



NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION  
NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS  
CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES

# Webinar 1: Emerging Threats Facing People Experiencing Homelessness

August 15, 2022

*Moderated by Jen Butler, Senior Director of Media Relations & Communications, NLIHC*



# Agenda

## Opening Remarks

- Diane Yentel, NLIHC
- Ann Oliva, NAEH
- Peggy Bailey, CBPP

## Overview of Housing First

- Dr. Va Lecia Adams  
Kellum, St. Joseph Center

## Emerging Threats to Housing First

- Eric Tars, National  
Homelessness Law Center

## Impact on People Experiencing Homelessness

- Donald Whitehead Jr.,  
National Coalition for the  
Homeless

## Ways to Take Action

- Sarah Saadian, NLIHC
- Steve Berg, NAEH
- Alex Berger, CBPP

# Opening Remarks

Diane Yentel  
*President & CEO*

National Low Income Housing Coalition

[dyentel@nlihc.org](mailto:dyentel@nlihc.org)

# Opening Remarks Ann Oliva

*Chief Executive Officer*

**National Alliance to End Homelessness**

[aoliva@naeh.org](mailto:aoliva@naeh.org)

# Opening

# Remarks

## Peggy Bailey

*Vice President for Housing Policy*

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

[pbailey@cbpp.org](mailto:pbailey@cbpp.org)



# Overview of Housing First

Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum

*President & CEO*

St. Joseph Center

[vadams@stjosephctr.org](mailto:vadams@stjosephctr.org)



# Homelessness & Housing First Webinar Series Agenda:

## Emerging Threats Facing People Experiencing Homelessness

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Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Ph.D.  
President & CEO

August 15, 2022

# ST. JOSEPH CENTER OVERVIEW

St. Joseph Center's mission is to provide working poor families, as well as homeless, men, women and children of all ages, with the inner resources and tools to become productive, stable and self-supporting members of the community.



St. Joseph Center (SJC) was founded on July 8, 1976 by two Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Though we are a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we retain an affiliation with the Sisters as a “Sponsored Institution.”





# ST. JOSEPH CENTER IMPACT: FY2020-21

 14,891  
SERVED



 2,351  
CONNECTED TO  
HOUSING

 1,134  
NEWLY HOUSED

 3,791  
ENGAGED THROUGH  
STREET OUTREACH

 12%  
INCREASE IN OVERALL  
PEOPLE SERVED

 33,841  
MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES PROVIDED

 30,073  
VISITS TO THE  
FOOD PANTRY

 42,322  
MEALS SERVED

 72%  
INCREASE IN  
MEALS SERVED

 95%  
RETAINED  
PERMANENT  
HOUSING

 43  
JOB TRAINING  
GRADUATES

 91%  
JOB TRAINING  
GRADUATION RATE



# OVERVIEW OF HOUSING FIRST



# A Housing First Oriented System

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Housing First is not just one type of program model. It is a system-wide approach and philosophical orientation. In an effective homeless response system, all key homeless interventions – including emergency shelters, outreach, and housing programs – align with the principles of Housing First.

# Housing First Principles

## Principles

- Homelessness is foremost a housing problem
- Everyone is ready for housing **now** if they choose
- Permanent housing is a right to which all are entitled
- People should be returned to or stabilized in permanent housing as quickly as possible and connected to resources necessary to sustain that housing

## Shift in Thinking...



# Housing First Principles

## Philosophy Shift

- Issues that may have contributed to a household's homelessness can best be addressed ***once they are permanently housed***
- For most people experiencing homelessness, intensive services are not necessary
- Vast majority of homeless individuals and families fall into homelessness ***one time*** after a housing or other crisis



# At the system level, key Housing First actions include...

- Policies and regulations do not create barriers to accessing services and housing
- People with the greatest needs are screened **INTO** programs and services, not **OUT OF**
- Communities provide a continuum of supports that meet the breadth of needs of all people experiencing homelessness, not just particular subpopulations
- Providers coordinate with each other to ensure that access to services is unified, streamlined, user-friendly, equitable, and available across the entire community
- All levels of service have a housing focus and are dedicated to quickly resolving the experience of homelessness

# Housing First Cornerstone #1

## Belief: Shift in Mindset

### Shift from...

- Many of our clients/consumers have too many barriers to be successful in housing
- Housing is too expensive for the Housing First approach to work
- Some of my clients just aren't ready for housing
- The most successful Housing First approaches use the same approach and model when working with everyone

### To...

- Creativity in housing options is critical!!
- **People Can Be Successful** regardless of barriers
- Housing First Philosophy offers a great opportunity to empower people without housing to believe in themselves and their success
- Many people that have the same housing history as our clients never become homeless and find ways to make housing work
- Creativity and flexibility are the key factors in successful housing first.



# Things to Keep in Mind



—  
NOT EASY.  
BUT SIMPLE.  
—

- Households experiencing homelessness are not significantly different than other low-income households
- Majority experience homelessness due to a financial or other crisis
- Prolonged exposure to homelessness has a significant negative impact on adults and children





# Five Key Principles of Housing First

1. Immediate Access to Housing
2. Consumer Choice and Self Determination
3. Recovery Orientation
4. Individualized and Person Driven Supports
5. Social and Community Integration

—  
NOT EASY.  
BUT SIMPLE.  
—



# Principles in Action

- **Permanent Housing**

- No time limits
- Household is a leaseholder with conditions and rights similar to other tenants
- Service participation is separate from housing and is not a condition of tenancy

- **Without Preconditions**

- Low Barriers to Entry: Acceptance into programs and housing regardless of sobriety, mental health history, criminal history, low or no income, etc.
- No “housing readiness”- programs must be client-ready, not clients program-ready
- Housing is the foundation for positive change, not the reward

- **As Quickly As Possible**

- Rapid, crisis-focused response

# And....

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- Voluntary services - participation is not required, although continuous attempts are made to engage and to make services effective and irresistible
- Strengths-based and client driven housing plans
- Community Integration- connection to formal and informal support network within the new community to help sustain housing

# Emerging Threats to Housing First

Eric Tars

*Legal Director*

National Homelessness Law Center

[etars@nlchp.org](mailto:etars@nlchp.org)



# HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS



## Emerging Threats Facing People Experiencing Homelessness

August 15, 2022

Eric Tars

Legal Director

[etars@homelesslaw.org](mailto:etars@homelesslaw.org)

@erictars @homeless\_law  
@HNHCampaign

#HousingNotHandcuffs

# Amber's Story

Hi my name is Amber  
Jachimski and I'm going to  
tell you what I have  
as a woman who  
in Saint Petersburg,  
me tell you that  
Public bathroom that  
can use after 11:00pm  
you have been tres-  
Public Park then you  
allowed to use that  
at any time or you  
sail. I have had  
myself and use  
outside on many  
when on my men  
have had to go be-  
to take care of my  
Having to use the  
outside hopping  
would see me or sexually  
assault me. Not to mention the  
Police catching me and





# Our Nation's Story

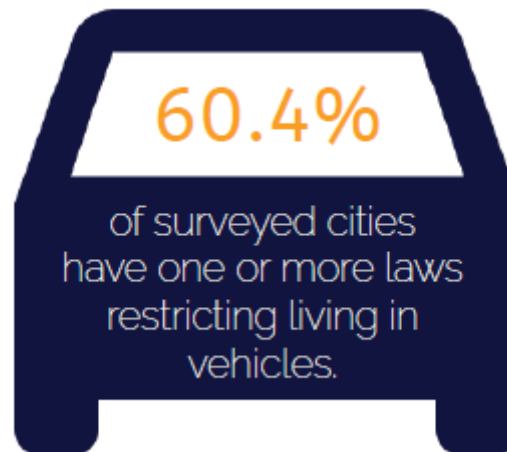


72% of cities have at least one law prohibiting camping in public.

There has been a 103% increase in city laws prohibiting loitering, loafing, and/or vagrancy since 2006.



City laws prohibiting sleeping in public have increased 50% since 2006.



60.4%

of surveyed cities have one or more laws restricting living in vehicles.

## HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS 2019

Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities

December 2019

NATIONAL LAW CENTER  
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

# Criminalization harms BIPOC more

NOTICE TO APPEAR

☐ Misdemeanor  
☐ Traffic ☒ Nontraffic

SEPTEMBER 2020

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Race/Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

**Cited for Being  
in Plain Sight:**

How California Polices  
Being Black, Brown, and  
Unhoused in Public

BY LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS  
OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

SEPTEMBER 2020

- Black adults up to 9.7 times more likely to receive citations than white adults
- Latinx adults up to 5.8 times more likely.
- But most jurisdictions don't collect housing status data.



# UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



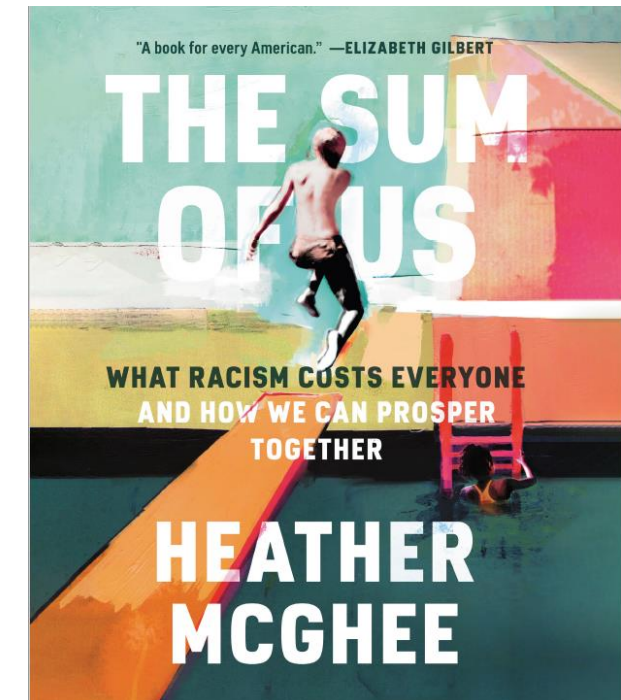
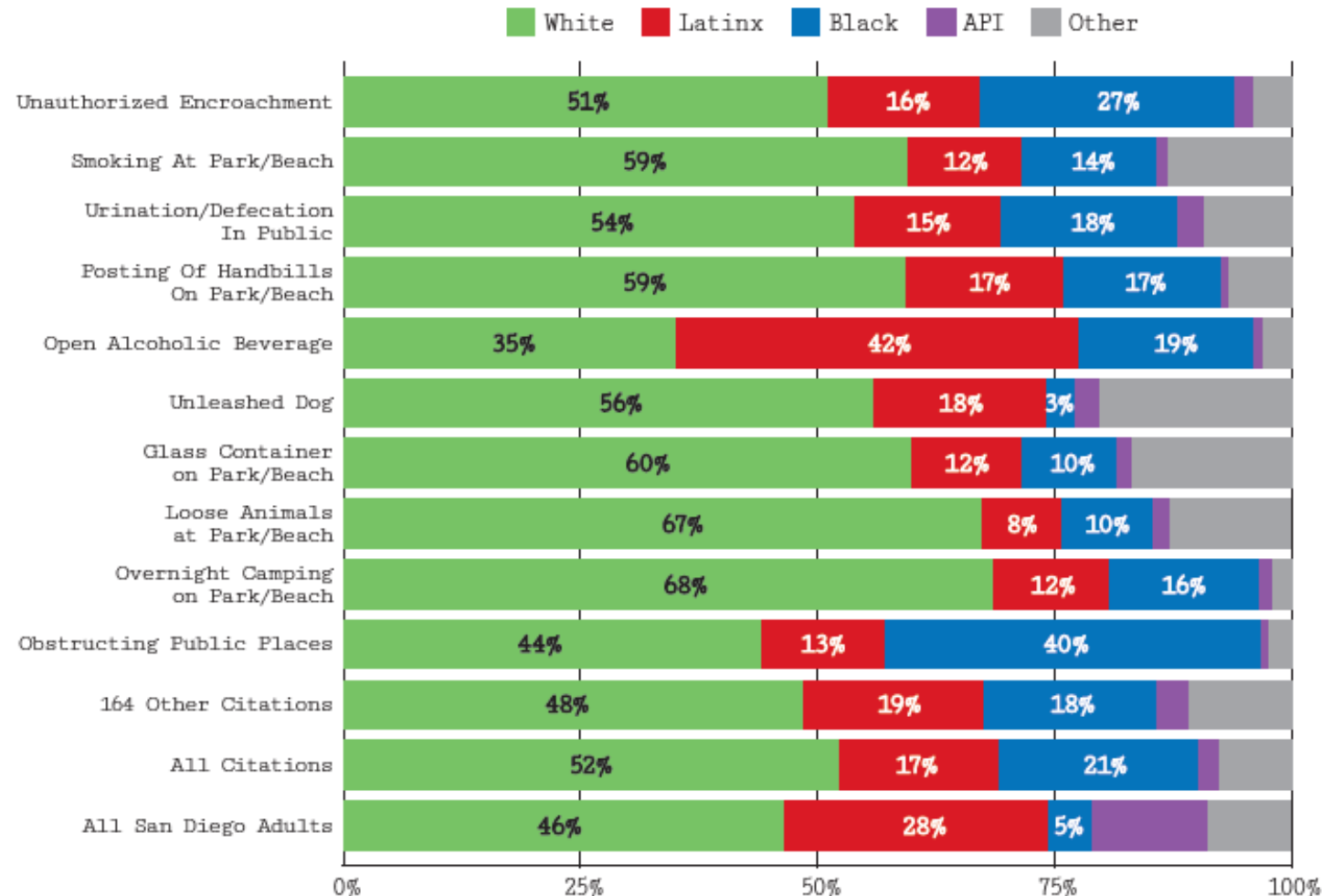
The U.S. should:

- (a) Abolish laws and policies making homelessness a crime;
- (b) Ensure close cooperation among all relevant stakeholders, including social, health, law enforcement and justice professionals at all levels to intensify efforts to find solutions for the homeless in accordance with human rights standards;
- (c) Offer incentives to decriminalize homelessness, including by providing financial support to local authorities that implement alternatives to criminalization, and withdrawing funding from local authorities that criminalize homelessness.

...[T]he Committee is concerned at the high number of homeless persons, who are disproportionately from racial and ethnic minorities, ...and at the criminalization of homelessness through laws that prohibit activities such as loitering, camping, begging, and lying in public spaces....

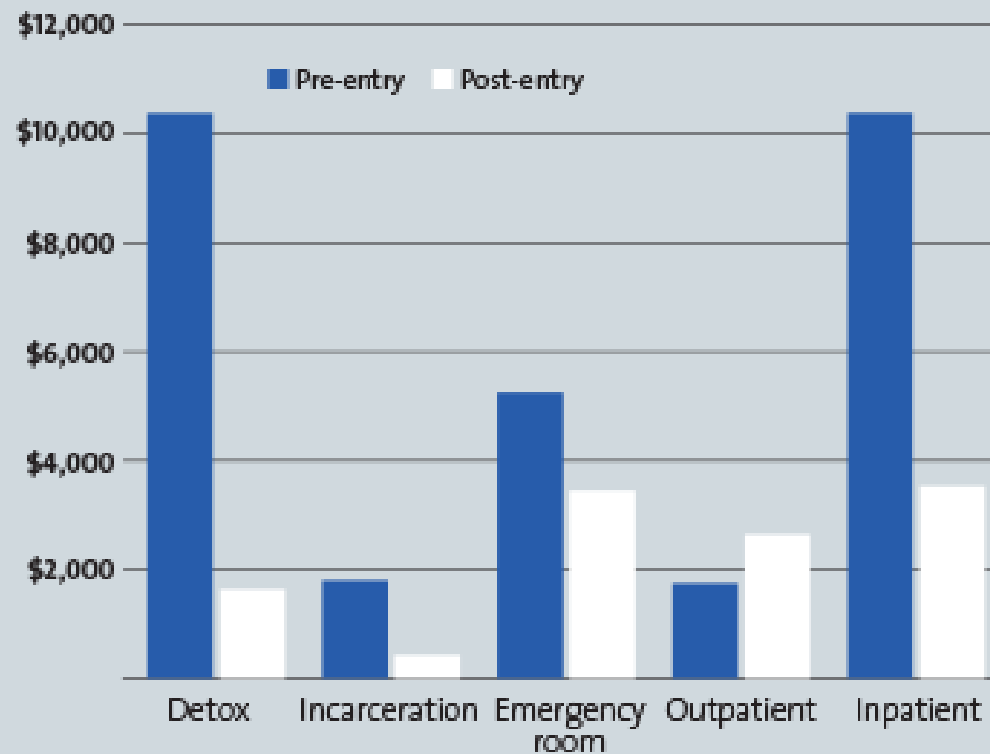
# Criminalization harms us all

San Diego PD: Top 10 Citation Types by Race/Ethnicity %  
(2017–2019)



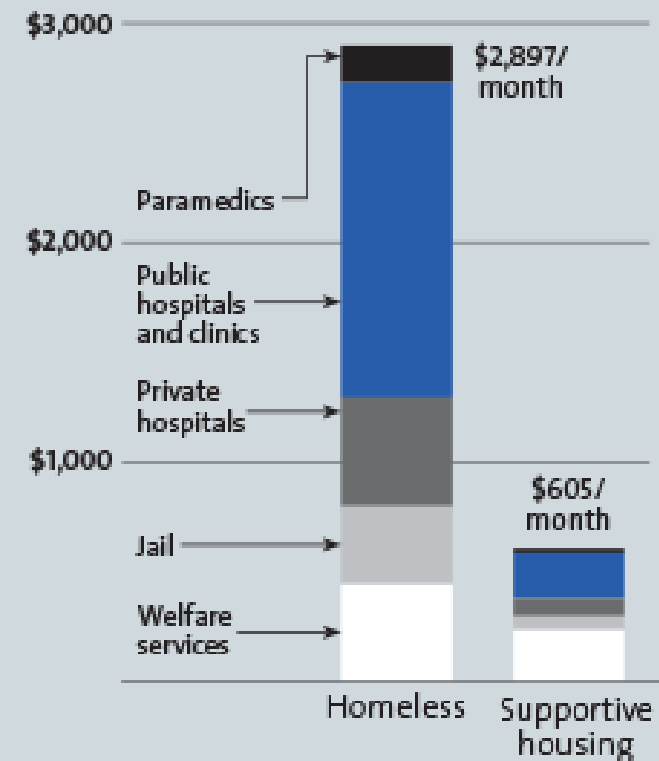
# Criminalization harms us all

**Housing First saved Denver \$17,858 per person over 2 years in these costs alone:**



Sources: Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, Economic Roundtable

**A person on LA's Skid Row costs 5 times as much as one in Housing First:**

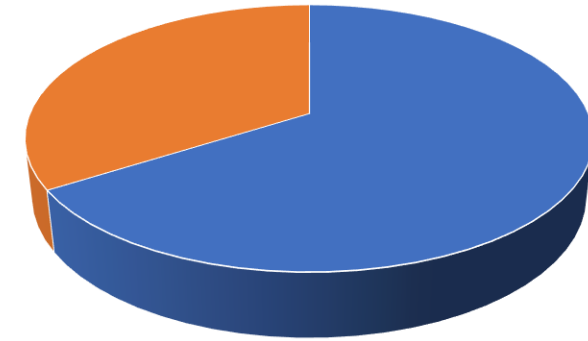


Mother Jones

# Overburdening the Criminal Legal System

- San Diego:
  - 66% of people being booked reported being homeless at some point, 39% in past 30 days
- Orange County
  - 11,600 hours police hours devoted to homeless-related calls
  - Equivalent to 6.5 full-time deputies

% homeless in recent past



■ homeless ■ not homeless





# Law Enforcement Shouldn't Be Our Front Line on Homelessness



The e-newsletter of the COPS Office | Volume 8 | Issue 12 | December 2015

[Dispatch Home](#) [COPS Home](#)

## COPS

### Alternatives to Criminalization: The Role of Law Enforcement

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People enter a career in law enforcement for a variety of reasons. Police officers serve the community, uphold the law, and save lives. But what do officers do when the policies in their communities challenge their efforts to improve the quality of life for those they serve?

One such policy is the criminalization of homelessness, an approach that some cities and towns are taking in an attempt to get people off the street. Not only does the practice do little to prevent and end homelessness but it also takes law enforcement officers away from their important work of solving crime and protecting the public. Fortunately, law enforcement can play an important role in creating solutions to homelessness that we know are more effective than criminalization and can even save taxpayer dollars.

#### Criminalization: An inefficient use of resources

People experiencing homelessness, like all people, should be held accountable when they violate the law. But arresting people for performing basic life-sustaining activities like sleeping in public takes law enforcement professionals away from what they are trained to do: fight crime. It also forces them into a role they were not trained for—interacting with people who are often coping with untreated mental health or substance abuse issues. Instead, communities need to focus resources on creating affordable housing and sufficient affordable treatment options for people dealing with serious mental health or substance abuse problems. Virtually all homelessness would disappear if there was a sufficient quantity of affordable, adequate, safe places to live.

# Emerging Threat: State-level Criminalization



- 17 states criminalize camping in public places
- 4 states criminalize sleeping in public
- 6 states criminalize sitting or lying in public
- 4 states criminalize living in vehicles
- 32 states criminalize loitering/loafing/vagrancy
- 36 states criminalize panhandling
- 9 states criminalize running away from home
- 6 states classify truancy as a status offense



# Emerging Threat: Cicero Institute Promoting State-level Criminalization

**Joe Lonsdale** @JTLonsdale

My [AmericanOptimist.com](#) team hacked into a 1990's RPG to announce Season 2.

This season focuses on solutions to important challenges the US faces, with amazing leaders in each episode.

Join us on a quest to fight for our country!

[Or, watch this and mock us for being nerdy]



91.2K views 0:56 / 2:59

12:51 PM · Dec 15, 2021 · Twitter for Advertisers

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## Homelessness: The Reality and the Solution




America has a homelessness crisis—and it's getting worse by the day. Politicians promise to stop it. Cities like San Francisco spend billions trying to end it. Nothing seems to help. We partnered with PragerU on this new documentary that reveals the root causes of homelessness and offers compassionate, effective solutions that we can all get behind.


# Emerging Threat: Cicero Institute Promoting State-level Criminalization

 **CICERO INSTITUTE**


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## Reducing Street Homelessness Act Model Bill

**SECTION 1.** This bill shall be known and may be cited as the “Reducing Street Homelessness Act of [2022].”

**(A) Purpose.** This Act will reallocate existing State homelessness and other funding to counteract the burgeoning homelessness crisis in [State].

**(B) Definitions.** As used in this Act:

(i) “Department” means the State entity that adopts and oversees the rules, regulations, and policies of [housing and homeless affairs].

(ii) “Municipality” means any political subdivision, other than CoCs, that receives money from the State to provide homeless services.

(iii) “Continuums of Care” or “CoCs” mean the local organizations which determine the use of homelessness funds, as the term is defined by the federal Housing and Urban Development.

(iv) “Nonprofit” means any charitable organization that receives State funding to provide services to the homeless.



# Cicero: Criminalization

(iii) No homelessness assistance funding shall be allocated to any CoCs or nonprofits in cities that show an increase in unsheltered homeless of at least [50] individuals for two consecutive years and refuse to enforce laws prohibiting unauthorized camping.

Sec. 364.003. INJUNCTIVE RELIEF. (a) The attorney general

(ii) may bring an action in a district court in Travis County or in a  
county in which the principal office of the entity is located to  
enjoin a violation of Section 364.002.

(b) The attorney general may recover reasonable expenses  
incurred in obtaining relief under this section, including court

(a) costs, reasonable attorney's fees, investigative costs, witness  
fees, and deposition costs.

(b) the municipality enforces State laws, including laws prohibiting unauthorized camping, sleeping, or obstructing a public sidewalk or right-of-way.

# Cicero: Redirecting Permanent Housing Funds to Short-term Encampments

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(b) Individuals must complete certain service obligations designated by the Department, including mental health and drug treatment programs as designated by the Department.

(1) Failure to submit to the forgoing requirements or any drug test result that yields a positive result for any substance on the State-controlled substances list shall result in the immediate removal from State-run structured camping facilities.

(v) A person that owns, operates, manages, or otherwise controls a camping facility under (A)(ii) is immune from liability for all civil claims, excluding claims involving the person's intentional or grossly negligent conduct, arising out of the ownership, operation, management, or other control of such facility.

(vi) Camping facilities under (A)(ii) are not subject to otherwise applicable building codes or ordinances.

# Cicero: Forced Institutionalization

THE CICERO INSTITUTE

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(iii) Upon determination that the subject of such a petition meets any of the above criteria, the State court shall order that the subject be confined to a State psychiatric institution for a period of 72 hours, during which time the facility staff shall conduct a mental health evaluation.

(a) At the end of 72 hours, the facility staff shall recommend a course of further treatment to the court, with a preference for Assisted Outpatient Treatment options where appropriate.

(1) Any initial period of Assisted Outpatient Treatment shall last for a minimum of [90 days].

(2) Any renewal of Assisted Outpatient Treatment shall last for a minimum of [180 days].

(3) The court shall specify consequences and procedures to follow if the individual does not follow the requirements of the Assisted Outpatient Treatment program.

(4) Punishment for violations of an Assisted Outpatient Treatment program shall not exceed [one month] in jail or a fine of [\$5,000].

# Cicero: Law Enforcement HOT

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## Reducing Street Homelessness Act Model Bill

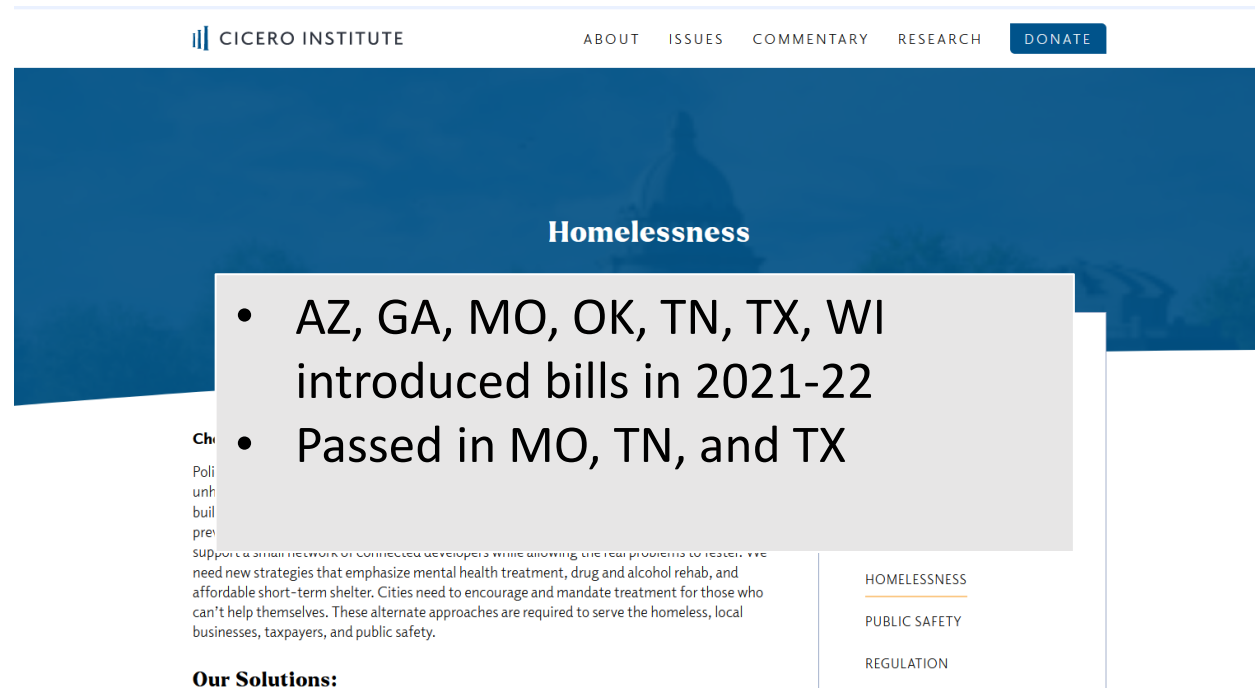
### **(H) Homeless outreach teams and public safety funding.**

(i) A municipality may allocate up to [25%] of the funds it receives from the State through grants for public safety to the creation of homeless outreach teams. These teams shall;

- (a) Be composed of both police officers and social service professionals;
- (b) Work to move individuals camping and sleeping in public or private places not fit for human habitation into homeless services; and
- (c) Enforce all State laws against street camping and sleeping in public, and these teams should have a preference towards moving homeless individuals into drug or mental health courts whenever possible.

(iv) "Nonprofit" means any charitable organization that receives State funding to provide services to the homeless.

# Emerging Threat: Cicero Promoting State-level Criminalization



The screenshot shows the Cicero Institute website. The header includes the logo and navigation links: ABOUT, ISSUES, COMMENTARY, RESEARCH, and a DONATE button. The main content area has a blue background with the word 'Homelessness' in white. Below this, a grey box contains a list of states and their legislative actions. To the left of this box, there is a vertical list of topics: CHALLENGES, POLICY, UNHousing, BUILDING, and PREVENTION. To the right, there is a sidebar with three links: HOMELESSNESS, PUBLIC SAFETY, and REGULATION.

**CICERO INSTITUTE** ABOUT ISSUES COMMENTARY RESEARCH [DONATE](#)

## Homelessness

- AZ, GA, MO, OK, TN, TX, WI introduced bills in 2021-22
- Passed in MO, TN, and TX

CHALLENGES  
POLICY  
UNHousing  
BUILDING  
PREVENTION

Support a small network of connected developers while allowing the real problems to re-emerge. We need new strategies that emphasize mental health treatment, drug and alcohol rehab, and affordable short-term shelter. Cities need to encourage and mandate treatment for those who can't help themselves. These alternate approaches are required to serve the homeless, local businesses, taxpayers, and public safety.

**Our Solutions:**

[HOMELESSNESS](#)  
[PUBLIC SAFETY](#)  
[REGULATION](#)

# State-level Criminalization: Tennessee

Tennessee is about to become the 1st state to make camping on public land a felony

May 26, 2022 · 8:18 AM ET

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Adam Atnip, who is homeless and lives in his car, accepts money from a driver as he panhandles on May 10, 2022, in Cookeville, Tenn.

Mark Humphrey/AP

In TN:

Minimum wage: \$7.25/hr

Rent affordable at min wage: \$307/mo.

Avg. rent studio: \$705/mo.

Avg. cost/mo. of prison: \$1410

# Involuntary Commitment: “Criminalization-lite”

- State proposals to make it easier to involuntarily commit individual for up to 2 years
- Law enforcement empowered to make referrals
- Discriminatory on ability and race

## Reducing Street Homelessness Model Bill

11/02/2021

DOWNLOAD



### CARE Court

A New Framework for Community Assistance, Recovery & Empowerment

CARE Court is a proposed framework to deliver mental health and substance use disorder services to the most severely impaired Californians who too often languish – suffering in homelessness or incarceration – without the treatment they desperately need.

#### THE CARE COURT IS A NEW APPROACH AND A PARADIGM SHIFT

It connects a person in crisis with a court-ordered Care Plan for up to 12 months, with the possibility to extend for an additional 12 months. The framework provides individuals with a clinically appropriate, community-based set of services and supports that are culturally and linguistically competent. This includes short-term stabilization medications, wellness and recovery supports, and connection to social services, including housing. Housing is an important component – finding stability and staying connected to treatment, even with the proper supports, is next to impossible while living outdoors, in a tent or a vehicle.

CARE Court is an upstream diversion to prevent more restrictive conservatorships or incarceration; this is based on evidence which demonstrates that many people can stabilize, begin healing, and exit homelessness in less restrictive, community-based care settings. With advances in treatment models, new longer acting antipsychotic treatments, and the right clinical team and housing plan, individuals who have historically suffered tremendously on the streets or during avoidable incarceration can be

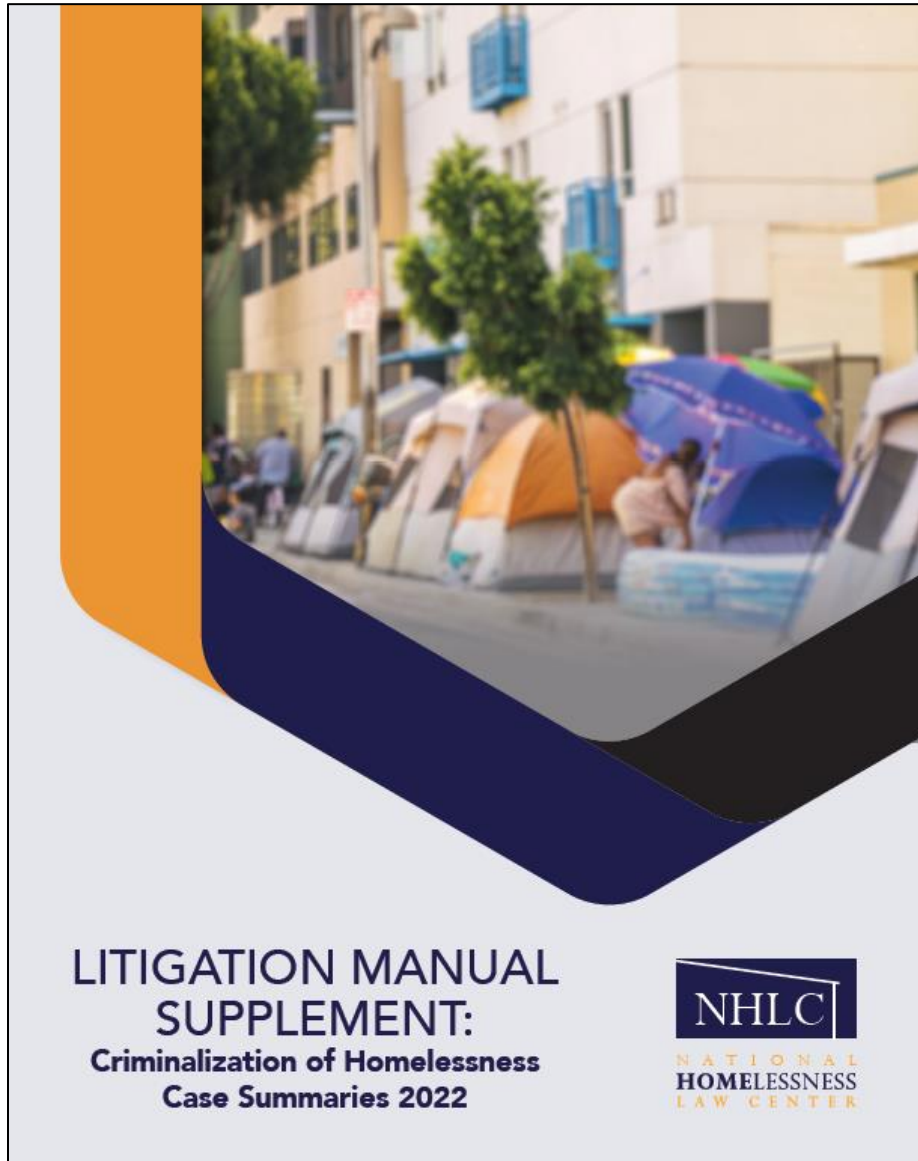
successfully stabilized and supported in the community.

CARE Court is not for everyone experiencing homelessness or mental illness; rather it focuses on people with schizophrenia spectrum or other psychotic disorders who lack medical decision-making capacity – before they get arrested and committed to a State Hospital or become so impaired that they end up in a Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Mental Health Conservatorship. Although homelessness has many faces in California, among the most tragic is the face of the sickest who suffer from treatable mental health conditions – this proposal aims connect these individuals to effective treatment and support, mapping a path to long-term recovery. CARE Court will help thousands of Californians on their journey to sustained wellness.

CARE Court engagement begins with a petition to the Court from a wider range of individuals, including care providers, family members, first responders, or counties, among others. CARE Court may be an appropriate next step after a short-term involuntary hospital hold (either 72 hours/5150 or 14 days/5250) or for those who can be safely diverted from a criminal proceeding.



# Courts are striking down these laws



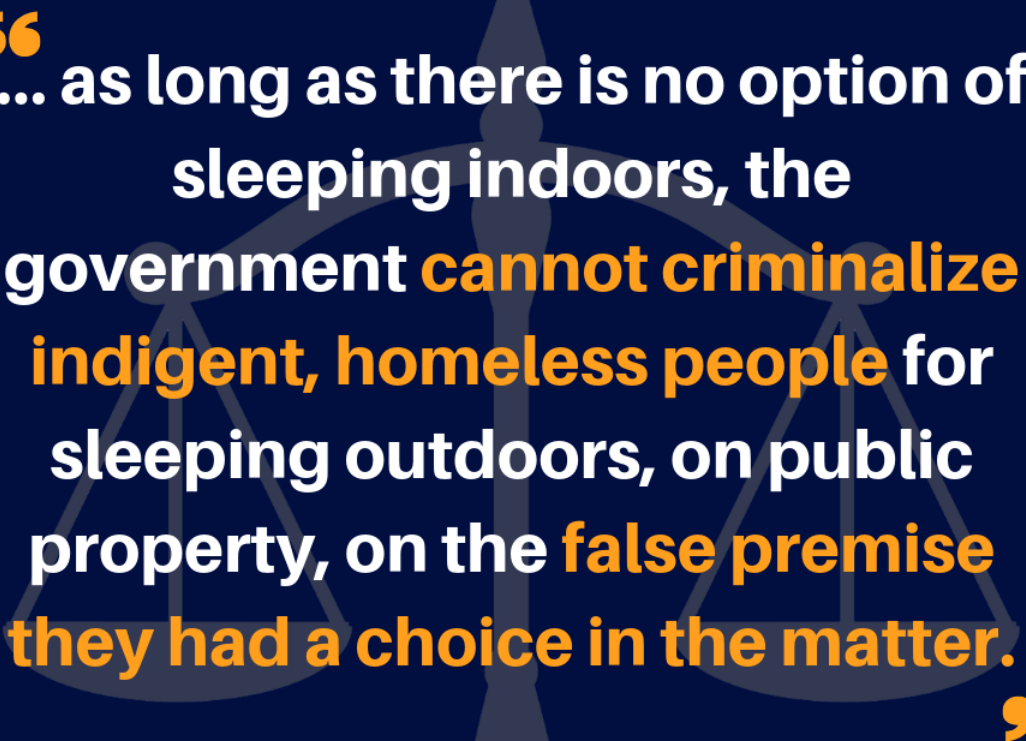
**LITIGATION MANUAL  
SUPPLEMENT:**  
**Criminalization of Homelessness**  
**Case Summaries 2022**



Broken down by category, favorable results were obtained in:

- 100% of cases challenging panhandling bans since 2015
  - (60% including older cases)
- 60% of cases challenging camping bans and/or sweeps of encampments
- 77% of cases challenging loitering, loafing, and/or vagrancy bans





“... as long as there is no option of sleeping indoors, the government **cannot criminalize indigent, homeless people** for sleeping outdoors, on public property, on the **false premise they had a choice in the matter.**”

— *Martin v. Boise*, 9th Cir. (Sept. 4, 2018)

NATIONAL LAW CENTER  
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

# Emerging Threat: Harm Induction Masquerading As Harm Reduction



- “Homeless encampments are taking over...the dangerously deranged roam our streets with impunity....We have to take back our streets and public spaces from the homeless, drug-addicted, and deranged...”
- “For the good of everyone, the homeless need to go to shelters, the mentally ill need to go to institutions, and the unhoused drug addicts need to go to rehab, and if appropriate, jail.”
- “It will take years to build hospitals and housing to take care of them...[the only way to address homelessness is to] “open up large parcels of land in the outer reaches of the city, bring medical professionals..., build permanent bathrooms and other facilities, and create thousands of high-quality tents.”

# Housing is A Human Right

## THE BIDEN PLAN FOR INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES THROUGH HOUSING

Joe Biden is running for President to rebuild the middle class and ensure that this time everyone comes along. He believes the middle class isn't a number, but a value set which includes the ability to own your own home and live in a safe community. **Housing should be a right, not a privilege.**



### Our Values

There are many unknowns about the next federal strategic plan, but one thing is clear: It will reflect USICH's values of racial equity, Housing First, decriminalization, and inclusion. At the core of these values is the belief that **housing should be a right—not a privilege.**



Justice in housing  
is everyone realizing  
the fundamental truth —  
**housing is a human right.**

**Sec. Marcia Fudge**

US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Alliance for  
Housing  
Justice

# DOJ



THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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## JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE


Thursday, August 5, 2021

### Justice Department Announces Investigation of the City of Phoenix and the Phoenix Police Department

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland and Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke for the Civil Rights Division announced today that the Justice Department has opened a pattern or practice investigation into the City of Phoenix and the Phoenix Police Department (PhxPD).

This investigation will assess all types of use of force by PhxPD officers, including deadly force. The investigation will also seek to determine whether PhxPD engages in retaliatory activity against people for conduct protected by the First Amendment; whether PhxPD engages in discriminatory policing; and whether PhxPD unlawfully seizes or disposes of the belongings of individuals experiencing homelessness. In addition, the investigation will assess the City and PhxPD's systems and practices for responding to people with disabilities. The investigation will include a comprehensive review of PhxPD policies, training, supervision, and force investigations, as well as PhxPD's systems of accountability, including misconduct complaint intake, investigation, review, disposition, and discipline.

# HUD



## HUD Exchange

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Laws, Regulations, and Federal Register Notices

### FY 2015 CoC Program NOFA


Date Published: September 2015

#### Description

This revised Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) establishes the funding criteria for the FY 2015 Continuum of Care (CoC) Program. HUD is making available approximately \$1.89 billion in funding for the CoC Program. The CoC Program is designed to promote a community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness; to provide funding for efforts by non-profit organizations to address homelessness; and to provide funding for efforts by local governments to address homelessness.

**Outreach.** Up to 2 points to CoCs that demonstrate recipients have implemented specific strategies that address the criminalization of homelessness....Applicants must describe how they are reducing criminalization of homelessness in their CoC plan and is highlighted in yellow.

Applicants should review and follow the steps as outlined in the NOFA to ensure that applications



## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

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### CONTINUUM OF CARE SUPPLEMENTAL TO ADDRESS UNSHELTERED AND RURAL HOMELESSNESS (SPECIAL NOFO)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released a first-of-its-kind package of resources to address unsheltered homelessness and homeless encampments, including funds set aside specifically to address homelessness in rural communities.

The \$322 million available under this NOFO will enhance communities' capacity to humanely and effectively address unsheltered homelessness by connecting vulnerable individuals and families to housing, healthcare, and supportive services. This Special NOFO strongly promotes partnerships with healthcare organizations, public housing authorities and mainstream housing providers, and people with lived expertise of homelessness.

## USICH



United States Interagency  
Council on Homelessness

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## 7 Principles for Addressing Encampments

June 15, 2022

This USICH guidance, [available as a PDF](#), is intended to help communities facing a crisis of unsheltered homelessness.

Local decision-makers are caught between demands for swift action and the reality that permanent, sustainable solutions—housing with voluntary supportive services—take time and investment to bring to scale. Some communities have turned to aggressive law enforcement approaches that criminalize homelessness and close encampments without offering shelter or housing options. While these efforts may have the short-term effect of clearing an encampment from public view, without connection to adequate shelter, housing, and supportive services, encampments will appear again in another neighborhood or even

### Featured Tools

[Case Studies: Ending Homelessness for People Living in Encampments](#)

[Caution is Needed When Considering “Sanctioned Encampments” or “Safe Zones”](#)

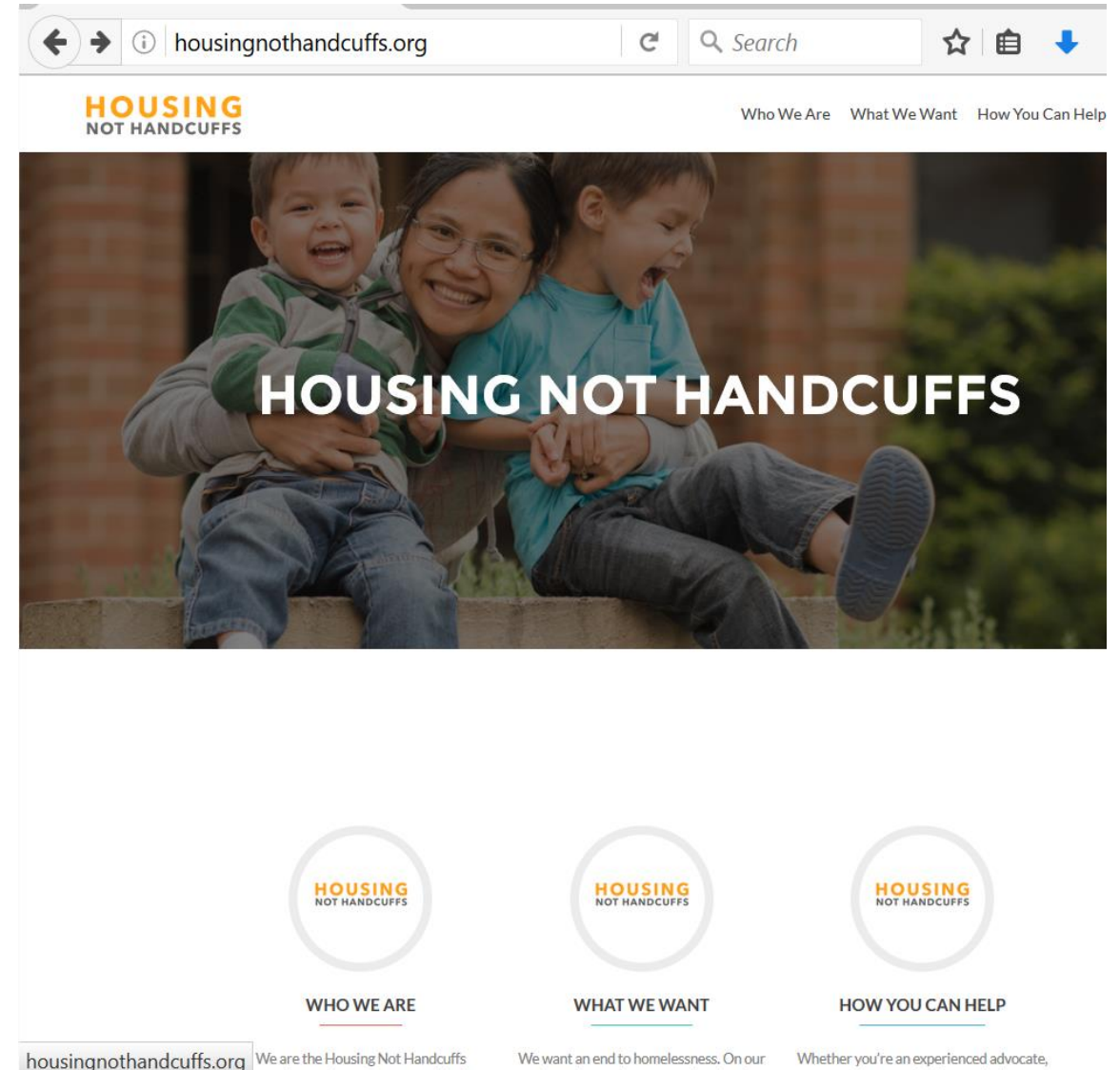
[Report: What Clearing Homeless Encampments Costs Cities](#)

[Ending Homelessness for People Living in](#)



# Actions YOU can take!

- Endorse Housing Not Handcuffs
- Oppose criminalizing laws in partnership with directly impacted individuals
- Support housing as a human right



# Amber's Story

[About Us](#)[Take Action](#)[Resources](#)[News and Events](#)[Contact Us](#)

<https://homelesslaw.org/resources/poor-not-guilty/>

Poornotguilty.org

## Poor Not Guilty: Fines & Fees Challenge

The Fines & Fees Challenge is an **interactive educational tool** based on a series of real-life experiences that highlight how fines and fees for petty offenses create impossible situations for those experiencing poverty and/or homelessness. Each scenario asks the player to make a series of choices in response to an inciting circumstance with the goal of escaping the cycle that financial punishment systems trap them in. To varying degrees throughout the U.S., cities and states impose heavy fines for minor offenses at every stage of the criminal justice system. Millions of Americans get trapped in a cycle of punishment simply because they can't afford to pay these fines and fees. Without any means of escape from a system designed to punish poverty, many Americans lose their jobs, homes, and even their children. Almost every state has laws that punish and fine people experiencing homelessness for engaging in necessary activities, such as sleeping or sitting in public. These types of policies criminalize homelessness and fail to address its root causes, like the lack of access to affordable and adequate housing.

An infographic titled 'Did You Know' with a dark green background. At the top left is a calendar icon showing 'DAY 0 July 20'. To its right is a wallet icon with a dollar sign and the text 'BALANCE \$30' and 'DAILY EXPENSES \$5'. The main text area is white with a black border. It contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph states that providing housing and services costs governments 2-3 times less than cycling homeless persons through the criminal justice system. The second paragraph states that housing is a proven solution to homelessness, citing that at least 78 communities and three states have effectively ended veteran homelessness by putting in place a system that prevents homelessness or, when it cannot be prevented, ensures that it is rare, brief, and non-recurring. The third paragraph cites the source as the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the National Homelessness Law Center (NHLC)'s #AskForHelpBecause campaign.

**Did You Know**

Studies show that **providing housing and services** costs governments 2-3 times less than cycling homeless persons through the criminal justice system.

Housing is a proven solution to homelessness. Indeed, at least 78 communities and three states have effectively ended veteran homelessness by putting in place a system that prevents homelessness or, when it cannot be prevented, ensures that it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Source: U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the National Homelessness Law Center (NHLC)'s #AskForHelpBecause campaign





## Keep in touch:



[www.homelesslaw.org](http://www.homelesslaw.org)

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@erictars

@homeless\_law



National Homelessness  
Law Center



<https://housingnothandcuffs.org>



@HNHCampaign

#HousingNotHandcuffs

# Impact on People Experiencing Homelessness

Donald Whitehead, Jr.

*Executive Director*

National Coalition for the Homeless

[dwhitehead@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:dwhitehead@nationalhomeless.org)





**BRING AMERICA  
HOME NOW**

<https://bringamericahomenow.org>

# The Impact of Criminalization on People Experiencing Homelessness

August 2022



# National Coalition for the Homeless

The National Coalition for the Homeless is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to a single mission:

To end and prevent homelessness while ensuring the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness are met and their civil rights are respected and protected.



# Impacts

- Criminalization exacerbates health problems and creates new ones
- Creates additional barriers to accessing housing, and employment and extends the length of time people remain unhoused
- Undermines trust in systems of care and disrupts the engagement of outreach workers; street medicine practices and other community partners conducting outreach.

# Impacts

- People experiencing homelessness involved in raids lose valuables. (Identification, personal items, clothing, medical devices including wheelchairs)
- Criminalization forces people into isolation the result may be deadly. Isolated people experiencing homelessness are more susceptible to violence and hate crimes.
- People experiencing homelessness have a shorter life span than housed individuals.



# Closing

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



BRING AMERICA  
HOME NOW

<https://bringamerica homenow.org>



NATIONAL  
COALITION FOR  
THE HOMELESS

# Ways to Take Action

**Sarah Saadian**

*Senior Vice President for Public Policy &  
Field Organizing*

**National Low Income Housing Coalition**

[ssaadian@nlihc.org](mailto:ssaadian@nlihc.org)





Universal • Stable • Affordable

AUGUST RECESS 2022  
**TOOLKIT**

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NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION



# Take Action!



1. **Schedule meetings with elected officials.** Use our [meeting request template](#) and [tips for planning](#) in-district meetings.
2. **Invite elected officials to tour an affordable housing development, or a Housing First program.** Read more about [how to plan](#) an effective site visit or tour.
3. **Amplify on social media key messages about America's housing and homelessness crisis and long-term solutions.** Use our sample [social media messages](#).
4. **Share stories of those directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability.** Learn more about [how to tell compelling stories](#).

# Talking Points



- **What are the major causes of America's housing and homelessness crisis?**
- **Why is homelessness increasing in some communities?**
- **What is Housing First?**
- **Why are some elected officials turning to misguided and harmful measures?**
- **What are the long-term solutions needed to end America's homelessness and housing crisis?**

# Resources



## State and Congressional District Profiles

### Factsheets on Housing First

- Why Housing First is a [critical strategy](#) for ending homelessness.
- [Research](#) on the effectiveness of Housing First.
- How Housing First [cut veteran homelessness](#) in half.
- How Housing First [supports recovery](#) from substance use disorders.

## Talking Points to Oppose the Cicero-Backed Legislation



# Immediate Opportunities



- Urge Congress to provide the *highest possible funding* in FY23 for affordable housing programs
  - Top Priorities for FY23:
    - Expand housing vouchers to an additional 200,000 households, as proposed by the President.
    - Provide significant funding for public housing.
    - Fund Homeless Assistance Grants at \$3.6 billion
    - Provide \$100 million for legal aid to prevent evictions
    - Increase funding for tribal housing programs.
- [Sign a national letter](#) to support the highest funding possible for affordable housing programs.

# Long-Term Solutions



- **Family Stability and Opportunity Vouchers Act ([S.1991](#))** – Ask your senators to cosponsor this bipartisan bill to create 500,000 housing vouchers w/ counseling services for families with children.
- **Eviction Crisis Act/Stable Families Act ([S.2182/H.R.8327](#))** – Ask your senators and representatives to cosponsor this bipartisan bill to create a permanent Emergency Rental Assistance program to help families avoid eviction and, in worst cases, homelessness.
- **Fair Housing Improvement Act ([S.4485/H.R.8213](#))** – Ask your senators and representatives to cosponsor this bill to prohibit housing discrimination based on “source of income” and military and veteran status.



NATIONAL LOW INCOME  
HOUSING COALITION

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Public Policy and Field Organizing  
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# Ways to Take Action

**Steve Berg**

*Vice President for Programs and Policy*

**National Alliance to End Homelessness**

[sberg@naeh.org](mailto:sberg@naeh.org)

# Homelessness: Housing First and Congress

Steve Berg

National Alliance to End Homelessness

# Virtual Hill Day

Talk to Congress about homelessness and Housing First

- Wednesday, September 14, 2022
- Focusing on key HUD spending accounts
- Help available to set up virtual meetings
- Interested? E-mail Jerry Jones  
**[jjones@naeh.org](mailto:jjones@naeh.org)**



# What to say to Congress

- Homelessness has bad impacts for everyone
- We know what to do about homelessness (the Housing First approach)
- How it's working in your community and elsewhere
- Better spending in accounts like Homeless Assistance and Tenant-Based Rental Assistance will take Housing First to scale

# Annual spending bills aka Appropriations

- The process is stuck because no agreement on allocations for each agency (Appropriations need 60 votes in Senate)
- There is support for good increases, but not a done deal
- Need a constant drumbeat on more funding and using the funding in the most effective manner
- Final decisions October? December? Spring? but may lock in individual accounts at any time

# Homelessness

Steve Berg

National Alliance to End Homelessness

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# Ways to Take Action

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*Manager of Government Affairs*

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

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# Resources

Next Webinar: *"Homelessness is a Housing Problem"*  
Monday, August 29, at 2:30 pm ET - 4:00 pm ET

Register at: <https://bit.ly/3vIbn5o>

Read more about Housing First: <https://bit.ly/3vHf8YR>

Take action during August recess: <https://bit.ly/3d8XNSd>

