

HIGH-IMPACT STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

Every CoC’s system has different strengths and challenges, and therefore, each community will need to undertake different actions to improve performance results. This section provides a set of high-impact system improvement strategies from which to choose, with links to additional resources to support implementation. CoCs should consider which areas are strong points and where there are opportunities for improvement.

Each of these components will better equip homeless systems to prevent and end homelessness and impact multiple facets of system performance. The table below summarizes the strategies in relation to the respective measures on which performance is expected to improve.

System Improvement Strategies	System Performance Measures		
	Length of Time Homeless (Measure 1)	Successful Placement and Retention of PH (Measure 7)	Returns to Homelessness (Measure 2)
1. Enhance Coordinated Entry			
Prioritize Vulnerable Households	✓	✓	
Right-size Assistance	✓	✓	✓
Incorporate Diversion Practices	✓	✓	✓
Streamline Admissions and Lower Barriers	✓	✓	
Link to Effective Outreach and In-reach	✓	✓	
Target Prevention Assistance		✓	✓
2. Strengthen Housing-Focused Practices			
Housing Focused Case Management	✓	✓	✓
Policies and Procedures to Promote Housing Stability		✓	✓
Housing Navigation	✓	✓	✓
3. Scale Permanent Housing Interventions			
Recruit Private Landlords	✓	✓	
Leverage Mainstream Housing and Services	✓	✓	✓
Reallocate Resources	✓	✓	
Build Rapid Re-Housing Capacity	✓	✓	✓

System Improvement Strategy Recommendations

1. Enhance Coordinated Entry

Fully implement [Coordinated Entry](#) and emphasize the following aspects.

Strategy	Recommendations
Prioritize Vulnerable Households	Prioritize individuals and families who have been homeless the longest and have the highest service needs across all interventions in the homeless portfolio. Identify these households using active or master lists , and consider case conferencing practices that hold projects accountable for housing this group. Develop admission preferences to dedicate PSH units to people who are chronically homeless and use the orders of priority set out in HUD's Notice CPD16-11 .
Right-Size Assistance	Maximize the number of households placed in housing by using housing barriers assessments to match household with the most appropriate level of assistance, and by providing assistance (move-in costs, deposits, rental assistance, etc.) in a progressive and flexible manner . Be responsive to changes in participants' financial circumstances or housing costs and provide more assistance where required. Continuously examine data on returns to homelessness, including comparison of assessments and assistance received, to determine if there are changes needed to coordinated entry systems.
Strategy	Recommendations
Incorporate Diversion Practices	Implement a phased assessment process which identifies households seeking shelter who are eligible for diversion resources at all coordinated entry access points. Prevent these households from becoming homeless by helping them immediately identify alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to resolve their housing crisis.
Streamline Admissions and Lower Barriers	Ensure tenant selection and admissions policies do not screen out participants based on factors such as rental, credit, or criminal histories, and sobriety, or income. Eliminate preconditions for acceptance to services. Standardize provider application and approval processes to help reduce wait times.
Link to Effective Outreach and In-reach	Expand outreach to people living on the street and in-reach to Emergency Shelters. Explore creative approaches for locating people not connected to services, building positive relationships, and engaging individuals and families in supportive services and mainstream resources that ultimately lead to stable housing.
Target Prevention Assistance	Use data on the characteristics of households in shelter to develop criteria for targeting prevention assistance . Identify all relevant services available in the community to determine what prevention assistance should be provided by the homeless system and where mainstream resources should be leveraged. Build strong partnerships with mainstream providers and get them to help identify households at risk, facilitate referrals to and from the homeless system, support participants in permanent housing, and improve discharge planning for people exiting systems of care and institutions.

2. Strengthen Housing-Focused Practices

From day one, individuals and families who enter the homeless system should be provided with support that is directly related to resolving their housing crisis and promoting housing stability.

Strategy	Recommendations
Housing Focused Case Management	All projects, including Emergency Shelters, Safe Havens, and Transitional Housing, should assess barriers to housing and support households, or link them to providers, to address issues that impede them from moving into permanent housing. Provide support to create a housing plan, resolve rental screening barriers, search for housing, negotiate lease terms, and mediate family conflict. Promote long-term stability by helping people who have been re-housed to connect with community-based resources and employment, understand their tenant rights and responsibilities, and develop plans for responding to future housing crisis.
Strategy	Recommendations
Policies and Procedures to Promote Housing Stability	Incorporate provider-level policies and procedures aimed at promoting long term housing stability . Remove lease provisions and participation agreements that require involvement in services or that deem things like alcohol use as a violation or grounds for eviction or termination. Build capacity to address problems, such as missed rent payments or disturbances to neighbors, through effective case management and motivational interviewing practices . Promote landlord-provider communication about program participants who are at risk of losing their housing and support landlords to resolve housing or lease issues before they escalate.
Housing Navigation	Beef up resources to help households locate housing units in the community, assess various options, and choose units that are the right fit and in desired neighborhoods, when possible. Be familiar with rental screenings used by local landlords and track vacancies, unit locations, and rental costs in the private market to inform housing navigation efforts. Promote choice and engage households in the decision-making process.

3. Scale Permanent Housing Interventions

Help more people become quickly and stably housed—optimize local resources and expand permanent housing options.

Strategy	Recommendations
Recruit Private Landlords	Expand the number of permanent housing units available through outreach to new landlords and cultivating long-term relationships with owners and managers. Replicate proven recruitment strategies , which draw on effective marketing and engagement efforts, and innovative incentives such as landlord payments or damage insurance funds .
Leverage Mainstream Housing and Services	Build partnerships with mainstream systems to leverage affordable housing resources and home-based services. Partner with local PHAs to prioritize housing subsidies for people who are chronically homeless and create meaningful preferences for people experiencing homelessness. Support people in permanent housing by linking mainstream healthcare , mental health, employment , or family services to housing subsidies. Replicate strategies using Medicaid and TANF to scale permanent housing interventions for individuals and families .
Reallocate Resources	Draw on the performance analysis and portfolio assessments outlined above to identify system strengths and weaknesses. Establish funding priorities and consider re-directing investments to fill gaps and expand high performing permanent housing projects.
Strategy	Recommendations
Build Rapid Re-Housing Capacity	Use local data and information on best practices to standardize a Rapid Re-housing project model and align funding sources to support expansion. Provide trainings and technical assistance on re-housing best practices. Use findings from high performing projects to inform the project model and provide peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Link Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing projects, and Street Outreach to Rapid Re-Housing interventions.