

Facts on Homelessness

The root cause of homelessness in California is poverty, with about 40% of Californians living at, or just above, the poverty line. For those Californians already experiencing poverty – and facing a statewide affordable housing crisis – numerous factors can increase the risk of homelessness, including:

Domestic Violence;
Lack of Work Opportunities;
Change in Family Status;
Fraying Safety Net;
Eviction;
Foreclosure;
Mental Illness;
Addiction;
Bills Higher than Earnings;
Loss of Job;
Lack of Affordable Health Care;
Incarceration;
Disability;
Foster Youth Emancipation; and
Lack of Affordable Housing.

According to recent data:

- 134,000 homeless individuals reside in California.
- Within California's homeless population:
 - Two-thirds are unsheltered, having to instead live in vehicles, abandoned buildings, parks, or on the street.
 - One in five live with severe mental illness, with roughly the same number experiencing substance use disorders (SUD).
- Studies show that a single person remaining chronically homeless costs tax payers between \$30,000 - \$50,000 per year.



California is experiencing a serious housing affordability crisis:

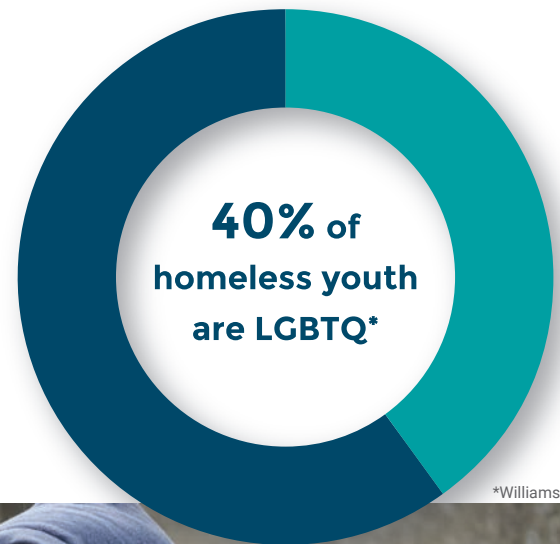
- California alone has 21 of the 30 most expensive rental markets in the nation.
- To afford the average rent without spending more than 30% of their income, an individual must make more than \$60,000 a year. In 2017, the annual median wage for an individual in California was just \$41,000.
- California sits at 49th in the nation for per capita housing production. In 2014-16 California built an average of 75,000 units each year, while the population increased by 300,000 each consecutive year.



Every Californian deserves to live in a safe and affordable home. County health and social services are one part of the equation, and County Behavioral Health Departments will continue to work toward meaningful solutions. Ultimately, city, county, and state governments need to come together to create smart, sustainable policy changes to resolve this crisis.

County Behavioral Health departments work diligently to assist homeless individuals living with mental health issues and SUD, regularly providing services such as counseling, case management, crisis treatment and medication evaluation and support. Current county-led programs that help to prevent homelessness, while also assisting individuals currently experiencing homelessness, include:

- **No Place Like Home Act (NPLH)** – Signed into law in 2016, this act will provide two billion dollars for construction of permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals living with mental illness.
 - Currently, NPLH is tied up in the courts. Governor Brown proposed placing NPLH on the November ballot for approval, to circumvent the court process.
- **Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS)** – Under this model, county SUD programs assess a person's whole health needs, including their living environment, and offer coordinated individualized care which incorporates referrals to recovery housing.
- **Full-Service Partnerships (FSP)** – FSPs assist with housing, employment and education, and provide services and treatment for co-occurring mental health and SUD issues.
- **Whole Person Care (WPC)** – There are 24 WPC pilots throughout the state, which offer an integrated and coordinated approach between health, behavioral health and social service agencies to provide efficient and practical resources to Medi-Cal recipients. Many of the pilot programs focus on residents who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.



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