



Alaska's Plan to End Long Term Homelessness 2018 Progress Report



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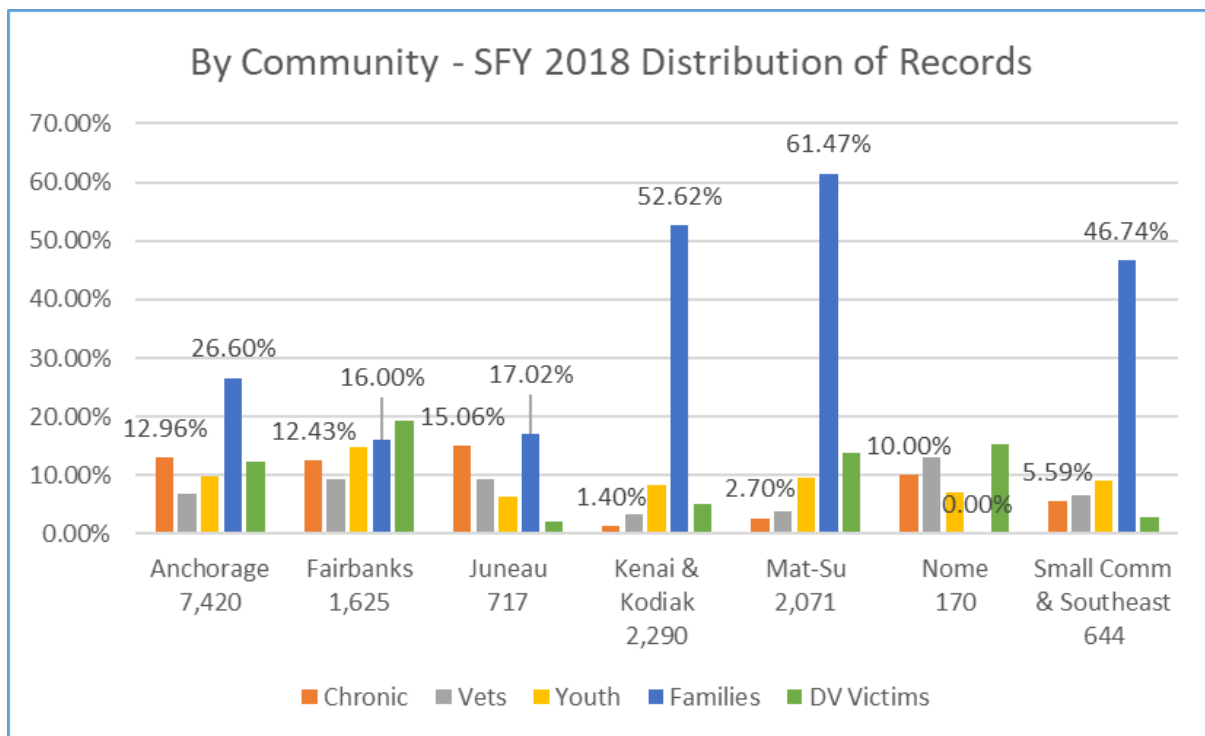
2018 Progress Report

Alaska Council on the Homeless adopted *Alaska’s Plan to End Long Term Homelessness* (Plan) in October 2015. The plan is designed as a framework for communities to unite in local planning efforts around issues of homelessness. It is organized around five priorities; housing development, supportive services, education, engagement and policy, and data. Within each priority are recommended strategies for communities and state agencies to guide progress in addressing a specific priority.

This progress report covers the third year of the plan from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 with accomplishments reported by communities and state agencies.

Alaska Homeless Management Information System (AKHMIS) is supported through HUD and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) grant funding and is jointly managed by the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness and the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness through a contract with the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA).

Total unduplicated number of clients served in FY2018 is 14,702.



Priority 1: Housing Development *Every Alaskan should have access to an affordable, accommodating, and safe place to call home.*

Strategy: Expand Housing Options (Construction/Rehab/Rental Assistance)

- AHFC's Greater Opportunities for Affordable Living (GOAL) program provided funding to construct 160 rental units for low-income Alaskans. Of those units, 30 percent were set-aside for homeless or disabled Alaskans.
- Fairbanks North Star Borough (FSNB) and Eielson Air Force Base are preparing for two squadrons of F35s that includes 1,474 families expected to arrive over the next two years. A task force has been created to address construction of up to 532 new units in a community with harsh winter conditions and without uniform building codes.
- My Place is a Rapid Re-Housing program resulting from a collaboration between Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA), City of Fairbanks, Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition, and eight local agencies. The project is housed at Fairbanks Rescue Mission and is expected to support 40 families through coordinated entry.
- Juneau's Forget-me-Not Manor opened October of 2017, providing 32 beds of supported housing for those with alcohol abuse challenges. Fundraising for Phase II is under way and would provide an additional 32 rooms.
- The City and Borough of Juneau supported a Cold Weather Emergency Shelter from December 1, 2017 to April 15, 2018. The shelter was run by Glory Hall and AWARE, and provided 30 beds on nights when temperatures fell below freezing.
- Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL) received \$15,000 from the Juneau Community Foundation to upgrade a residence in Juneau Village so that elders with hearing loss, vision loss and mobility impacts could age in place.
- Juneau Community Foundation HOPE funds were used to prevent homelessness for 90 households; 61 received prevention assistance, 29 received placement assistance.
- Valley Residential Services (VRS) is expanding affordable housing in Mat-Su Valley. Vista Rose opened 36 new units of affordable senior housing in September. VRS also broke ground on Whispering Winds, which will provide an additional 42 units of senior housing when completed.
- AHFC provided 80 Sponsor-Based Rental Assistance HUD vouchers to serve vulnerable populations in Anchorage.
- AHFC combined several funding sources to provide a Special Purpose GOAL Round to develop Permanent Supported Housing programs in Alaska. Applications were submitted in October 2018 and awards will be announced later this year.

Strategy: Increase Pool of Operating Support to Preserve Existing Housing Stock

- AMHTA and AHFC provided operating support to assist 293 households in permanent housing across the state through the Special Needs Housing Grant Program.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation provided \$100,000 in funding through Valley Charities to support programs serving homeless and at-risk adults in Mat-Su.

Strategy: Increase Number of Units Available to Priority Populations

- Returning Home Program, a partnership between AHFC and DOC, supports 96 families per month through rental assistance for returning citizens released from incarceration.
- Moving Home, a partnership between DHSS and AHFC, provided rental assistance for 150 families per month transitioning into housing from homelessness or institutional settings.
- AHFC and DHSS Office of Children's Services provided rental assistance to 20 youth, aged 18-24, per month transitioning out of foster care.
- AHFC's Empowering Choice Housing Program which provides rental assistance to families displaced due to domestic violence and sexual assault supported 185 families per month.
- Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, administered by AHFC and the Veteran's Administration supplied 286 rental assistance vouchers for veterans experiencing homelessness per month.
- No Limits supports citizens returning from DOC custody in Fairbanks. In FY18, No Limits increased street outreach/prison in-reach and supportive services through federal grant funding and received SFY19 Continuum of Care funding to develop the Home Free Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program. Additionally, No Limits has recently enacted sober living at Prosperity House to assist tenants struggling with addiction.
- Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) launched Loving Families, a housing solution for families experiencing homelessness in Fairbanks, late last year. The program connects families with housing, financial, and spiritual support. Families in the program stay in participating churches for one week at a time with the goal of securing permanent housing within 90 days of enrollment. All five families were successfully housed in under 90 days through the help of 484 volunteers providing over 7,234 volunteer hours. The families completed 462.5 hours of case management and 246.5 hours of education.
- United Way in partnership with the Municipality of Anchorage, HUD and DOC supported the Pay For Success initiative to develop Permanent Supportive Housing units for high vulnerability populations in Anchorage.

- Anchorage finalized the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project with grantees increasing host home options for LGBTQ youth (Choosing our Roots and NeighborWorks Alaska), 8 permanent supporting housing beds for young adults (Volunteers of America), increasing capacity for 40-50 rapid rehousing beds for youth and young adults (Covenant House) and increasing related permanency navigation services (Covenant House).
- Path to Independence is a partnership between Weidner Apartment Homes and Cook Inlet Housing Authority to provide 40 housing units for families experiencing homelessness. The program requires work-able adults to seek employment or vocational training.
- Blood-N-Fire Ministries, Knik House, provides 34 emergency shelter bed in Mat-Su. 23 are set aside for men and 11 for women.
- MY House added two housing units serving transition-age youth and young adults with room for 7 men and 5 women.
- Mat-Su Reentry Coalition supports returning citizens with transitional housing and support services.
- Daybreak, Inc. expanded offices to include both Mat-Su and Anchorage and added a case manager to support individuals with traumatic brain injuries.

Priority 2: Supportive Services *Individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness should have access to all eligible services and supports.*

Strategy: Increase Funding and Sources of Supportive Services in Underserved Areas

- AMHTA, DOC and AHFC administer the Discharge Incentive Grant Program that provides housing placement and services support to individuals re-entering the community.
- Juneau Alliance for Mental Health (JAMHI) received an AMHTA grant for \$100,000 to improve participation in Medicaid-funded services and improved response to clients in crisis.
- Juneau's medical respite provided temporary housing for clients unable to recover in a shelter environment. The program had a budget of \$3,000 last year, which will increase to \$10,000 through additional funding from Bartlett Regional Hospital.
- JAMHI operated a health care clinic for case management, behavioral health, and primary care services in coordination with Juneau Housing First Collaborative which operates Forget Me Not Manor providing 32 permanent housing units for chronically homeless individuals. Additional funds from the Juneau Community Foundation supports the program.

- Alaska Family Services in Mat-Su has obtained funding to provide case management and behavioral health services to our low-income individuals and families who may also be experiencing domestic violence.
- Mat-Su Health Foundation is funding a full-time case manager to work with returning citizens through the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition, a program supported by the Mat-Su Coalition on Homeless and Housing.

Strategy: Increase Income and Employment Opportunities for Persons in Transition

- Love INC of the Kenai Peninsula assists people in restoring lapsed certification, licenses, and training in order to gain employment.
- Breadline Inc.'s Stone's Throw is a 12-week, two-tier training program supported by AMHTA, Rasmuson Foundation, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Learning Programs of Alaska. Stone's Throw serves people experiencing homelessness and near homelessness.
- The City and Borough of Juneau is committing \$9,000 to a contract administered by the Glory Hole that assists with sidewalk and street clean-up.
- Mat-Su Coalition on Homelessness and Housing has partnered with Mat-Su Job Center to provide a trained staff person to work with homeless individuals referred by coalition partners.

Strategy: Increase Outreach Services

- Fairbanks Rescue Mission provides outreach at homeless encampments weekly. The Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) Street Outreach & Advocacy Program (SOAP), Fairbanks Youth Advocates (FYA), Bright Futures, and the school district all have youth outreach services.
- Angels In Motion (AIM) is a group of community members that engage people experiencing homelessness in downtown Fairbanks. AIM has built considerable rapport with many people struggling with housing barriers and has partnered with Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition (FHHC) to connect people with resources.
- Juneau Community Foundation granted \$72,000 for homeless navigator programs at Zach Gordon Youth and Saint Vincent de Paul.
- Municipality of Anchorage established a Mobile Intervention Team, housed within the Police and Fire department, to provide services and outreach to high vulnerability clients in Anchorage. MIT conducts camp outreach and operates Anchorage's coordinated entry.

- Partners for Progress meets bi-weekly with returning citizens at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River. The team provides case management and referral services to support returning citizens upon reentry.
- MY House in Mat-Su has an outreach coordinator who focuses on youth and young adults, but also provides referrals for campers and other homeless individuals who don't meet the MY House criteria for services.
- Daybreak, Inc offers case management services and referrals to Valley Reentry program through a partnership with DOC. Case managers visit Goose Creek Correctional Center in Wasilla regularly.

Strategy: Maintain and/or Expand Emergency Lodging Options as Needed

- Anchorage's Emergency Cold Weather Shelter program continued to provide shelter for up to 24 families per night from October to May through the support of 9 churches and numerous volunteers.
- Fairbanks has space for a total of 187 emergency shelter beds and has not reached full capacity in the past year. However, emergency shelters for sub populations, such as Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living (IACNVL), the Door, Love In the Name of Christ's Loving Families, and Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Sobering Center have frequently operated at capacity.
- Fairbanks Rescue Mission raised over \$200,000 to replace the roof on their shelter.
- Department of Public Safety continues to fund emergency shelters across the state that provide assistance for Alaskans fleeing domestic violence and sexual assault through the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.
- AMHTA and AHFC supported 17 emergency shelters statewide through the Basic Homeless Assistance Program.
- Juneau established a 28-bed seasonal low-barrier cold weather shelter, which opened December 1, 2017 and closed April 15, 2018. 158 individuals were served across 715 bed nights. The shelter will re-open on November 15, 2018.
- Mat-Su Coalition on Homeless and Housing is developing an emergency housing program similar to the Anchorage Cold Weather Program. Currently, the valley does not have an emergency shelter but does provide emergency housing vouchers through the Salvation Army office in Palmer.

Priority 3: Education, Engagement, and Policy Community and statewide education, engagement, and policy efforts among stakeholders and interested parties is central to addressing issues of homelessness.

Strategy: Landlord Engagement, Education, and Support

- The Salvation Army, Restore Inc., Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living, and a number of local veteran's services are actively engaging and recruiting landlords to participate in voucher driven housing programs in Fairbanks.
- Mat-Su Coalition on Homeless and Housing hosted a landlord luncheon on April 13, 2018 and encouraged on-going dialogue between landlords and service providers.

Strategy: Encourage Housing Policy at the Local Level

- At the request of the City of Nome, Nome Emergency Shelter Team (NEST) is leading a taskforce to address the increasing number of homeless Alaskans in their community.
- The City and Borough of Juneau Assembly included \$45,000 in the FY2019 budget to fund consultant studies on the most efficient delivery of behavioral health care and addiction services. Another \$45,000 is anticipated in the FY2020 budget. These studies are designed to improved success for scattered site supported housing.
- The AMHTA continues to support Municipality of Anchorage, City of Fairbanks and City and Borough of Juneau Homeless Coordinator Positions within the Mayor's office to lead efforts to reduce homelessness. A new Rural Housing Coordinator position is being developed to support communities across the state.
- The Municipality of Anchorage has invested in the Mobile Intervention Team and hired a Chief Housing Officer in addition to a Housing and Homeless Coordinator. The muni is partnering with AMHTA, Rasmuson Foundation and other partners in the Anchorage Homeless Community Leadership Council to develop the Anchored Home plan to address housing shortages across multiple populations.
- The Municipality of Anchorage is partnering with the United Way to implement a pilot "Pay for Success" program which intends to divert folks who are chronic utilizers of institutions from institutions and homelessness.
- The Mat-Su Coalition on Housing and Homeless cultivates strong partnerships with local governments and state agencies to support on-going efforts to address homelessness in the Mat-Su Valley.

Strategy: Support Local Housing Organizations to Coordinate Planning Services and Reporting

- The Seward Peninsula Housing Coalition is a newly developing housing coalition that brings together local non-profits, the regional housing authority, and local tribes to collaboratively address housing issues in the region.
- The AMHTA and AHFC continue to support the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (AKCH2) statewide education, engagement, and policy efforts by funding an Executive Director position.

- The Mat-Su Coalition on Homeless and Housing sponsored a Coordinated Entry workshop with AKCH2. More than 20 representatives from Mat-Su service organizations attended the workshop.
- In December 2017, the Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition (FHHC) hosted the Fairbanks Symposium on Homelessness. The symposium connected over 200 local stakeholders, local government, state/federal agencies, funders, and leading national experts to discuss the need and ability of the community to create an RRH program. The symposium was the catalyst that led to ten organizations collaborating on and establishing the My Place RRH program.
- AKCH2 adopted the Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures for the Balance of State on January 22, 2018. On-site technical assistance has been provided in the Mat-Su Valley, Juneau, Fairbanks, and Kenai Peninsula. Coordinated Entry is anticipated to begin in Fall, 2018.

Strategy: Expand Outreach on Use of Alaska Housing Locator

- The Mat-Su Valley's coordinated group of housing and service programs provide staff training on the use of the Alaska Housing Locator and find it to be an effective tool in guiding clients to resources.

Priority 4: Prevention *Prevention support is essential to mitigating episodes of homelessness.*

Strategy: Eliminate Discharge to Homeless Shelters and the Streets from State Institutions

- The Brother Francis Shelter in Anchorage continues to operate a respite care program for clients newly discharged from medical treatment which provides space for clients to recuperate from acute physical ailments or injury on a short-term basis. The program opened in April of 2017 and the 80 percent of the pilot program participants did not return to homelessness after entering the program.
- Emergency shelters in Fairbanks are developing programs to eliminate discharge from the shelters into episodes of homelessness. The Fairbanks Rescue Mission has the My Place RRH program and the Joshua Community, a sober living housing project. IACNVL has a Transitional Housing (TH) program, two Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) programs, and is developing a third PSH. The Door has been exploring youth specific TH and RRH programs.
- Juneau's Tlingit & Haida Regional Council is proposing modification of their downtown Harbor Hotel into reentrant housing open to all men without sex offenses. The proposal is to house 12-15 individuals in a sober living environment.
- The Mat-Su Homeless Assistance Program leveraged state and federal grant funds to help 1,885 clients remain in housing or find new housing during FY18. Of these 50%

were having difficulty due to lack of employment or low income, 27% were dealing with health or safety issues, and 16% were facing loss of a roommate or spouse.

- The funds assisted 333 with partial rent payments, 285 with utility payment assistance (this helped avoid shut-offs and evictions), and 25 were helped with paying for transitional housing rent.
 - Seven agencies: Alaska Family Services, Blood-N-Fire Ministries, Daybreak, Inc, Family Promise Mat-Su, MY House, Salvation Army of Mat-Su, and Valley Charities, Inc share the responsibility of serving clients with the HAP grant funds. They offer many services along with homeless prevention.
- Gastineau Human Services established a 10-bed residence for men participating in long-term treatment of substance use disorders and co-occurring mental illness in 2017. This program was expanded at the end of FY2018 to offer two sober-living apartments for individuals who have completed long-term treatment but are unable to secure housing in the community that is supportive of their continued recovery.

Strategy: Improve Outreach and Linkages to Housing Resources and Services

- Anchorage has established the Mobile Intervention Team which consists of four staff who are located within the APD/AFD and conduct camp outreach and connect with individuals who are utilizing public facilities such as libraries.
- The Mat-Su Health Foundation, in partnership with the Mat-Su Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, provides outreach into correctional facilities and helps returning citizens navigate the reentry process.
- Communities throughout the state hosted a Project Homeless Connect event in January to connect persons experiencing homelessness or near-homelessness with service providers and housing assistance.
- DOC updated their inmate database to include a homeless screen which will help identify and track individuals in need of housing and will increase the coordination of care services prior to release into the community.
- The Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness in partnership with stakeholders and service providers is supporting the Anchorage Coordinated Entry System.
- AKCH2, in coordination with AHFC and housing and homeless leadership throughout Alaska, is implementing Coordinated Entry in communities around the state.
- Mat-Su Project Homeless Connect assisted 375 people through connecting with legal resources, clothing and food donations, Medicaid enrollment, behavioral health screenings and public assistance applications.
- Kenai Project Homeless Connect assisted 119 individuals. 68% of participants reported that this was their first time attending the event.

Strategy: Maintain Centralized Pool of Prevention Resources

- Brother Francis Shelter in Kodiak serves as the centralized location for prevention resources for their community with approximately 96% of Kodiak's prevention resources administered through that organization.
- In Fairbanks, the Salvation Army administers rental assistance through the Basic Homeless Assistance Program (BHAP). Love INC runs the Clearing House, which connects individuals with prevention resources. Over the past year the Clearing House received 3,782 requests. Many of the requests were handled by Love INC or participating churches, but 555 of the requests resulted in referrals to other organizations.
- The Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, in coordination with partner agencies, maintains a centralized pool of prevention resources from state and local funding sources.
- Over 1,800 households were provided prevention assistance by 24 organizations statewide through AHFC's Basic Homeless Assistance Program in partnership with the AMHTA.
- Valley Charities, Inc. administered the shared BHAP funds for the area and supported \$1,885 clients with an average assistance of \$586.58. Over 40 percent of the clients were under the age of 17.

Priority 5: Data *Timely and accurate data is essential to making housing and homeless policy decisions.*

Strategy: Expand Homeless Service Provider HMIS Coverage

- The Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homeless has expanded from 5 organizations to 11 organizations entering data into HMIS.
- Anchorage and the AKCH2 continues outreach to funders to provide support for expansion of HMIS reporting capabilities and increase of users for statewide services.
- Statewide HMIS participation has more than doubled since 2015 and maintains an "A" grade for data completeness. AKCH2 is working with the Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to transition DV providers to the Domestic Violence Information System (DVIMS), a VAWA compliant database equivalent to the HMIS system.
- AKCH2 implementation of Coordinated Entry will increase the number of organizations participating in HMIS as they work to get their referrals connected with the process.

- Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness continues to utilize staff and volunteers to complete data entry for providers that are unable to input information directly into HMIS and is in conversation with the providers who do not currently utilize HMIS about bringing them on board.

Strategy: Develop Strategies for Gathering Homeless Data from Organizations Not Connected to HMIS

- AKCH2 is working with Association of Alaska Housing Authorities (AAHA) to increase tribal participation in the annual Point in Time count. In addition, AKCH2 Board is reviewing changes in shelter and homelessness definitions to better capture rural Alaska's severe overcrowding crisis.
- Nome Emergency Shelter Team (NEST) and Seward Peninsula Housing Coalition are working towards engaging other rural hubs and regions in the annual Point-in-Time Count (PIT) and AKHMIS.
- City and Borough of Juneau homeless navigators partner with service providers to complete intake forms and vulnerability assessments that are then entered into HMIS.
- Mat-Su Coalition on Homelessness has data sharing agreements with 35 service organizations.
- To encourage robust data collection and reporting efforts, Love INC, Kenai Peninsula, provides staffing support to partner agencies that are limited in capacity and resources to fully participate in HMIS.
- Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) gathers information from school districts throughout the state to generate an annual report on homeless children and youth.
- Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness, and AHFC continue to gather homeless data from organizations not connected to the system through the annual Point-in-Time count and Housing Inventory Chart.

Strategy: Coordinate Community Prevention Services

- Community prevention services are coordinated in some communities through AHFC's Basic Homeless Assistance Program.
- United Way, with support from AHFC, operates 211 and 211.org as a statewide service to link community members with immediate resources such as cold-weather shelters, or homeless prevention supports such as utility assistance. 211 is also an entry point for clients to access the coordinated entry system for the purposes of assessment and referral.

- Fairbanks has held six community events to facilitate partnerships between community providers. Notably, Love INC in collaboration with JP Jones Community Development Center held a gathering of agencies providing prevention services, so that frontline staff from each agency could learn about resources provided by others.