



Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness 2012 Policy Priorities

The Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness works to create, support, coordinate, and sustain effective strategies to prevent and end homelessness in Chicago. Our vision is a community in which everyone has a home, including the most vulnerable and the most challenged. In collaboration with service providers, consumers, and civic and government partners, our 2012 advocacy efforts will create new resources and effective policies that support Chicago's efforts to end homelessness.

Federal Initiatives

Advocate for Successful Implementation of the HEARTH Act

As HUD prepares to implement key components of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act in 2012, including the Emergency Solutions Grant, HMIS, and Continuum of Care regulations, there are still many opportunities to impact the new legislation through the federal regulatory process and local implementation. The Alliance will analyze regulations, educate stakeholders, organize community feedback sessions, submit commentary, and advocate on behalf of Chicago's homeless system. We will also assist HUD-funded agencies implement new HEARTH requirements by advocating for increased technical assistance and/or capital funding where necessary.

Protect and Increase Appropriations for Homeless Services and Affordable Housing

During the FY 2013 appropriations process, the Alliance will pursue every opportunity to protect and increase funding for federal programs that support Chicago's homeless system, including HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants; Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) homeless programs; veteran-specific homeless programs; Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8); the National Housing Trust Fund; and the Community Development Block Grant.



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State Initiatives

Protect and Increase State Funding for Homeless Prevention and Services

After a big victory in restoring funding to the Emergency and Transitional Housing Program in 2011, the Alliance's top state priority for 2012 will be increasing homeless prevention funding from \$1.5 million to \$5 million. We will also work to protect and/or increase funding for other homeless programs, including Emergency and Transitional Housing; Supportive Services in Supportive Housing; Homeless Youth Services; and Homeless Education. We will also continue to work in collaboration with our statewide partners (the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, the Supportive Housing Providers Association, and Housing Action Illinois) to measure the impact of budget cuts and the effectiveness of homeless programs.

Advocate for Coordinated Health Care that Benefits People Experiencing Homelessness

As implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act nears, the Alliance will be working with service providers and policymakers to ensure that Medicaid expansion reaches all people experiencing homelessness and is a viable health care resource. We will continue to advocate for expanded health care infrastructure, increased Medicaid billing capacity within the homeless system, and a coordinated care system that meets the needs of the most vulnerable.

Advocate on Behalf of the Homeless System during Implementation of Budgeting for Results

In 2012, Illinois will unveil a new system for performance-based contracts. The Alliance will advocate to ensure that this new budgeting system is community-driven, realistic, and sensitive to the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. We need to make sure that homeless service providers are at the table and that the new system does not put an unrealistic burden on providers nor encourages creaming.

Local Initiatives

Develop Version Two of Chicago's Plan to End Homelessness

The Alliance, in collaboration with the City of Chicago, is facilitating a public process for creating Plan 2.0. The new Plan will be driven by results from the 2009-2011 evaluation of Chicago's



Plan and system-level data; extensive community feedback by a broad range of stakeholders, including a community planning charrette; and the opportunities, risks, and resources facing our homeless system. Recommendations from Plan 2.0 will guide the Alliance's advocacy efforts for years to come. Plan 2.0 will also shape our system goals for coordinated access and homeless prevention, short-term housing interventions like interim and rapid rehousing, and the creation and maintenance of safe, stable permanent housing for all who need it.

Advocate for the Needs of Homeless Youth

The Alliance has been participating in the City Task Force on Homeless Youth, created by Mayor Richard M. Daley in 2010, since its inception. We will continue to support the advocacy initiatives of the Task Force, including increasing youth housing capacity and improving access to education and training opportunities. We will also advocate with homeless youth providers to ensure youth are more accurately counted in the January 2013 Point in Time Count.

Pursue Strategies to Prevent Institutions from Discharging Individuals into Homelessness

The Alliance will continue to coordinate with other systems of care to prevent institutions like hospitals and prisons from discharging individuals into homelessness. The Countywide Discharge Planning Committee will establish its own priorities for 2012, based on the recommendations of Plan 2.0.

Overarching Initiative

Initiate a Site Visit Campaign to Encourage Grassroots Activism and Educate Policymakers

Site visits are one of the most powerful advocacy tools in our arsenal. Meeting with providers and consumers on their own turf and seeing how public resources are being spent well makes a lasting impression on policymakers. To encourage more providers to invite their elected officials out to their sites, the Alliance will initiate a site visit campaign in 2012 and work with providers to plan and execute effective visits.