



CITY OF OAKLAND

# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Edward D. Reiskin  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Sara Bedford  
Director, Human Services

**SUBJECT:** YAC's Homelessness Youth  
Informational Report 2022

**DATE:** April 13, 2022

City Administrator Approval

Date: Apr 20, 2022

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The Youth Advisory Commission's (YAC) Updated Recommendations To Their Homeless Youth Policy Of 2018.**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This informational report revisits the Youth Advisory Commission's (YAC) Homeless Youth Policy of 2018. It provides an update of YAC recommendations, and uplifts the work of the Youth Action Board (YAB) and Career and Technical Education Hub at 1025 Second Avenue youth leaders.

The report consists of the following attachments: **A)** Letter to the Mayor and Oakland City Council from the YAC Housing Subcommittee, **B)** YAC Homeless Youth Policy of 2018, **C)** CTE Hub, YAB, YAC's Recommendations of 2022, **D)** YAC's Report Card Template, developed to guide evaluation of youth-led recommendations, **E)** Status of Homeless Youth Activity and Data on Youth Homelessness since 2018. In representing vulnerable Oakland youth, the YAC requests that the City Council champion a future time-bound information report that monitors the Task Force's progress in realizing the recommendations from the YAB, CTE Hub Coalition and YAC over the next two years

City Council  
April 25, 2022

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The Youth Advisory Commission's (YAC) Updated Recommendations To Their Homeless Youth Policy Of 2018.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Carina Lieu, Program Analyst II, at (510) 238-3245.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Sara Bedford  
Director, Human Services

Prepared by: Carina Lieu  
Program Analyst II  
Children and Youth Services Division

Attachments (5):

- A) Letter from the YAC Housing Subcommittee
- B) YAC Homeless Youth Policy of 2018
- C) CTE Hub, YAB, and YAC's Recommendations of 2022
- D) YAC's Report Card Template
- E) Status of Homeless Youth Activity and Data on Youth Homelessness since 2018

## Attachment A

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council,

From a young age, all Oakland youth become very aware of homelessness. Oakland Youth Advisory Commission (YAC) advocates for vulnerable youth. We are concerned that today's unsheltered youth today will become tomorrow's unsheltered adults. We want to debunk myths that homelessness affects only adults, and stigmas associated with homeless youth. All youth deserve protection, health, and safety.

When the YAC Housing subcommittee formed in 2019, members participated in the Alameda County ALL IN Ending Youth Homelessness Youth Action Board (YAB) to listen in on meetings as youth allies. This structured space allowed youth to build community, where we learned about the City's tiny homes projects and witnessed the community engagement process. Youth gained knowledge from City staff about rent affordability. Yet, throughout all of these experiences, the youth felt overwhelmed. We devoted a great deal of time and passion to housing affordability and homelessness but there were not enough resources.

Eliminating homelessness means fixing other systems, such as employment readiness, juvenile justice, mental health, education, substance abuse, housing stability, and funding for other types of intervention programs. It requires time, consideration, and most importantly, collaboration. Today, Commissioners come before you in collaboration with the YAB and CTE Hub at 1025 Second Avenue's Youth Leaders. Having meaningful conversations with those who experience and experienced being unsheltered and lifting up the voices of those most impacted is vital to addressing needs and creating preventative measures.

While the end game is to ensure that no youth has to go through homelessness, the Youth Homelessness Hearing is one of those opportunities where youth-voice will be centered to help others recognize how important this issue is. Fixing something so overwhelming is not easy, but we must not allow it to be normalized. The YAC is committed to addressing the needs of unhoused populations. Just as we continued the work of the previous cohort, we look forward to the ways that this Hearing will motivate the next cohort and community leaders to advocate for unsheltered youth. We hope that decision-makers will keep prioritizing and pursuing youth homelessness until the very end.

Sincerely,

Gyssell Perez (D7), Giselle Venegas (D7), and Mia Hatfield (D2)  
Oakland Youth Advisory Commission Housing Subcommittee

**Homeless Youth Policy 2018**

Recommendation

The Youth Commission puts forward that the City of Oakland develop a Homeless Youth Policy and recommended programs. Refer back to the Youth Commission for further questions and/or developments. The policy and programs should include the following and other similar policies and programs:

- 1) Allocate 25% of the City's dedicated homeless funding/resources and any additional homeless funding received by the city, for youth-specific homeless programs and services, with a focus on Transition Age Youth (TAY) aged 18-24 years old and youth populations that are disproportionately impacted by homelessness, such as; Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) involved youth, LGBTQ+ youth and youth aging out of the foster system.
- 2) Explore and develop a match funding source via a city-wide sales or parcel tax that creates ongoing and stable funding dedicated to providing youth-specific homeless programs and services that takes a broad definition of youth homelessness, per the Mc-Kinney Vento Act.
- 3) Set aside a percentage of the Alameda County A1 Housing Bond units and City of Oakland KK bond units for homeless Transition Age Youth (TAY) earning 20 percent or less of the area median income.
  - a) Match these housing units with operational subsidies that provide supportive services. In addition to setting aside at least 15 units specifically for youth.
- 4) Ensure that the regional comprehensive housing and services coordinated entry system for homeless individuals has a component that is youth-inclusive with the intention of identifying and meeting their unique service needs and their full integration into society.
  - a) Create a North County youth-specific Housing Resource Center in Alameda, similar to the current one serving families.
- 5) Develop multi-sector partnerships designed to create workforce development opportunities, paid internships, technical and/or vocational training opportunities and job training opportunities targeted for homeless youth.
- 6) Collaborate with law enforcement, probation officers, school systems, and aftercare programs to identify, engage and provide services to homeless youth.
- 7) Create a youth-specific table as part of the most appropriate City-County collaborative working on the issue of homelessness.
- 8) Explore deeper coordination and collaboration with Oakland Unified School District and Peralta Community College District to provide services to homeless students.

Background

In a homeless count by Point-In-Time and a survey by EveryOne Counts, there were more than 900 unaccompanied transitional age homeless youth and more than 480 homeless children (72 of these children were unaccompanied) in Alameda County. Moreover, 34% of the first episode of homelessness occurs in between the ages of 0-24 years old.

As stated by Oakland Unified School District, the number of homeless students has increased from 400 to 900 from 2014 to 2017. Additionally, these statistics are agreed to be an undercount, especially for unaccompanied transitional age youth and children who are a somewhat hidden subpopulations of homelessness.

Homeless youth are receiving more attention, both locally and nationally, as the severity of the problem becomes more evident. Voices of Youth Count says, “Everyday of housing instability represents missed opportunities to support healthy development and transitions to productive adulthood.” We all agree that there should be “no more missed opportunities”.

LGBTQ+ youth had 120% higher risk of reporting homelessness.

Support (organizations we are seeking endorsements from)

The following providers, coalitions and/or agencies working with and on behalf of homeless youth in Oakland, support these recommendations:

First Place for Youth  
Covenant House  
Dream Catcher Youth Services  
EveryOne Home  
City of Oakland Human Services Department

We have identified these additional providers, coalitions and/or agencies as important to confer with around this work:

MISSEY  
EBHO  
Beyond Emancipation  
Family Emergency Shelter Coalition  
Tay Housing  
Voices of Youth Count  
The Unity Council  
The Village  
EOCP  
Oakland Path Rehousing Initiative  
East Oakland Community Project - Our House

CTE Hub, YAB, YAC's Recommendations of 2022



## **Executive Summary**

From 2017-2018, the Youth Commission launched a [Homelessness Youth Policy](#) campaign received by the Life Enrichment Committee in the YAC Annual Report of 2018. Over the past four years, YAC members consistently raised homelessness as a major concern. This is not surprising, as evidence of the growing homelessness state of emergency in Oakland and Alameda County overall has been seen and felt by all residents and more so since the COVID-19 pandemic.

This public hearing between the Youth Commission and City Council is to ensure that the testimony of young adults, transition-aged youth (TAY), and youth experiencing homelessness (YEH) is heard by community leaders so that action can be taken to prioritize the resources needed to address this crisis.

With the elevated costs of living in Alameda County, and disproportionate numbers of impoverished Black, brown and LGBTQ, and mentally unstable people are facing housing insecurity, unhoused youth are confronted with the added marginalization of being youth in an adultist environment that can render their special needs for services, programs, and shelter invisible. Youth transitioning into adulthood are at a critical stage of developing necessary life skills to become productive members of society. If not stopped at its root, today's unhoused youth will become tomorrow's unhoused adults. Future youth will shoulder the consequences of society's current inaction both socially and economically.

We would like to revisit the Homeless Youth Policy of 2018 by providing an updated list of recommendations, uplift the Youth Action Board (YAB) Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project's Coordinated Community Plan recommendations, and share recommendations from youth leaders of the Career and Technical Education Hub at 1025 Second Avenue.

### **YAC's Recommendation of 2022**

We seek the establishment of a Task Force (of representatives from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, County Board of Education, Peralta Community College District, Oakland Mayor's office, Oakland City Council, and Oakland Unified School District) to discuss how the city and county can advance the plan presented by youth leaders. We are asking this coalition members to address the four key areas of the proposed strategy:

1. Structural: legislation, policy, and investment to increase social equality.
2. Systems: remove barriers to enhance access to services and supports.

3. Early intervention for high-risk youth (i.e., “not literally homeless” per HUD definition): strategies designed to provide crisis intervention such as effective outreach, coordinated intake and assessment, and client-centered case management.
4. Housing stabilization: supporting people who have experienced homelessness to find and maintain housing, such as through financial assistance to prevent eviction, and improve access to health care, education and employment.

We call upon the City Council to champion a future time-bound information report that monitors the Task Force’s progress in realizing the above outlined recommendations from the YAB, CTE Hub Coalition, and YAC over the next two years. We have provided a report card in Attachment 3 to guide evaluation of our youth-led recommendations.

**CTE Hub, YAB, and YAC Recommendations for Future Investments**

The YAB, CTE Hub at 1025 Second Avenue, and YAC are bodies that center youth leadership in creating solutions in the civic arena. We came together to represent youth on the margins and advocate for specific resources for transition aged youth (TAY), youth and young adults (YYA) and youth experiencing homelessness (YEH) in policy settings. Each body develops youth leaders and engages them in recommendations for designing an end to youth homelessness based on common missions, lived experiences and a desire to increase youth power. Recommendations from these youth bodies can be divided into the categories of housing stabilization, human resources and staff needs, legislative changes, transportation assistance, and continuous quality improvement. The YAB will produce a CCP which will be approved by Alameda County’s Continuum of Care. Once accepted, the YAB will proceed with obtaining funding from HUD to be allocated over the next two years. While understanding that the YAB recommendations may be funded through YHDP, the following Tables 1 through 5 captures the policy recommendations that the YAC and CTE Hub youth leaders residing in Oakland desire and align with the YAB’s priorities:

<b>Table 1: YAB and CTE Hub Recommendations for Housing Stabilization</b>	
YAB projects recommended \$3 million investment in a transitional housing and rapid re-housing project.	YAB
Prioritize creation of joint-component housing (transitional and rapid re-housing housing) and strengthen pipelines into and increase supplies of rapid re-housing. For example, develop policies that incentivize landlords to accept housing subsidies specifically for TAY.	CTE Hub

**Table 2: YAB, CTE Hub, YAC Recommendations for Human Resources and Staff Needs**



YAB recommends creating peer mentoring & vetting process to ensure youth are paired with those who fit their needs (23%)  YAB Goal #1: Enhance Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide trainings to enhance staff knowledge to work with YYA</li> <li>● Work with recipients to properly fund projects</li> <li>● Engage YYA to evaluate and improve coordinated access to resources.</li> </ul>	YAB
Create universal training and professional development programs and certifications for folks who are serving TAY that include the development of trauma informed and healing centered practices.	CTE Hub
Train and hire former clients transitioning out of homelessness as Peer Navigators and provide them with jobs with livable wages and training that launches them into career pathways.	YAC

<b>Table 3: YAB, CTE Hub, YAC Recommendations for Legislative Changes</b>	
YAB Goal #4: YHDP-funded projects will partner with legal advocates with the expertise to support unaccompanied minors and/or un/undocumented.	YAB
Extend resources, services, investments to the larger transition aged youth community experiencing homelessness - not just those that are systems-involved. For example, create policies that allow funding to flow to YEH who are undocumented.	CTE Hub
Create network of free and affordable legal support to avoid evictions of recently housed youth and undocumented youth.	YAC

<b>Table 4: YAB and YAC Recommendations for Transportation Assistance</b>	
YAB Goal #6: Increase transportation (mobility) support for YYA experiencing homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build a transportation network that helps YYA access shelter, and other services.</li> <li>● Work with YHDP-funded projects to build transportation options into programming.</li> </ul>	YAB
Build a transportation network that helps YYA access shelter, and other services (medical appointments).	YAC

<b>Table 5: YAB and YAC Recommendations for Continuous Quality Improvement</b>	
YAB Goal #7: Create and implement a continuous quality improvement plan to ensure YHDP-funded projects are effective and efficient.	YAB
Increase access, transparency, and monitoring of transition-aged youth (TAY) specific homelessness data. Collaborate with youth leaders and introduce legislation leading to resourcing and prioritizing budget allocations for youth housing stabilization, programs, and services.	YAC

## **2022 YAC Homeless Youth Policy Recommendations**

It has been said that there will never be enough to meet the need. A recent Home Together Community Plan model estimates that ending homelessness in all of Alameda County would cost \$28 billion. Ten percent of that, which is proportional to the approximate homeless youth population would equal to \$2.8 billion. As mentioned, there has been a great deal of investments. OYAC proposes the stand-alone recommendations to guide future decision-making related allocations for homeless youth-specific beds, programs, and services.

### **Recommendations 1-3**

One of the major issues we have found is that there is a need to increase the number of beds proportional to the need for homeless TAY. Per the McKinney-Vento Act, we support extending services, resources, and investments to the larger TAY community experiencing homelessness. Given restrictions on federal and state funding, we recommend:

1. Create a dedicated funding stream through securing a mix of philanthropic sources and/or tax revenues specifically for youth homelessness housing, programs, and services.
2. Continue to include specific funding for TAY experiencing homelessness in future city, county, state and federal aid for emergencies.
3. Set aside a percentage of any future housing bond units for homeless TAY earning 20 percent or less of the area median income.

In light of concern for dedicated TAY funding in times of crisis, the CTE Hub youth leaders propose the following stand-alone recommendation: support TAY specific outreach to understand the menu of housing, programs, and service options available.

### **Recommendations 4-7**

The Innovations for Youth at UC Berkeley published a Rapid Needs Assessment Report which highlights a number of critical needs for YEH and service providers in the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe these are the most relevant and applicable recommendations, even as we emerge from the crisis.

4. Coordinate with City-County tables to provide information about the resources that school districts and post-secondary schools can provide to students who are experiencing homelessness.

5. Continue to provide youth unemployment emergency funds to meet their basic needs. Ex: for youth who have lost their jobs and need unemployment.
6. Provide stipend pay for volunteers in YEH service providers to compensate them as they provide relief for burdened staff. Volunteers can be leveraged for supportive, lower-risk tasks. Ex: providing meals to free staff up for one-on-one support for youth.
7. Provide youth access to computers/phones, wifi hotspots, and charging stations so youth can access medical, education, information, and social networks. Ex: phones are a basic necessity for YEH.

#### Recommendation 8

The Oakland LGBTQ Center writes that “LGBTQ individuals experiencing homelessness are often at a heightened risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation compared with their heterosexual peers. Transgender people are particularly at physical risk due to a lack of acceptance and are often turned away from shelters; in some cases signs have been posted barring their entrance, and family engagement services.” Given that statistics show a higher rate of homelessness in this segment, there needs to be investments, when family members are still in contact, to access family counseling and education in multiple languages, when children are coming out as queer or transgender.

8. Promote client-led coaching and solutions to help family engagement and re-engagement in activities such as counseling, closure, and aftermath services and provide translation services for family counseling and family engagement.

#### Summary

We understand the enormity of the issue at-hand and wish to work together with community leaders to intervene and prevent youth homelessness. We do not wish to delay this anymore.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs regards biological survival, based on shelter, food, and clothing, as tertiary before all other needs. When youth cannot obtain stable housing, they cannot establish permanent social ties, focus on education and employment, improve their health, develop independence, or gain self-mastery. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, which catalyzes the federal response to homelessness, identified core outcomes that a community must achieve to end youth homelessness, which are stable housing, permanent connections, education/employment, and social-emotional well-being.

Preventing youth homelessness is a family, community, state and national priority. Doing so requires the continued coordination of robust diversion and prevention strategies, housing and support services, education and workforce programs, and health. Not stably housing youth prevents them from accessing

education and career experiences early-in-life and can have lasting impacts, such as loss in human potential and lower earnings. The net costs to society of that loss in human potential would result in higher public expenditures and lower tax revenues. In California, it costs more to incarcerate an individual in the juvenile justice system (\$304,259) per year than to educate (\$12,000) them.

The generational impacts of not meeting our youth's physiological needs today means that we, as a society, will miss out on seeing our brightest reach their full potential, and as a result, not achieve our collective best.

**YAC’s Report Card Template**

<b>Rubric 1 of Recommendations for Legislative Changes</b>		<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Notes</b>
YAB Goal #4: YHDP-funded projects will partner with legal advocates with the expertise to support unaccompanied minors and/or undocumented.	YAB					
Extend resources, services, investments to the larger transition aged youth community experiencing homelessness - not just those that are systems-involved. For example, create policies that allow funding to flow to YEH who are undocumented.	CTE Hub					
Create network of free and affordable legal support to avoid evictions of recently housed youth and undocumented youth.	YAC					
Set aside a percentage of any future housing bond units for homeless TAY earning 20 percent or less of the area median income.	YAC					
Create a dedicated funding stream through securing a mix of philanthropic sources and/or tax revenues specifically for youth homelessness housing, programs, and services.	YAC					
Continue to include specific funding for TAY experiencing homelessness in future city, county, state and federal aid for emergencies.	YAC					

Rubric 2 of Systems Change		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes
<p>YAB recommends per CCP investing \$1 million (17%) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop youth specific CE processes</li> <li>● Expand youth specific CE access points</li> <li>● Management of navigators</li> <li>● Managing and implementing CE matching and referral process for youth</li> <li>● Facilitating youth specific case conferencing</li> <li>● Evaluation and monitoring of youth CES</li> <li>● Project technical assistance (staff training)</li> <li>● Outreach to market youth CES</li> </ul>	YAB					
<p>YAB supports peer navigation support in community colleges, schools, and youth centers will help homeless youth navigate systems and housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a peer navigation project as the front door to the homeless response system and integrate peer navigation supports throughout all front door system access points.</li> <li>● Create a process that supports matching youth with navigators whose expertise and experience fits their needs.</li> <li>● Increase the number of people with lived experience working across the system in both YYA-supporting and system-level roles</li> </ul>	YAB					
<p>Provide information about the resources that school districts and post-secondary schools can provide to students who are experiencing homelessness.</p>	YAC					

<b>Rubric 3 of Recommendations for Human Resources and Staff Needs</b>		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes
<p>YAB Goal #1: Enhance Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide trainings to enhance staff knowledge to work with YYA</li> <li>● Work with recipients to properly fund projects</li> <li>● Engage YYA to evaluate and improve coordinated access to resources</li> </ul> <p>YAB also recommends creating peer mentoring and a vetting process to ensure youth are paired with people that will fit their needs (23%).</p>	YAB					
Create universal training and professional development programs and certifications for folks who are serving TAY that include the development of trauma informed and healing centered practices.	CTE Hub					
Volunteers can be leveraged for supportive, lower-risk tasks. Provide stipend pay for volunteers to compensate them as they provide relief for burdened staff. Ex: providing meals to free staff up for one-on-one support for youth.	YAC					
Train and hire former clients transitioning out of homelessness as Peer Navigators and provide them with jobs with livable wages and training that launches them into career pathways.	YAC					

<b>Rubric 4 of Recommendations for Transportation Assistance</b>		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes
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YAB Goal #6: Increase transportation (mobility) support for YYA experiencing homelessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a transportation network that helps YYA access shelter, and other services.</li> <li>• Work with YHDP-funded projects to build transportation options into programming.</li> </ul>	YAB					
Build a transportation network that helps YYA access shelter, and other services (medical appointments).	YAC					

<b>Rubric 5 of Recommendations for Housing Stabilization</b>		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes
YAB projects recommended \$3 million investment in a transitional housing and rapid re-housing project.	YAB					
Prioritize creation of joint-component housing (transitional and rapid re-housing housing) and strengthen pipelines into and increase supplies of rapid re-housing. For example, develop policies that incentivize landlords to accept housing subsidies specifically for TAY.	CTE Hub					

<b>Rubric 6 of Education and Economic Mobility</b>		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide youth expertise to community-based Direct Cash Transfer programs to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of these programs.</li> <li>● Partner with an organization providing Direct Cash Transfers for homeless youth to ensure youth are provided with the supportive services necessary to obtain and maintain stable housing and achieve self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>	YAB					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the number of in-system program (ex: Chabot College program for inmates)</li> <li>● Fund EOPS/Scholar programs for homelessness/low income youth to receive grants &amp; additional aid</li> <li>● Provide training that educates homeless services staff to understand all the resources and programs available to youth</li> </ul>	YAB					
Phones are a basic necessity. Provide youth access to computers/phones, wifi hotspots, and charging stations so youth can access medical, education, information, and social networks.	YAC					
Provide emergency funds to meet their basic needs; youth have lost their jobs and need unemployment.	YAC					
Continue to provide youth unemployment emergency funds to meet their basic needs. Ex: for youth who have lost their jobs and need unemployment.	YAC					

<b>Rubric 7 of Family Engagement</b>		Beginning	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds	Notes
Promote client-led coaching and solutions to help family engagement and re-engagement in activities such as counseling, closure, and aftermath services and provide translation services for family counseling and family engagement.	YAC					

<b>Rubric 8 of Recommendations for Continuous Quality Improvement</b>		<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Notes</b>
YAB Goal #7: Create and implement a continuous quality improvement plan to ensure YHDP-funded projects are effective and efficient.	YAB					
Increase access, transparency, and monitoring of transition-aged youth (TAY) specific homelessness data.	YAC					
Collaborate with youth leaders and introduce legislation leading to resourcing and prioritizing budget allocations for youth housing stabilization, programs, and services.	YAC					

### Status of Homeless Youth Activity since 2018

Since 2018, when the YAC put forward a Homeless Youth Policy (YAC Policy) in its annual report and the Life Enrichment Committee received it, many commendable changes have taken place in the youth homelessness arena and much has changed in the national landscape.

Since 2018, the State of California has been providing counties and large cities with one-time funds to address homelessness. Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) allocations have specific TAY set aside, which is currently set at 10%. In HHAP round 3, Oakland will receive \$24 million, and \$2.4 million is reserved for programs serving TAY. The County and the Continuum of Care (CoC) combined will receive another \$24 million in HHAP 3, resulting in \$2.4 million for TAY. The same was true in different amounts for previous rounds of HHAP 2, HHAP 1, and HEAP funds. State HomeKey funds also have incentives for jurisdictions that are creating permanent housing for TAY.

The COVID-19 pandemic eroded an already frayed safety net for homeless youth, and unemployment and housing instability disproportionately impacted Black, brown, and LGBTQ transition-aged youth (TAY) and shined a spotlight on vulnerable populations. Efforts to re-evaluate community safety became center-stage after the murder of George Floyd; and the City of Oakland participated in a robust Reimagining Public Safety dialogue and worked fervently to deliver services and CARES Act funding.

- The Human Services Department (HSD) has been involved in and funded multiple hotel and other conversions to support homeless housing options: Clifton Hall (42 units permanent, family shelter 25 rooms) and Holland (90 bed transitional housing). Oakland Housing Authority expanded a partnership to subsidize rents for homeless families.
- The Department of Violence Prevention, established in 2020, will fund in FY 22-23 youth diversion and healing activities that include restorative practices. School-site Violence Intervention and Prevention (VIP) teams at several high schools will consist of access to a network of violence interruption and youth life coaching support along with gender-based violence specialists.
- Discussions about universal basic income reached the mainstream nationally, including in the State of California, which awarded Oakland a Homeless Youth Guaranteed Income Pilot Program in the amount of \$1,689,925 this past year.

Youth and adult ally communities have worked together to make progress on policy solutions too. In 2020, Alameda County’s ALL IN Ending Youth Homelessness Collaborative launched the Youth Action Board (YAB). The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded Alameda County a \$6.6 million Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant, which centers the YAB in decision-making. A robust, full-service Career Technical Education (CTE) Hub in Oakland for transitional aged youth (TAY) was supported by OUSD Board of Directors to include the proposed CTE Hub in the Measure Y school facilities bond project list and committed \$15 million towards the project. The City of Oakland included the CTE Hub in its recommendations for Reimagining Public Safety; and the Oakland City Council included \$5 million in state affordable housing funding for the Hub in its proposed 2021-22 budget.

Table 7 illustrates progress made on some YAC Policies by youth communities since 2018, while Table 8 shows the 2018 recommendations that YAC believes needs to be re-lifted.

<b>Table 7: 2018 YAC Homeless Youth Recommendations Progress Report</b>	
<b>OYAC 2018 Recommendations</b>	<b>Relevant Youth-Led Solutions in 2022</b>
Ensure that the regional comprehensive housing and services coordinated entry system for homeless individuals has a component that is youth-inclusive with the intention of identifying and meeting their unique service needs and their full integration into society.	<p>The YAB proposals will be approved by the Continuum of Care and funding will be distributed from HUD in Summer 2022. Coordinated entry improvements is a priority project within the YAB. YAB recommends per CCP investing \$1 million (17%) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop youth specific CE processes</li> <li>● Expand youth specific CE access points</li> <li>● Management of navigators</li> <li>● Manage and implement CE matching and referral process for youth</li> <li>● Facilitate youth specific case conferencing</li> <li>● Evaluate and monitor youth CES</li> <li>● Provide project technical assistance (staff training)</li> <li>● Outreach to market youth CES</li> </ul>
Develop multi-sector partnerships designed to create workforce development opportunities, paid internships, technical and/or vocational training opportunities and job training opportunities targeted for homeless youth.	<p>CTE Hub continues to engage youth and adult ally stakeholders in program design and planning, including: youth, workforce development, mental health, probation, juvenile hall, adult education, philanthropy, youth councils, youth-service providers, etc.</p>
Collaborate with law enforcement, probation officers, school systems, and aftercare programs to identify, engage and provide services to homeless youth.	<p>The YAB proposals will be approved by the Continuum of Care and funding will be distributed from HUD in Summer 2022. YAB's Goal #2 per CCP recommends Youth Collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a peer navigation project as the front door to the homeless response system and integrate peer navigation supports throughout all front door system access points.</li> <li>● Create a process that supports matching youth with navigators whose expertise and experience fits their needs.</li> <li>● Increase the number of people with lived experience working across the system in both YYA-supporting and system-level roles</li> </ul> <p>Reimagining Public Safety prioritized the City to fund web restorative justice services, build affordable housing for unsheltered residents, and increase investments in the Department of Violence Prevention.</p>

<p>Create a youth-specific table as part of the most appropriate City-County collaborative working on the issue of homelessness.</p>	<p>Alameda County ALL IN Ending Youth Homelessness Collaborative Youth Action Board was established in 2020. YAB recommends investing \$1.8 million (30%) to housing navigation focused peer navigation and \$250K to support project management and support authentic youth collaboration in the planning process. YAB received a \$6.6 million YHDP grant, and proposes to continue youth-led decision-making in programming and planning in its Coordinated Community Plan (CCP), which will be funded in Summer 2022.</p>
<p>Explore deeper coordination and collaboration with Oakland Unified School District and Peralta Community College District to provide services to homeless students.</p>	<p>The YAB proposals will be approved by the Continuum of Care and funding will be distributed from HUD in Summer 2022. YAB supports peer navigation support in community colleges, schools, and youth centers will help homeless youth navigate systems and housing. YAB also recommends creating peer mentoring and a vetting process to ensure youth are paired with people that will fit their needs (23%) to navigate housing services and programs.</p> <p>YAB Goal #3 per CCP recommends Economic Mobility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide youth expertise to community-based Direct Cash Transfer programs to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of these programs.</li> <li>● Partner with an organization providing Direct Cash Transfers for homeless youth to ensure youth are provided with the supportive services necessary to obtain and maintain stable housing and achieve self-sufficiency.</li> </ul> <p>YAB Goal #5 per CCP recommends Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the number of in-system program (ex: Chabot College program for inmates)</li> <li>● Fund EOPS/Scholar programs for homelessness/low income youth to receive grants &amp; additional aid</li> <li>● Provide training that educates homeless services staff to understand all the resources and programs available to youth</li> </ul> <p>CTE Hub actively engages partners with OUSD and Peralta Community College District.</p>

<p><b>Table 8: OYAC 2018 Recommendations Pertaining to Funds for Youth-Specific Beds, Programs and Services</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allocate 25% of the City’s dedicated homeless funding/resources and any additional homeless funding received by the city, for youth-specific homeless programs and services, with a focus on Transition Age Youth (TAY) aged 18-24 years old and youth populations that are disproportionately impacted by homelessness, such as; Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) involved youth, LGBTQ+ youth, youth exiting the juvenile justice system, and youth aging out of the foster system.</li> <li>● Explore and develop a match funding source via a city-wide sales or parcel tax that creates ongoing and stable funding dedicated to providing youth-specific homeless programs and services that takes a broad definition of youth homelessness, per the Mc-Kinney Vento Act.</li> <li>● Set aside a percentage of the Alameda County A1 Housing Bond units and City of Oakland KK bond units for homeless TAY earning 20 percent or less of the area median income.</li> <li>● Match these housing units with operational subsidies that provide supportive services. In addition to setting aside at least 15 units specifically for youth.</li> </ul>

**Data on Youth Homelessness since 2018**

*YHDP*

In 2021, the Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD) awarded \$6.5 million to Alameda County in 2021 to lead a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). The YHDP supports the development and implementation of a Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) that would prevent and end

youth homelessness. The YHDP CCP's proposals are grounded by values of equity, youth development, family engagement, youth choice, housing first, social and community integration, coordinated entry, unsheltered homeless, and client-centered supports and solutions. The ALL IN Ending Youth Homelessness Collaborative's Youth Action Board (YAB), central to decision-making, is made up of 13 young people ages 18-24 who have lived experience with being unstably housed. The YAB works with the YHDP Core Team, made up of youth-serving partners in Alameda County, and makes proposals to be approved by the Continuum of Care.

To capture needs and resources available, as well as design improvements to existing system components, the CCP gathered data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), Point-in-Time (PIT) counts, and conducted listening sessions with special population groups as defined by United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), including: minors, pregnant and parenting youth, systems-involved youth with child welfare and juvenile justice, LGBTQ+ youth, youth experiencing or fleeing violence or trafficking, education and employment, and BIPOC youth.

Among its recommendations which will be included in the CCP are:

- Joint Component Housing (Transitional Housing and Rapid Re-Housing)
- Peer Housing Navigation
- HMIS Improvement
- Coordinated Entry

#### *CTE Hub at 1025 Second Avenue*

In 2017, young men detained at Camp Sweeney envisioned a one-stop-shop where their education, housing, health, and employment needs could be met as a solution to ending and preventing the 70% recidivism rate that statistically showed they would return back to detention after exiting the juvenile system. To realize the youths' vision, a group of Oakland volunteers comprising alternative education students, recent alumni, and adults, formed a coalition to develop a hub that would provide critical services in education, work training, health and mental health services, and myriad social and family services, as well as joint-component housing. The coalition identified an ideal site at 1025 2nd Avenue in downtown Oakland--a vacant building owned by the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) that is close to public transportation and across the street from Laney College, Dewey Academy, and La Escuelita Education Center.

The OUSD Board of Directors voted to include the proposed CTE Hub in the Measure Y school facilities bond project list and committed \$15 million towards the project. The YAC sent an official letter to the

OUSD BOD to endorse the inclusion of this project in the Measure Y bond list. Since then, the City of Oakland included the CTE Hub in its recommendations for Reimagining Public Safety; and the Oakland City Council included \$5 million in state affordable housing funding for the Hub in its proposed 2021-22 budget. The CTE Hub secured private funding, continues to conduct research meetings with developers that specialize in TAY housing, and engages youth stakeholders in its program planning, design, and development. The CTE Hub’s Youth Council launched in Fall 2021, engages with 21 youth who are 100% BIPOC and between 16 and 25-years-old, who are transitioning from foster care/juvenile detention, run away/dropped out, and/or with disabilities. YAC’s housing subcommittee members are regular attendees of the CTE Hub’s Strategic Planning meetings.

The CTE Hub Coalition recommends that the City of Oakland:

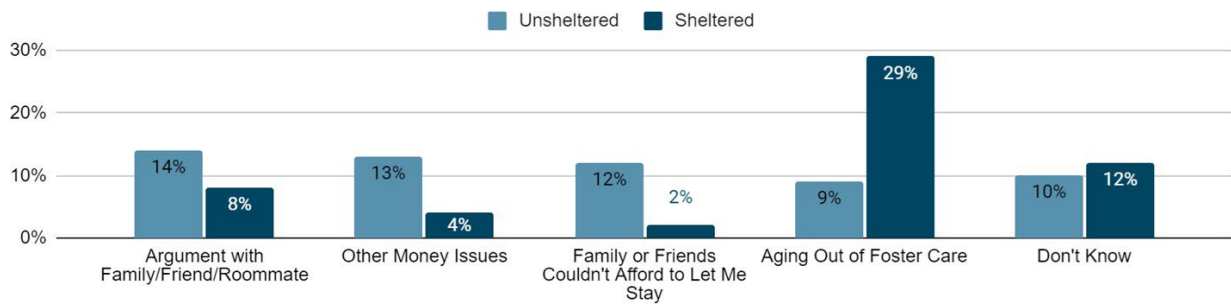
<b>Table 9: CTE Hub Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend resources, services, investments to the larger transition aged youth community experiencing homelessness - not just those that are systems-involved. For example, create policies that allow funding to flow to YEH who are undocumented.</li> <li>• Include specific funding for TAY experiencing homelessness in all future city, county, state and federal aid for emergencies.</li> <li>• Prioritize creation of joint-component housing (transitional and rapid re-housing housing) and strengthen pipelines into and increase supplies of rapid re-housing. For example, develop policies that incentivize landlords to accept housing subsidies specifically for TAY.</li> <li>• Prioritize the development of one-stop-shop TAY hubs that meet several needs in one location. These hubs lower transportation and other accessibility barriers by offering education, housing, and wrap around services in one location.</li> <li>• Create universal training and professional development programs and certifications for folks who are serving TAY that include the development of trauma informed and healing centered practices.</li> </ul>	

### **Youth Homelessness Data**

There is no single path to youth homelessness. While youth with systems involvement are also more likely to experience homelessness than non-system involved peers, youth with a history of foster care comprise a larger proportion of sheltered youth (60%) and youth who experience unsheltered homelessness were more likely to have no history of foster care involvement (77%). This points to a need for youth-specific housing supports that are not tied to prior-systems involvement.

Alameda County offers a comprehensive network of services for youth at-risk of and experiencing homelessness - such as connection to mainstream benefits, disability-related services, drop-in centers, community-based outreach, education and job training programs, financial and transportation assistance,

legal help, medical and mental health services, substance use services, support for LGBTQ+ youth, and support for pregnant and parenting youth – yet, given that Alameda County is one of the most expensive communities in the United States there is still a critical need to improve service delivery and increase services dedicated to youth. Youth need flexible options to increase their income and access housing, with an emphasis on affordability.



In Alameda County, TAY and unaccompanied youth account for approximately 11% of the homeless population. Yet, only 4.5% of emergency shelter beds are for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness. Thus, 82% of unaccompanied youth and young adults experiencing homelessness are unsheltered, meaning they are living in places unfit for human habitation.

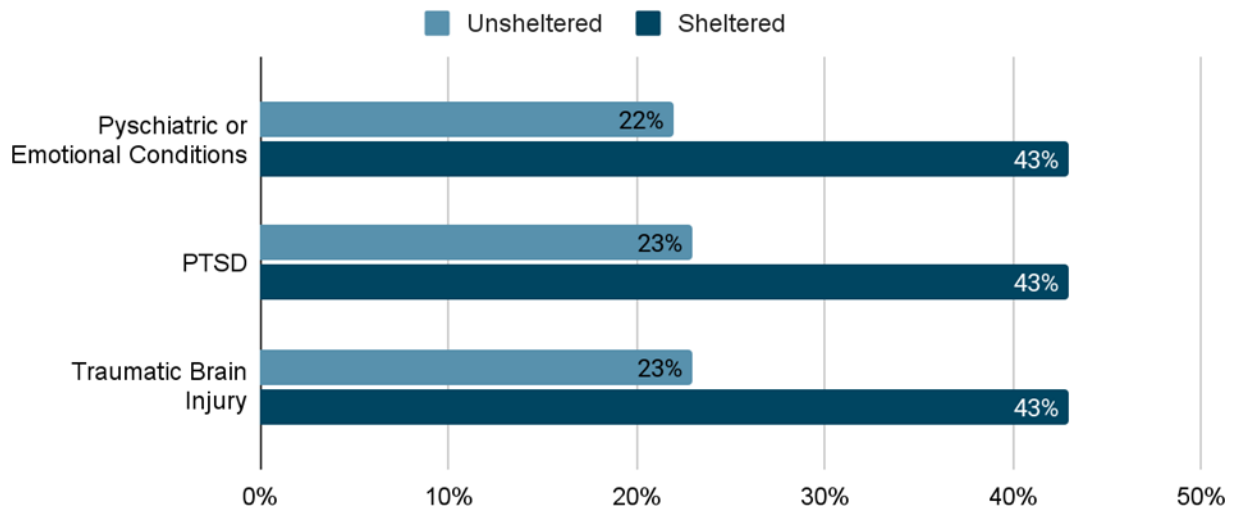
### Housing Inventory Count (HIC) 2020

Total Year-Round Beds for People Experiencing Homelessness	Total Beds for Households with Children	Total Dedicated Youth Beds	Total Beds Dedicated to Youth
<b>6,210</b>	<b>2,112</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>5.41%</b>
Total Emergency Shelter Beds for People Experiencing Homelessness	Total Emergency Shelter Beds for Households with Children	Total Emergency Shelter Dedicated Youth Beds	Total Emergency Shelter Beds Dedicated to Youth
<b>2,032</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>8.32%</b>
Total Permanent Supportive Housing for People Experiencing Homelessness	Total Permanent Supportive Housing Beds for Households with Children	Total Permanent Supportive Housing Dedicated Youth Beds	Percentage of Total Permanent Supportive Housing Beds Dedicated to Youth
<b>4,178</b>	<b>1,558</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>4.00%</b>

In a homeless Point-in-Time Count survey by EveryOne Counts 2019, there were 702 young adults between 18-24 experiencing homelessness, and 29 unaccompanied youth under the age of 18. The majority of younger youth were sheltered (69%), while the majority of older youth were unsheltered (82%). Based on this Count, nearly 25% of all currently homeless had first homelessness experience before age 25.



National estimates show that LGBTQ+ youth have a 120% higher risk of reporting homelessness. Forty-two percent of the sheltered youth identified as LGBTQ. Among the sheltered, 43% of TAY cited having mental health concerns in the forms of PTSD, psychiatric concerns, and traumatic brain injury.



Alameda County’s Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) Annual Performance Report in 2020 showed:

- 1,488 youth accessed homeless services in Alameda County, a majority were between 18-24.
- Of those 1,488, 126 were parents themselves.
- Less than 2% identified as Transgender or Gender Nonconforming.
- At the time of their HMIS intake, most youth stayed in tents, parks, sheds, or at shelters. Other locations included staying with family, friends, in a motel or hotel, or in a rental.

While the Black population made up 11% of Alameda County, Black youth accounted for 63% of the YEH population. Among unsheltered youth, the largest population was born in Oakland.

Alameda County’s Board of Education reports that there were 4,445 “homeless students” who attended public schools from 2019-2020. Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) stated that the number of homeless students increased from 400 to 900 from 2014 to 2017. These statistics are known to be an undercount, especially for unaccompanied TAY and children who represent hidden homeless subpopulations.

## COVID-19 Impacts

The COVID-19 shed light on an already frayed safety net for YEH. UC Berkeley's Innovations for Youth reported in May 2020 that:

- YEH are particularly dependent on youth-friendly service providers, more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. YEH providers struggled to meet the needs of young people who had no safe spaces to shelter-in-place.
- Youth who had been relying on couch-surfing to remain indoors reported no longer being welcome in homes where they previously stayed. As schools and their places of work closed, so did connections to vital resources.
- The pandemic also compounded typical causal factors such as family dysfunction, poverty, involvement with social services and juvenile justice, and contributed to higher rates of homelessness.
- Additionally, minors and TAY between 18 and 25 were overlooked in COVID-19 response efforts. COVID relief funds - such as the CARES Act - did not provide specific allocations to support the unique needs of youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

In 2020, the California Coalition for Youth surveyed 312 youth, ages 15-25 across the state. Their report found that BIPOC and LGBT youth are overrepresented and most significantly impacted by housing instability.

- Thirty-two percent had three or more different sleeping locations in the last week because they could not stay in their home or did not have a home. The top three locations youth slept in during the last week were: car (58%), tent (41%), outdoors (40%).
- COVID-19 has exacerbated the fight for young people to access even their most basic needs. Employment was the number one resource young people indicated they were in need of (81% listed employment). Other high ranking needs: physical health (61%), housing (58%), distance learning support (42%), mental health (38%).
- Isolation, increased vulnerability, and loss of connections have negatively impacted the mental health of young people.

UC Berkeley YAAH conducted a Youth Impact Survey that reached 386 YEH in 2021 from San Francisco and Alameda Counties. Their findings showed:

- 76% of respondents reported a change in housing situation due to COVID-19.

- 16.8% said they did not feel safe where they stayed last night.
- Two out of three lost income or had lower income during the pandemic.
- One in five had no income before or after the stay-at-home orders.
- One in six respondents who were in school before the pandemic had left for reasons other than graduation.
- An overwhelming number (82.6%) shared that they were not able to fully follow shelter-in-place protocols.

The report called for more affordable housing options, easy access to basic needs, assistance in getting youth back on track with education, and providing a basic income for youth. In a society where homeless youth feel invisible, the pandemic may have further exacerbated feelings of isolation, possibly impeding them from seeking help. It may take time to see what effect the pandemic has had on homelessness numbers among young people.

### **Defining Homelessness**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (referred to below as HUD) is tasked by Congress to administer Continuum of Care (CoC) grants to local governments to meet local homelessness needs. Congress mandates HUD's homelessness eligibility criteria to be narrowly defined by those whose housing crises are most immediate. HUD uses four categories under which an individual or family may be eligible for services, abbreviated below:

- Category 1: Literally homeless;
- Category 2: Less than two weeks from having somewhere to go;
- Category 3: Families and youth tenuously housed;
- Category 4: Fleeing unsafe situations (including living with a trafficker or trading sex for a place to stay).

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act created a homeless definition such that education could be more of an expansive resource so that when a child, youth, or student's housing became unstable, their education would be guaranteed:

- Sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds, emergency or transitional shelters; abandoned in hospitals;\*

- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- Migratory children living in circumstances described above

An important aspect of youth homelessness is that youth have a greater likelihood of being part of the “hidden homeless” population. Young people who “couch-surf” between friends and relatives without stable housing are virtually invisible to the system. Some stay temporarily with friends or relatives, and may not seek out services designed to support people who are homeless. Some may be housed but lack a sense of home because their situation is inherently precarious due to economic instability, abuse, or environmental hazards. These young people would be considered “at risk”. While counts measure unsheltered and sheltered youth, the range of precarious circumstances a young person may face may place them in the “at-risk” category. At-risk means a young person is not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious. Young people must be pushed out of systems and fail in order to receive services and this must be rectified.

It is important to note that out of fear of authorities, or because of fear of violence or discrimination, youth may avoid the homeless-serving system. And often, due to HUD’s categorical homeless definitions, youth who fall within the “hidden homeless” may disqualify themselves from receiving shelter and services during the intake process and get turned away.

For their survey on COVID-19 Youth Impacts, UC Berkeley’s Youth Allies Against Homelessness (YAAH) defined unstably housed/experiencing homelessness more broadly as:

Staying in a shelter, [or] outdoors, squatting in a vacant building, staying with a stranger/someone youth don’t know well, staying in a car/vehicle, on public transportation, in SRO/hotel/motel, or transitional housing program for youth who have experienced homelessness, an encampment or in a tent, couch surfing (staying temporarily with friends or family), or jail or prison.

### *Characteristics of Youth Homelessness*

Youth homelessness is distinct from adult homelessness. Youth homelessness is a loss of a home embedded in dependent relationships. From a life-course standpoint, youth are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. To successfully transition to adulthood, youth must acquire the life skills and social capital to complete their educational goals, enter the workforce or professional training, independently meet their basic needs, engage in healthy relationships with peers and romantic partners, and become productive members of society. Youth experiencing unstable housing and homelessness are attempting to meet these goals in a context that is hostile to their success. Unlike adults, the vast majority of YEH are unsheltered

and may live outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation, placing them at greater risk of illness and leaving them disconnected and isolated.

### *Relationship Factors*

Family breakdown is one of the main reasons why youth are homeless. While these are important and felt personally, it is worth pointing out that structural and systemic factors generally produce the conditions under which personal and interpersonal crises result in homelessness. Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) can be a significant contributing factor to homelessness, when youth are forced to leave abusive, neglectful, or unsafe living situations. Identity-based conflict, after a youth comes out as LGBTQ, for instance, can contribute to youth homelessness. LGBTQ youth have a 120% increased risk of experiencing homelessness compared to youth who identify as cisgender or heterosexual. To develop solutions, having an understanding of the different types of circumstances, causes, and ways to approach an end to youth homelessness is key.

### *Homeless Prevention Typology*

Ruptures to structural, systemic, and relationship factors can lead a youth to homelessness. Solutions from various levels form the eco-system to ending youth homelessness.

1. Structural: legislation, policy, and investment to increase social equality.
2. Systems: removing barriers to enhance access to services and supports.
3. Early intervention for high risk youth (ie: Not Literally Homeless per HUD definition): strategies designed to provide crisis intervention such as effective outreach, coordinated intake and assessment, and client-centered case management.
4. Eviction prevention: programs to keep people stably housed and help them avoid eviction.
5. Housing stabilization: supporting people who have experienced homelessness to find and maintain housing, and improve access to health care, education and employment-

