

Year 5 of 5 current five-year plan

The tables below share the feedback that was received from the various internal and external stakeholders in our current local five-year plan at the end of 2021 and includes 2021 – 2023 data points and recommendations come from the Department of Human Services.

Goal 1: Quickly identify and engage people experiencing homelessness through outreach and coordination between every system that encounters people experiencing homelessness.

Objective	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
1.1 Design, implement, an efficient and compliant Coordinated Entry (CE) System	CE Policy & Procedure Subgroup – Complete CE Policy Team update local guidelines approval anticipated	Complete[1]	Evidence: updating/alignment in BoS guidelines with local plans. Local restructure to increase and measure system effectiveness	*2023: Continue with Coordinated Entry work and ensuring that updated policies and procedures are being followed by the subcontractors. Provide TA as needed.*

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[1] Was identified as complete in the 2019 Update
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Objective	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
1.2 Maintain, and utilize an efficient and compliant Coordinated Entry (CE) System		Ongoing	Increase in youth and young adult housing placements month over month through ACI	Continue transition for service providers to client case conferencing Need BoS support in client consenting laws to ensure compliance
1.2 Improve outreach to identify individuals experiencing homelessness and encourage participation in services through CE or BNL	Undefined	Ongoing[2]	Improvements in community coordination efforts – Inclusion of public service and businesses feedback/needs to outreach teams Starting street outreach meetings during PIT and continue after	Establish outcome measurements for outreach teams when developing the new five-year plan.
1.3 Implement prioritization policy in CE to prioritize housing for people with the greatest need, synchronize CE prioritization tool with ACI BNL	CE Policy & Procedure Subgroup (current work) CE Policy Team local guidelines approval (tentative approval January 1, 2023)	Complete	County wide access point prioritization tool starting 1/2023	Continue with CE system improvements and establish outcome measurements
1.4a Design, implement, maintain, and utilize an efficient and compliant By Name List (BNL) for YYA experiencing homelessness	The existence of a BNL for YYA	Ongoing		Need BoS support in client consenting laws to ensure compliance

Goal 2: Operate an effective and efficient homeless crisis response system that moves people into stable permanent housing as swiftly as possible.

Objective[3]	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence
2.1 Increase exits to permanent housing from Emergency Shelter (ES) Increase exits to Permanent Housing from ES by 5% from the previous year until 50% rate is met "to 26% by June 30, 2020	Exits to Perm Housing via the CHG Performance Tracker	Not met	2023 rate is 14% 2022 rate is 10% 2021 rate is 11% 2020 rate is 19% 2019 rate 10%
2.2 Increase exits to permanent housing from Rapid-Rehousing (RRH) *by 5% from the previous year until 80% rate is met"*	Exits to Perm Housing via the CHG Performance Tracker	Not Met/ **9% increase in one year!**	2023 rate is 60% 2022 rate is 72% 2021 rate is 63% 2020 rate is 65% 2019 rate of 61%

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[2] There is an overarching recommendation that ongoing activities be pulled out of the plan and displayed separately.
[3] Dates in objectives need to be addressed and made consistent.
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Objective[3]	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence
2.3 Increase retention of permanent housing from Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs to 92% by June 30, 2020	Retention Rate via the CHG Performance Tracker	Complete	2023 rate is 99% 2022 rate is 99% 2021 rate is 98% 2020 Rate is 97% 2019 rate of 97%
2.4 Increase percent unsheltered served by homeless response system to 49% by June 30, 2020	System Prioritization via the CHG Performance Tracker	Complete	2023 rate is 68% 2022 rate is 58% 2021 rate is 57% 2020 rate is 59% 2019 rate of 53%
2.5 Reduce returns to homelessness after exit to permanent housing *by 5% from the previous year until 10% rate is met"*	Returns to homelessness via the County Report Cards	Not Met	2023 rate unavailable 2022 rate is 20% 2019 rate is 17% 2018 rate is 13%
2.6 Reduce average length of time homeless of those served to less than 90 days by 2025	Average Length of time via the County Report Cards	Not Met	2023 rate is unavailable 2022 rate is 104 days 2019 rate was 104 days 2018 rate was 84 days[4]
2.7 Increase percentage of exits from street outreach to positive outcome destinations as defined by HUD System Performance Measures to >76% by 2025	Positive Exits	Unknown	Develop a measurable outcome in the next 5year plan.
2.8 Increase system-wide percentage of exits to permanent housing to >59% by 2025	Exits to Perm Housing	Not Met	2023 rate was unavailable 2022 rate was: ES 12%, TH 43%, RRH 47% 2019 rate was 30% 2018 rate was 33%

Goal 3: Support the development of adequate affordable housing and permanent supportive housing.

Objective	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
3.1 Support potential capital projects for building evidence based PSH	Number of PSH project in current contracts	Ongoing		Recommendation to address this during the next five-year plan.
3.2 Explore partnerships with landlords to increase and support participation in the homeless crisis response system	Number of landlords who are members of YCHC	Ongoing	Initial community building conference has positive outcomes but, totals were not captured.	Continue with relationship building between landlords and community providers.

Objective	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
3.3 Support affordable housing strategies to increase density	Undefined	Ongoing		Recommendation to address this during the next five-year plan.
3.4 Advocate and support transitional housing efforts to increase housing inventory	Undefined	Ongoing		Recommendation to address this during the next five-year plan.

Goal 4: Track and publish data regarding homelessness in Yakima County.

Proposed Reframe of Goal #4: Develop community awareness, education and fiscal transparency related to homelessness within Yakima County.

Activity	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
4.1 Project the impact of the fully implemented local plan on the number of households housed and the number of households left unsheltered	Utilize Model EZv7 from Commerce	**Ongoing**		Recommendation to address this during the next five-year plan.
4.2 Continue to use and promote the shared enterprise of County-wide HMIS database by actively recruiting non-funded partners	Number of unfunded HMIS users	**Ongoing**	Increasing access has barriers with BoS status. However, county was able in fund another large shelter this year.	Recommendation to address this during the next five-year plan.
4.3 Support accurate and consistent Point in Time data collection efforts		**Complete**	While data quality has improved. Yakima county has provided PIT reports in 2020, 2021 and 2022	
4.4 Increase accessibility and transparency of data	County Web site	**Ongoing**		a. Data Analysis for Identifying Unmet Needs: In July 2023, Human Services expanded its team by hiring a full-time data coordinator. Both the department manager and coordinator have undergone Tableau training to enhance their skills in extracting local data from the HMIS. The county's data on homeless services has led to the creation of community dashboards. Additionally, the department manager and Dave Hansen from the

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Activity	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
				community participated in HUD's TA Learning Session on Coordinated Entry. The goal is to refine the Coordinated Entry system, prioritizing the most vulnerable homeless households for housing and services. This data-centric approach will pinpoint unmet needs, highlight service gaps, and provide insights into community challenges. The gathered insights will inform the formulation of a new 5-year local plan, which will feature emerging dashboards.

b. Documented Policies and Procedures:
To uphold transparency and ensure the community's needs are met effectively, there's a commitment to creating clear policies detailing the procedures to identify priority unmet needs for funding. These documented guidelines will clarify the county's approach, enabling stakeholders and partners to understand the criteria and decision-making process. Importantly, these policies will undergo regular reviews in community stakeholder meetings such as YHC, YHC Exec Team, and CE policy and provider teams. This ensures that the approach remains adaptable and in sync with the ever-changing challenges related to homelessness. The framework will also |

Activity	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
				include details on funding processes and the formation of a scoring committee.
4.5 Monitor and track program performance in the homeless crisis response system to ensure performance targets are being met and make results known to all stakeholders	HMIS/clarity and Looker, ongoing staff engagement both at County and provider level	**Ongoing**	Data dashboards shared on the Department of Human Services Web site	*See Recommendation in 4.4*
4.6 Track available housing through the Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)	HIC	**Complete/Ongoing**	Yakima county has provided a HIC report in 2020, 2021 and 2022, 2023	

Goal 5: Address disparities among people experiencing homelessness and create resources to meet the needs of priority populations.

Activity	Measured by	Status	Barriers/Evidence	Recommendations
5.1 Assess and analyze racial disparities using a racial equity tool and data provided by Commerce, and seek additional data sources for assessing other disparities	Washington Equity Analysis Tool, HMIS, provider participation in HMIS	**Ongoing**		See recommendation in section 4.4
5.2 Engage with agencies including, but not limited to, School Homeless Liaisons, Rod's House, Henry Beauchamp Community Center, YNHS LGBTQ Youth Resource Center (The Space), and Catholic Families Youth to identify youth and determine their specific needs	Relationships with Youth and Young Adult (YYA) groups	**Ongoing**		
5.3 Create a safe overnight facility for Youth and Young Adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness	Capital funds, program capacity (Rod's House)	**Not Met**	Original deadline 2018	Program still funded by the county.
5.4 Create partnerships to advocate for youth homelessness issues and educate providers on legislatively acceptable strategies for addressing the needs of youth	Youth advocates, stipends for youth, training opportunities	**Ongoing**		
5.5 Increase opportunities for LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness to access support, resources, housing, and family reunification when possible		**Ongoing**		

Significant Changes Made to the Plan

This year, Yakima County Human Services maintained the integrity of its existing plan without significant alterations. To bolster its operational capacity, the department strategically onboarded a data coordinator and prioritized knowledge enhancement for both new hires and existing staff. These strategic initiatives are poised to fortify the county's foundation for the forthcoming 5-year plan.