



North Carolina Coalition

securing resources ■ encouraging public dialogue ■ advocating for public policy change

to End Homelessness

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Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing: Housing for which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for total housing costs, including rent, mortgage payments, condominium fees, utilities, taxes, and insurance, as applicable for rental or owned housing units.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Center (ADATC): ADATCs in North Carolina operate with the following mission: to provide medically monitored detoxification/crisis stabilization and short-term treatment to prepare adults with substance abuse problems for ongoing community-based services. There are three centers in North Carolina: Walter B. Jones in Pitt County, R.J. Blackley in Granville County, and Julian F. Keith in Buncombe County.

Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR): The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is a report to the U.S. Congress on the extent and nature of homelessness in America. The report is prepared by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and programs' capacity to house homeless persons. The report is based on two data sources: Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data about persons who experience homelessness during a 12-month period and Point-in-Time Count data about persons who experience homelessness on a single designated night in January.

Annual Performance Report (APR): All recipients of Continuum of Care Program funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are required to submit an Annual Performance Report each year. The APR is a reporting tool used by HUD to track the progress and accomplishments of programs that receive this funding.

Area Median Income (AMI): Each year, the federal government calculates the median income for communities across the country. Area median incomes are adjusted for family size. Affordable housing programs usually use a percentage of area median income as a qualifier for program eligibility. For example, some programs serve families and individuals up to 80% of AMI, while others reserve units for those at 50%, 30%, or even 15% so that people with the lowest incomes are offered housing they can afford.

Assessment Tools: A series of questions that are designed to aid communities in triaging households for housing and services based on need. Examples of specific assessment tools are the Vulnerability Index (VI), Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT), and the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT).

Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoCs): Many states have large areas (often rural) which are not covered by regional, county, or city Continuums of Care and are instead grouped into one large Balance of State CoC. Balance of State CoCs operate in 31 states and make up 7 percent of all CoCs. These CoCs usually include regions and organizations of varying capacity levels that have joined together to submit a single Continuum of Care Program application for their combined geographical area. North Carolina has a Balance of State CoC that is made up of 79 mostly rural counties from around the state.

Bed Utilization Rate: A program's bed utilization rate is the percentage of its beds that are occupied at a given point in time. The rate is calculated by dividing the program's number of occupied beds by its total number of beds. Bed utilization rates are used as an indicator of HMIS data quality and can be used to evaluate program performance.

Chronically Homeless: Prior to the passage of the HEARTH Act, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defined chronically homeless as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. Under the HEARTH Act, the definition was expanded to also include families with at least one adult member who has a disabling condition and has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of community development needs, including decent affordable housing, services for the most vulnerable citizens, and job creation through the expansion and retention of businesses. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to 1209 general units of local government and states.

Continuum of Care (CoC): A local consortium of agencies that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires to be formed by community organizations and stakeholders in order to apply for and receive HUD funding through an annual competitive application. Most CoCs include a majority of a community's or region's non-profit and faith-based homeless service providers and local government representation, and may also include law enforcement, hospitals, local colleges and universities, churches, etc. The CoC's responsibilities include holding regular public meetings; establishing performance targets and evaluating HUD-funded programs; establishing a coordinated assessment system; creating written standards for providing assistance; designating and operating an HMIS; and conducting an annual Point-in-Time Count.

Coordinated Assessment: Coordinated assessment (also called coordinated entry or coordinated intake) refers to a process designed to coordinate intake, assessment, and provision of referrals for people accessing a community's homeless services system. Models for coordinated assessment include a centralized phone hotline, a single physical point of access, or a decentralized coordinated system using a standardized process at multiple locations.

Disability: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 8 program defines a "person with a disability" as a person who is determined to: 1) have a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that is expected to be of continued and indefinite duration, substantially impedes his or her ability to live independently, and is of such a nature that the ability could be improved by more suitable housing conditions; or 2) have a developmental disability, as defined in the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. The term physical or mental impairment may include, but is not limited to, conditions such as visual or hearing impairment, mobility impairment, HIV infection, mental retardation, drug addiction (except current illegal use of or addiction to drugs), or mental illness.

Doubled-Up: Also known as couch-surfing, a situation in which persons are living with relatives or friends on a temporary basis for economic reasons and have a host/guest relationship. These persons are not on a lease or mortgage and could be asked to leave at any time. This does not include legal arrangements such as foster care. Doubled-up situations fall into Category 3 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness.

Emergency Shelter: Any facility with overnight sleeping accommodations, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary shelter for homeless persons in general or for specific populations of homeless persons. The length of stay typically ranges from one night to three months.

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG): The purpose of the Emergency Solutions Grants program is to assist individuals and families to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing homelessness or a housing crisis. ESG funds are available for five program components: street outreach, emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-

housing assistance, and data collection through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Grantees, which are state governments, large cities, urban counties, and U.S. territories, receive ESG grants and make these funds available to eligible recipients, which can be either local government agencies or private nonprofit organizations. The recipient agencies and organizations, which actually run the homeless assistance projects, apply for ESG funds to the governmental grantee, and not directly to HUD. In North Carolina, the state ESG program is run by the Department of Health and Human Services.

E-Snaps: E-Snaps is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) online grants management system. It is used for the submission of the Continuum of Care funding application and for Annual Performance Reports (APRs).

Exits to Permanent Housing: The number of participants who exit a homeless program for a permanent housing destination, including public housing, permanent supportive housing, rental properties, homeownership, or the housing of family or friends. The rate of exits to permanent housing is used as an indicator of a program's performance.

Fair Market Rent (FMR): A property's fair market rent is the amount of money that it would rent for if it were available for leasing at the moment. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) publishes a list of FMRs annually for each county in the nation as well as selected metropolitan areas. The amounts are calculated using several factors, including local economic conditions and housing demand. FMRs are used to determine the amount of rent that HUD will subsidize for tenants who are enrolled in its housing programs, including Section 8 and Continuum of Care-funded permanent supportive housing.

Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD): The Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is offered annually by the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Programs to fund community agencies providing services to homeless veterans. Only programs with supportive housing (up to 24 months) or service centers (offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women veterans, etc.) are eligible for these funds. The program has two levels of funding: the Grant Component and the Per Diem Component.

HEARTH Act: On May 20, 2009, President Obama signed the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act. The HEARTH Act is the first substantial reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act in the past 20 years. It amends the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act with substantial changes, including:

- A consolidation of HUD's competitive grant programs;
- The creation of a Rural Housing Stability Program;
- A change in HUD's definition of homelessness and chronic homelessness;
- A simplified match requirement;
- An increase in prevention resources; and
- An increase in the emphasis on performance.

Homeless (HUD definition): In an effort to prioritize services for those who are currently homeless, the HEARTH Act contained changes to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness, which went into effect on January 4, 2012. Under the revised definition, a person may be considered homeless by HUD in one of four different categories. Eligibility for HUD-funded homeless programs may be limited to particular categories.

Category 1: Literally Homeless

- Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation (such as a car, abandoned building, park, sidewalk, or the streets);
 - Is living in a shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (such as an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or hotel/motel paid for by a charitable or governmental agency);

- Is exiting an institution where s/he has resided for 90 days or less and resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution.

Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness

- Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
 - Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

Category 3: Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes

- Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
 - Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
 - Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
 - Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the preceding 60 days; and
 - Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers.

Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

- Any individual or family who:
 - Is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence;
 - Has no other residence; and
 - Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

Homeless (Department of Education definition): The Department of Education defines homelessness more broadly than the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in an effort to serve more at-risk children in schools. The definition considers someone homeless if he or she:

- Lacks a regular, fixed, and adequate nighttime residence (living in sub-standard housing)
- Is sharing housing due to economic struggles (doubled-up with family or friends)
- Is living in a shelter, hotel, or motel
- Is living in a public place not designed for human habitation (cars, parks, abandoned buildings)
- Is an unaccompanied child
- Is a child or youth awaiting foster care placement
- Is a child or youth abandoned in a hospital
- Is a migrant child who qualifies under any of the above

Homeless Data Exchange (HDX): The website through which Continuums of Care submit Point-in-Time Count, Housing Inventory Chart, and Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) data to HUD.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS): A software application designed to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. North Carolina has a statewide HMIS system in which all 12 Continuums of Care participate.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP): The HPRP Program was funded through the American Recovery and Re-investment Act of 2009 and was time-limited to three years. It provided homelessness prevention assistance to people who were at risk of becoming homeless and rapid re-housing assistance that quickly placed homeless

people in permanent housing. Services included rental and utility assistance, security deposits, case management, housing location services, legal services, credit repair, and outreach and engagement. HPRP funding expired in 2012.

Homeless Prevention and Diversion Services: Activities or programs designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness. The main difference between prevention and diversion is the point at which the intervention occurs: prevention targets people at imminent risk of homelessness; diversion targets people as they are applying for entry into shelter. Prevention and diversion services include, but are not limited to:

- Short-term subsidies to defray rent and utility arrearages for families who have received eviction or utility termination notices
- Security deposits or first month's rent to permit a homeless family to move into their own apartment
- Mediation programs for landlord-tenant disputes
- Legal services programs for the representation of indigent tenants in eviction proceedings
- Payments to prevent foreclosure on a home
- Short-term case management
- Connection to mainstream services and/or benefits
- Housing search services
- Other innovative programs and activities designed to prevent the incidence of homelessness

Homeless Youth: An umbrella term for a large variety of homeless young people, including unaccompanied children, runaways, throwaways, street youth, and systems youth. The age range includes both children under age 18 and young adults age 18 to 24.

Housing First Model: An approach that centers on providing homeless people with permanent housing quickly and then providing services as needed, rather than placing the homeless person in a shelter or transitional housing unit or requiring them to receive services before being placed in housing. The model assumes that housing stabilization is key in the return of the individual or family to independent living and that needed supportive services can effectively be provided to clients either on site or at agency offices while they reside in the permanent housing provided.

Housing Inventory Chart (HIC): The Housing Inventory Chart is a point-in-time inventory of all programs within a Continuum of Care that provide beds dedicated to serve homeless people. The programs are divided into five categories: emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, safe haven, and permanent supportive housing. The information in the HIC is collected during the Continuum of Care's Point-in-Time Count. Submission of the HIC is a required part of the application for Continuum of Care funding.

Housing Preference: Since the demand for housing assistance often exceeds the limited resources available to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and local public housing authorities (PHAs), long waiting periods are common. In fact, a PHA may close its waiting list when it has more families on the list than can be assisted in the near future. PHAs may establish housing preferences for selecting applicants from its waiting list. For example, PHAs may give a preference to a family who is (1) homeless or living in substandard housing, (2) paying more than 50% of its income for rent, or (3) involuntarily displaced. Families who qualify for any such local preferences move ahead of other families on the list who do not qualify for any preference. Each PHA has the discretion to establish local preferences to reflect the housing needs and priorities of its particular community.

Housing Trust Fund: Housing trust funds (HTFs) are distinct funds established by cities, counties, and states that dedicate sources of revenue to support affordable housing. HTFs are usually created by legislation or ordinance. North Carolina's HTF was created in 1987 and began funding affordable housing in 1988. Funding fluctuates from year to year due to annual appropriations from the state's General Fund. The National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) was established as a provision of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. The NHTF will provide communities with funds to build, preserve, and rehabilitate rental homes that are affordable for extremely and very low income households.

Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO): An agency of local government (area authority or county program) that is responsible for managing, coordinating, facilitating, and monitoring the provision of services for mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse in the catchment area served. LME/MCOs also oversee the Medicaid utilization for their catchment areas through a capitated payment system.

LME/MCO Care Coordinator: A position paid for by a Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) that facilitates coordination of care for individuals in the LME/MCO's catchment area. This may differ from the LME/MCO Hospital Liaison duties or may be a combined position.

LME/MCO Hospital Liaison: A position paid for by the Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) to assist state psychiatric hospitals with discharge planning.

LME/MCO Housing Specialist: Housing Specialists help consumers access affordable housing with the support and services to meet their needs. Housing specialists maintain the Bed Availability Database for their catchment area and can assist with identifying housing options. They also work with targeted property management and referral agencies to help consumers maintain their housing and work with local public housing authorities and HUD Section 8 administering agencies to improve access and increase the supply of affordable housing resources. Housing specialists are also available to provide training and information to mental health service providers regarding the N.C. Landlord-Tenant and Fair Housing laws and negotiating reasonable accommodations.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit: Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, the LIHTC program gives state and local LIHTC-allocating agencies the equivalent of nearly \$5 billion in annual budget authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME): The HOME Investment Partnerships Program provides formula grants to states and localities that communities use - often in partnership with local nonprofit groups - to fund a wide range of activities, including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.

Mainstream Benefits: Income supports, work supports, and health care benefits provided to eligible consumers, usually low-income or special needs populations, through publicly funded programs. Examples of mainstream benefits programs include Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAPS)/food stamps, and VA health and pension benefits.

McKinney-Vento Act: This act, passed in 1987, was the first significant federal legislative response to homelessness. The scope of the act included outreach, emergency food and shelter, transitional and permanent housing, primary health care services, mental health services, alcohol and drug abuse treatment, education, job training, and child care. There are nine titles under the McKinney-Vento Act that are administered by several different federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The McKinney-Vento Act was amended by the HEARTH Act, passed in 2009.

Mental Illness: A mental illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking, feeling, or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. Each person will have different experiences, even people with the same diagnosis. A serious and persistent mental or emotional impairment may impact a person's ability to live independently without supports.

Multiply Diagnosed: This term generally refers to people who have chronic alcohol and/or other drug use problems and/or a serious mental illness and/or are HIV-positive. The terms “dually diagnosed” and “triply diagnosed” are also used.

Olmstead Decision and Department of Justice Settlement: In 2009, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) launched an effort to enforce the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, a ruling that requires states to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with disabilities and to ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. On August 23, 2012, the DOJ entered an eight-year settlement agreement with the State of North Carolina resolving the DOJ's investigation of the State's mental health service system, which was serving thousands of individuals with mental illness in large adult care homes. The agreement will expand access to community-based supported housing (integrated housing that promotes inclusion and independence and enables individuals with mental illness to participate fully in community life). Pursuant to the agreement, the State must provide community-based supported housing to 3,000 individuals who reside in, or are at risk of entry into, adult care homes. The agreement also ensures that thousands of people with mental illness have access to community-based mental health services and expands integrated employment opportunities for individuals with mental illness by providing supported employment services to 2,500 individuals. The agreement also requires development of a crisis service system that offers timely and accessible services and supports in the least restrictive setting, including mobile crisis teams, walk-in crisis clinics, short-term community hospital beds, and 24/7 crisis hotlines.

PATH Program (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness): The PATH program provides services to people with serious mental illness, including co-occurring substance use disorders, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and not receiving services. Services provided include outreach and engagement; mental health, substance abuse, case management, and other support services; and a limited set of housing services. The PATH program is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Funding is provided to states using a formula grant.

Permanent Housing: Housing which is intended to be the tenant's home for as long as he or she chooses. In the supportive housing model, services are available to the tenant, but accepting services cannot be required of tenants or in any way impact their tenancy. Tenants of permanent housing sign legal lease documents.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Long-term community-based housing and supportive services for homeless persons with disabilities. The intent of this type of supportive housing is to enable this population to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting. The supportive services may be provided by the organization managing the housing or provided by other public or private service agencies. There is no definite length of stay. Services may be short-term, sporadic, or ongoing. Examples of permanent supportive housing programs include HUD-VASH vouchers and Continuum of Care-funded PSH.

Person-Centered Plan (PCP): A plan required to be created by service providers in conjunction with the consumer and family to ensure care is person-centered and not driven by funding or providers.

Point-in-Time Count: The Point-in-Time Count is a one-day, statistically reliable, unduplicated count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families. It is required that communities applying for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care funding conduct a count each year in the last ten days of January. Point-in-Time Counts are conducted to ascertain how many people are homeless in our communities and to track changes in homelessness from year to year. During the count, staff and volunteers gather data on the homeless population such as demographic information (including gender and race), causes of homelessness, where people are sleeping, and subpopulation information (such as the numbers of veterans, victims of domestic violence, unaccompanied children, etc.).

Project Homeless Connect (PHC): Community event designed to provide centralized access and referrals to services for homeless people at a single location. PHCs are “one-stop shop” events at which homeless people can receive and connect

to various local services, including housing, health care, mental health and substance use treatment, assistance with applications for benefits, transportation, employment services, legal services, and life skills.

Public Housing: Public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered-site single family houses to high-rise apartments. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers federal aid to local public housing authorities (PHAs), which manage the housing for low-income residents at rents they can afford. HUD furnishes technical and professional assistance in planning, developing, and managing these developments.

Public Housing Authority (PHA): An organization established under state law to provide housing for low- and moderate-income persons. Commissioners are appointed by the local governing body of the jurisdiction in which they operate. Many housing authorities own their own housing or operate public housing funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Many housing authorities also operate Section 8 vouchers/ Housing Choice vouchers, which are sources of permanent affordable housing for homeless persons coming from shelters and transitional housing.

Rapid Re-Housing: Consistent with a Housing First approach, rapid re-housing programs quickly place families experiencing homelessness in permanent housing. These programs help locate housing in the community, negotiate with landlords, provide time-limited rental assistance, and provide home-based case management to promote housing retention and link families with needed services within their community.

Regional Committees: The Balance of State Continuum of Care (BoS CoC) is organized into Regional Committees that coordinate local work and planning. Each Regional Committee is represented on the BoS CoC Steering Committee by a Regional Lead who is elected annually. The Regional Lead is responsible for carrying out the tasks on the Regional Lead Job Description and working to achieve the goals listed the BoS CoC Action Plan.

Seasonal Beds: Shelter beds that are available only during high-demand seasons of the year (usually during winter months).

Section 202: The Section 202 program helps expand the supply of affordable housing with supportive services for the elderly. It provides very low-income elderly people with options that allow them to live independently but in an environment that provides support activities such as cleaning, cooking, transportation, etc.

Section 8: The Section 8 Rental Voucher Program increases affordable housing choices for very low-income households by allowing families to choose privately-owned rental housing. The public housing authority (PHA) generally pays the landlord the difference between 30% of household income and the PHA-determined payment standard (about 80 to 100% of the fair market rent). The rent must be reasonable. The household may choose a unit with a higher rent than the fair market rent and pay the landlord the difference, or choose a lower-cost unit and keep the difference.

Section 811: The Section 811 program is authorized to operate in two ways: (1) the traditional way, by providing interest-free capital advances and operating subsidies to nonprofit developers of affordable housing for persons with disabilities; and (2) providing project rental assistance to state housing agencies. A new Project Rental Assistance program was authorized by the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010, and was first implemented through a demonstration program in FY 2012. Under this program, state housing agencies that have entered into partnerships with state health and human services and Medicaid agencies can apply for Section 811 Project Rental Assistance for new or existing affordable housing developments funded by LIHTC, HOME, or other sources of funds. Under the state health care/housing agency partnership, the health care agency must develop a policy for referrals, tenant selection, and service delivery to ensure that this housing is targeted to a population most in need of deeply affordable supportive housing. This Section 811 assistance comes in the form of project rental assistance alone. No funds are available for construction or rehabilitation.

Shelter Plus Care: The Shelter Plus Care program provides rental assistance for high-need homeless persons with disabilities and connects them with supportive services funded from sources outside the program. The HEARTH Act of 2009 merged the Shelter Plus Care program into the Continuum of Care program, meaning that existing Shelter Plus Care grants transition to CoC PH-PSH grants when they renew their funding.

Sheltered Homeless Persons: Sheltered homeless persons are persons living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs. The category does not include persons who sleep in places not meant for human habitation or formerly homeless persons who live in permanent supportive housing.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Federal disability program, administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), that provides benefits to blind or disabled individuals who are “insured” based on contributions paid into the Social Security trust fund, as authorized by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA).

SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR): The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) contracted with Policy Research Associates to develop the SOAR program, which trains caseworkers to assist eligible homeless and at-risk clients to apply for federal disability benefits. On average, SOAR caseworkers have a higher approval rate on applications than homeless applicants who apply on their own.

Stand Down: Stand Downs are typically one- to three-day events providing supplies and services to homeless veterans, such as food, shelter, clothing, health screenings, and VA Social Security benefits counseling. Veterans can also receive referrals to other assistance such as health care, housing solutions, employment, substance use treatment, and mental health counseling. They are collaborative events, coordinated between local VA Medical Centers, other government agencies, and community-based homeless service providers.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): SAMHSA leads public health efforts to advance behavioral health nationwide by providing programs, grants and contracts, and research and data related to mental illness and substance use disorders. It is an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, established by Congress in 1992. SAMHSA oversees the PATH and SOAR programs and provides resources like best practices toolkits and the Homelessness Resource Center.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI): Federal disability program, administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA), that provides benefits to low-income people who are disabled, blind, or elderly.

Supportive Services: Services such as case management, medical or psychological counseling and supervision, child care, transportation, and job training provided for the purpose of facilitating people’s stability and independence.

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program: Under the SSVF program, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awards grants to community agencies to provide supportive services to very low-income veteran families living in or transitioning to permanent housing. Services can include outreach, case management, assistance in obtaining VA or other benefits, and time-limited payments for rent, utilities, moving costs, or child care, if these payments will help the family acquire or sustain permanent housing.

Targeting Plans/Key Program: As part of a partnership between the NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) and the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) intended to facilitate the inclusion of homeless people and people with disabilities into low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) properties, LIHTC developers must commit to target 10% of their units to these populations. Developers create Targeting Plans with local agencies to outline how the units will be made available to homeless people and people with disabilities. To make the targeted units affordable, NCHFA and DHHS

created the Key Program, which provides a bridge subsidy for households on disability income who have not yet received a Section 8 Housing Choice voucher.

Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness: Community plan that provides a policy framework for maximizing existing resources and creating new tools to provide needed housing and appropriate services for preventing and ending homelessness. Plans also identify strategies for reducing the connection between the back door of publicly funded systems and the front door of our homeless service system. In 2010, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released *Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, which set goals to end veterans and chronic homelessness by 2015 and homelessness among families, children, and youth by 2020.

Transition-in-Place: Transition-in-place programs are an alternate model to traditional transitional housing programs. In transition-in-place programs, clients are housed in rental units owned or leased by the program provider while they receive services for the designated length of the program. Upon completion of the program, the clients are offered the opportunity to take over the lease and remain in the rental unit. This model provides more continuity and stability than traditional transitional housing programs and reduces the amount of upheaval that clients experience.

Transitional Housing: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines transitional housing as a project that is designed to provide housing and appropriate support services to homeless persons to facilitate movement to independent living within 24 months. For purposes of the HOME program, there is no HUD-approved time period for moving to independent living.

Unaccompanied Child: Previously called an “unaccompanied youth,” the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines an unaccompanied child as any person under the age of 18 who presents for services alone. HUD changed the term from “unaccompanied youth” to “unaccompanied child” as of the 2011 Point-in-Time Count to clarify that the category only refers to people under age 18, in contrast to programs that serve youth up to age 24.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD’s mission is to increase homeownership, support community development, and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination. HUD sets guidance for and funds many programs designed to serve currently and formerly homeless individuals, including the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program, the Continuum of Care program, Section 8, Section 811, Section 202, and public housing.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: A U.S. cabinet department that provides patient care, veterans’ benefits, and other services to veterans of the U.S. armed forces and their families, including the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), and Grant and Per Diem (GPD) programs.

U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH): The mission of the USICH is to coordinate the federal response to homelessness and to create a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness in the nation while maximizing the effectiveness of the federal government in contributing to the end of homelessness. The USICH’s membership consists of 19 federal Cabinet secretaries and agency heads.

Unsheltered Homeless Persons: Unsheltered homeless persons are people whose primary nighttime residence is a place not meant for human habitation (for example, streets, parks, abandoned buildings, or subway tunnels).

Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH): The HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program combines Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA provides these services for participating veterans at VA medical centers (VAMCs) and community-based outreach clinics. HUD and VA award the vouchers based on geographic need and public housing authority administrative performance.

Voucher: “Voucher” generally refers to a Section 8 voucher provided by a local housing authority to a low- or moderate-income person, but can also refer to an emergency or short-term motel voucher for a homeless person. The Section 8 voucher issued by the housing authority directly pays the landlord the difference between what a low- or moderate-income tenant can pay for rent (roughly 30% of their income) and the fair market rent (more or less an average rent). Most Section 8 vouchers are tenant-based, meaning that the voucher holder can shop for an apartment or house rental on the private market, while others are project based, meaning that they are not portable, but can only be used in a specific building.

Voucher/Overflow Beds: Overflow beds are shelter beds that are available on an ad hoc basis when the shelter’s regular beds are full. Voucher beds are usually made available in a motel or hotel. They may function like overflow beds or be provided by an agency or community that does not have any shelter beds of its own.

Work First/TANF: North Carolina’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides parents with short-term training and other services to help them become employed and self-sufficient. The program is time limited, and most families have two years to move off Work First Family Assistance.

Year-Round Beds: Shelter beds that are available on a continuous basis throughout the entire year and are considered part of the stable inventory of beds for homeless persons.

Frequently Used Acronyms

- AHAR: Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (see definition above)
- AMI: Area Median Income (see definition above)
- APR: Annual Performance Report (see definition above)
- BoS: Balance of State Continuum of Care
- CDBG: Community Development Block Grant (see definition above)
- CoC: Continuum of Care (see definition above)
- DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services
- DQ: Data Quality
- EAN: Emergency Assistance Network
- ESG: Emergency Solutions Grants (see definition above)
- FMR: Fair Market Rent (see definition above)
- HEARTH: Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (see definition above)
- HIC: Housing Inventory Chart (see definition above)
- HMIS: Homeless Management Information System (see definition above)
- HPRP: Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (see definition above)
- HTF: Housing Trust Fund (see definition above)
- HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (see definition above)
- LIHTC: Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (see definition above)
- LME: Local Management Entity (see definition above)
- MCO: Managed Care Organization (see definition above)
- NCHFA: North Carolina Housing Finance Agency
- NC HMIS: North Carolina Homeless Management Information System
- NOFA: Notice of Funding Availability
- PATH: Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (see definition above)
- PHA: Public Housing Authority (see definition above)
- PHC: Project Homeless Connect (see definition above)
- PIT: Point-in-Time Count (see definition above)
- PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing (see definition above)
- QPR: Quarterly Progress Report
- SAMHSA: U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (see definition above)
- SOAR: SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (see definition above)
- SSA: Social Security Administration
- SSDI: Social Security Disability Insurance (see definition above)
- SSI: Supplemental Security Income (see definition above)
- SSVF: Supportive Services for Veteran Families (see definition above)
- TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (see “Work First/TANF” definition above)
- USICH: U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (see definition above)
- VA: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- VAMC: Veterans Affairs Medical Center
- VASH/HUD-VASH: Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (see definition above)