

# Utah Office of Homeless Services

## ANNUAL REPORT DASHBOARD ON HOMELESSNESS



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Office of Homeless Services advocates for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to shelter provision, integrating wrap-around services, behavioral health support, and measurable success metrics. State Legislature funding is essential for coordinating efforts among cities, counties, businesses, faith-based organizations, and the philanthropic community.

In the 2024 General Session, state legislators affirmed the importance of continuing to invest in sustainable solutions by allocating funding for the following:

- **Emergency Shelter (\$37,050,800):** We are expanding our emergency shelter system to meet growing demand, reinforcing existing resources, and increasing shelter options to ensure everyone in need finds support. This funding also allows for effective enforcement of no-camping ordinances, fostering a safer community. The one-time funding will be allocated for low-barrier emergency shelter development, statewide homeless system support, data improvement, and the Department of Alcohol Services Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund round-up initiative.
- **Homeless Systems Support and Mitigation (\$13,616,700):** This ongoing funding provides statewide homeless system support, data improvement and Homeless Shelter Cities Mitigation.
- **Prevention (\$4,426,800):** Our commitment to tackling the affordable housing crisis remains unwavering as we strive to empower families with resources needed for stable housing. Additionally, we are dedicated to equipping families with necessary tools to access quality care for individuals facing mental and behavioral health challenges.
- **Behavioral Health (\$11,084,500):** Recognizing the critical role mental and behavioral health play in ensuring stability, we are bolstering services and educational opportunities, addressing the persistent workforce shortage in the behavioral health sector. These initiatives will improve access to vital care and create a more resilient community.

The Office of Homeless Services appreciates the support of the legislature in allocating funding for critical initiatives to address homelessness. This support will make a significant impact in several key areas:

- Enhancing data and reporting capabilities is crucial for better understanding and addressing homelessness trends, identifying gaps in services, and ensuring resources are allocated effectively. By improving these capabilities, policymakers and service providers can make more informed decisions and tailor interventions to meet specific community needs.
- Supporting homeless services statewide is essential for ensuring that individuals and families receive the assistance they need regardless of their location. This funding will bolster existing services and strengthen partnerships with local organizations to better serve vulnerable populations.
- Creating additional resources for immediate crisis response and addressing unsheltered homelessness is particularly urgent. These efforts can provide immediate relief to individuals living on the streets, offering them access to safe shelters, basic necessities, and pathways to more stable housing solutions.
- Expanding services throughout the winter is crucial, as colder months can exacerbate the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness. Increased funding will support expanded capacity at emergency shelters, code blue response, and outreach efforts to ensure that no one is left exposed to harsh weather conditions without access to essential services.

Overall, this funding reflects a commitment to tackling homelessness comprehensively and compassionately. It underscores the importance of investing in both immediate interventions and long-term solutions to support individuals and families on their journey toward stability and independence.

As part of Utah's ongoing effort to enhance its homeless system, the 2024 Utah Legislature passed HB 298 to restructure the governing body responsible for distributing vital funding and overseeing local homeless providers. The new [Utah Homeless Services Board](#) brings together representatives from government, private industry, philanthropy, and homelessness organizations to coordinate statewide support for individuals experiencing homelessness.

The Utah Office of Homeless Services is committed to expanding prevention efforts, robust wrap-around services, and support for those transitioning out of homelessness as pivotal strategies. Prevention initiatives encompass financial assistance to prevent evictions, mediation services, and housing subsidies. Wrap-around services are comprehensive and encompass mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, job training, and childcare assistance to tackle the root causes of homelessness. Supportive services for individuals exiting homelessness typically involve transitional housing, case management, and pathways to long-term housing solutions. These efforts aim not only to offer temporary assistance but also to promote lasting and sustainable outcomes.

By expanding and implementing these strategies, we aim to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring, thereby supporting individuals and families in achieving stability.

We express sincere gratitude for the continued support and encouragement of all who work tirelessly to serve Utahns experiencing homelessness. Together, we can make a lasting difference, providing hope and opportunities to Utahns affected by homelessness. Special thanks are extended to the Governor's office and the Department of Workforce Services for their essential support and guidance in this work.