

5 Things you should know about Homelessness in Florida

01

Florida Leads the Nation in Reducing Homelessness

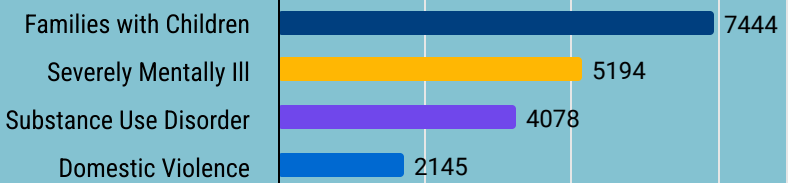
The Florida Legislature's investment in the Homeless CoCs has resulted in a significant decrease in homelessness. Florida led the nation and had the largest absolute decrease in homelessness of any state from 2007-2023, a decrease of 17,313 or 36%. When adjusted for population, Florida saw a 47% decrease in homelessness.



02

Flexibility is Key to Addressing Needs of Subpopulations

The State Funded Homeless Challenge Grant flexibility is key to addressing the various needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. The flexibility allows the CoC to provide client focused individualized supports.



03

Homelessness Among the Elderly is Growing

Elderly individuals are faced with increasing costs and increased rents. The average 1 bedroom rental is \$1,311. According to the Social Security Administration, an average SSI check is \$1,777. The largest age group of homelessness in Florida is 55-64; a total of 8,372 individuals are 55 and over.

27%
of persons experiencing homelessness are 55+



04

Permanent Supportive Housing is Cost Effective

Permanent Supportive Housing is a cost-effective strategy for moving chronically homeless persons into homes. 96% of persons enrolled in PSH remain stably housed. PSH is housing with the appropriate client-centered supportive services they need - not something they need to achieve before housing. This approach saves lives and money.

PSH is
30%
less expensive than doing nothing to address chronic homelessness

05

Affordable Housing (with supports) is the Solution

According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, with every \$100 increase in rent, you will see a 9% increase in homelessness. With the nearly \$200 increase in rent from 2020-2023, Florida saw a 11.9% increase in homelessness. Affordable Housing is the solution to this ongoing issue. We've shown that client-centered supportive services (services to remain in housing) is key to solving their unique reason for becoming homeless.



2025 Legislative Priorities

The Florida Coalition to End Homelessness (FCEH) is a dynamic organization whose membership includes the state's Local Lead Agency Continuums of Care (CoCs), homeless advocates, local service providers, members of the faith-based community, formerly homeless persons, educators, attorneys, mental health professionals and policy makers statewide. This diverse group is committed to implementing programs that prevent homelessness and rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families to return them to self-sufficiency and productive lives. The membership of the Florida Coalition to End Homelessness has collaborated to establish the following 2025 Legislative Priorities to work toward ending homelessness in Florida and to increase the capacity of local CoCs to manage and deliver these critical programs.

Continue Homeless CoC Recurring Staffing Grant – Included in DCF's LBR

Ask: Maintain current Fiscal Year Funding for the recurring base budget Homeless Staffing Grants (\$5.2 million)

FCEH supports the continuation of recurring funding for the Homeless Housing Assistance grants (A.K.A. "Homeless Staffing Grants") for Fiscal Year 2025-26. CoCs continue to incur additional costs to complete the required tasks as outlined in s. 420.644, FS. Without the Staffing Grant, Florida's CoC system, which draws down and administers over \$130 million annually to the State, would not be able to operate.

The Staffing Grant provides \$185,900 for operational expenses to each of the State's 28 CoC Lead Agencies. A few examples of the operational expenses include salaries, office rent, equipment, electricity, internet, telephone, and supplies. On average, each CoC supports three full-time staff positions with this funding.

CoCs are responsible for a wide array of services to address homelessness in their communities and have done exemplary work to increase collaborative partnerships to keep homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. Without appropriate staffing levels, this momentum is not sustainable.

Continue Homeless CoC Recurring Challenge Grant Funding – Included in DCF's LBR

Ask: Maintain current Fiscal Year Funding for the recurring base budget Homeless Challenge Grants (\$20,016,822) and make the \$10,000,000 non-recurring appropriation in FY24-25 recurring for unsheltered individuals

FCEH supports the continuation of recurring funding for the homeless Challenge Grants for Fiscal Year 2025-26. The legislature has funded this grant program each year consecutively since 2014. s. 420.644(4), FS, establishes the Challenge Grant Program and creates criteria for local grant awards, competitively procured through the State Office on Homelessness. This funding is used by the CoCs to meet emergency housing needs of the homeless and at-risk individuals and families, especially those needs which cannot be met by any other program. These funds require as much flexibility as the statute allows to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in every community across the State.

For FY 24-25, the legislature appropriated an additional \$10 million non-recurring Challenge Grant for unsheltered individuals. FCEH requests for the legislature to make the appropriation recurring for FY 25-26.