

# KEY FACTS ABOUT HOUSING FIRST

## **FACT: HOUSING FIRST IS FLEXIBLE.**

Under the Housing First model, homeless service providers must design programs that address the unique, individualized needs and interests of each person who is being served, rather than imposing a one-size-fits-all design that denies or disqualifies people from receiving the assistance they need.

People with sobriety and substance use issues often seek and accept help in different ways and at different speeds. For that reason, Housing First service providers must continue to offer guidance and services in ways that meet the needs of these individuals.

## **FACT: HOUSING FIRST IS EFFECTIVE.**

Housing First replaced a wasteful approach. The “stairstep” or “linear” model risked lives and increased costs to communities. When individuals struggled to meet arbitrary and rigid requirements, they were often pushed back into homelessness without a path to housing, and communities spent more on emergency health care, corrections, and law enforcement.

## **FACT: HOUSING FIRST IS FAITH-COMPATIBLE.**

Faith-based organizations play a vital role in local homelessness systems, establishing and operating shelters, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing programs consistent with Housing First. The principles that serve as the foundation of Housing First – upholding the dignity and autonomy of the individual being served, recognizing that all people deserve help even if a person may struggle, and focusing on an individual’s needs and interests rather than the organization’s – is supported by many faiths.

## **FACT: HOUSING FIRST IS COMMUNITY-FOCUSED.**

Local communities choose to prioritize Housing First programs because it is more effective. It is a flexible model that can be adapted to address the unique needs in local communities and tailored to the challenges facing individuals. As a result, Housing First is supported by a broad range of state and local elected officials who have seen Housing First work in their communities.

## **FACT: HOUSING FIRST IS A GOOD INVESTMENT OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS**

Housing First is a responsible, accountable way to spend taxpayer dollars on homelessness. Housing First is the most effective approach to ending homelessness for most individuals and families, and evidence shows that it can improve quality of life and other outcomes, lead to better treatment outcomes, and reduce taxpayer spending on public services, like emergency healthcare and the criminal legal system.

For more information, contact NLIHC senior vice president of public policy and field organizing Sarah Saadian at [ssaadian@nlihc.org](mailto:ssaadian@nlihc.org).

