

## Homelessness Glossary of Terms

The following are terms you may encounter as you are reading about homelessness and homelessness interventions. The definitions below are from the following sources:

[www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-V/subchapter-C/part-578](http://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-B/chapter-V/subchapter-C/part-578)

[Continuum of Care Program: Rental Assistance Slides \(hudexchange.info\)](http://Continuum of Care Program: Rental Assistance Slides (hudexchange.info))

<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Virtual-Binders-Glossary-of-Terms.pdf>

[Functional Zero - Community Solutions](#)

**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Final Rule.** Requires recipients and subrecipients to take meaningful, proactive actions to affirmatively further fair housing by addressing disparities in housing access and opportunity, and intentionally working to alleviate segregated or disparate living patterns. See 24 CFR 578.93(c) of the CoC Interim Rule.

**Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR).** HUD report to the U.S. Congress that provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons. The report is based on HMIS data about persons who experience homelessness during a 12-month period, point-in-time counts of people experiencing homelessness on a single day in January, and inventory of shelter and housing available in a community.

**At Risk of Homelessness.** 24 CFR Part 576.2 of the ESG Interim Rule and 24 CFR 578.3 of the CoC Interim Rule defines At Risk of Homelessness as follows:

(1) An individual or family who:

(i) Has an annual income below 30 percent of median family income for the area, as determined by HUD;

(ii) Does not have sufficient resources or support networks, *e.g.*, family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from moving to an emergency shelter or another place described in paragraph (1) of the “Homeless” definition in this section; and

(iii) Meets one of the following conditions:

(A) Has moved because of economic reasons two or more times during the 60 days immediately preceding the application for homelessness prevention assistance;

(B) Is living in the home of another because of economic hardship;

(C) Has been notified in writing that their right to occupy their current housing or living situation will be terminated within 21 days of the date of application for assistance;

(D) Lives in a hotel or motel and the cost of the hotel or motel stay is not paid

by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals;

(E) Lives in a single-room occupancy or efficiency apartment unit in which there reside more than two persons, or lives in a larger housing unit in which there reside more than 1.5 people per room, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau;

(F) Is exiting a publicly funded institution, or system of care (such as a health-care facility, a mental health facility, foster care or other youth facility, or correction program or institution); or

(G) Otherwise lives in housing that has characteristics associated with instability and an increased risk of homelessness, as identified in the recipient's approved consolidated plan;

(2) A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under section 387(3) of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act ([42 U.S.C. 5732a\(3\)](#)), section 637(11) of the Head Start Act ([42 U.S.C. 9832\(11\)](#)), section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 ([42 U.S.C. 14043e-2\(6\)](#)), section 330(h)(5)(A) of the Public Health Service Act ([42 U.S.C. 254b\(h\)\(5\)\(A\)](#)), section 3(m) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 ([7 U.S.C. 2012\(m\)](#)), or section 17(b)(15) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 ([42 U.S.C. 1786\(b\)\(15\)](#)); or

(3) A child or youth who does not qualify as “homeless” under this section, but qualifies as “homeless” under section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11434a\(2\)](#)), and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of that child or youth if living with her or him.

**Chronically Homeless.** Chronically homeless means:

(1) A “homeless individual with a disability,” as defined in section 401(9) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11360\(9\)](#)), who:

(i) Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and

(ii) Has been homeless and living as described in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years, as long as the combined occasions equal at least 12 months and each break in homelessness separating the occasions included at least 7 consecutive nights of not living as described in paragraph (1)(i). Stays in institutional care facilities for fewer than 90 days will not constitute as a break in homelessness, but rather such stays are included in the 12-month total, as long as the individual was living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility;

(2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility, including a jail, substance abuse or mental health treatment facility, hospital, or other similar facility, for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility; or

(3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

**Continuum of Care (CoC)\*.** The group organized to carry out the responsibilities required under 24 CFR part 578 and is composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless service providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formally homeless individuals to the extent these groups are represented within the geographic area and are available to participate.

*\*Idaho has two Continuums of Care: Boise City/Ada County (Our Path Home); and Balance of State.*

**Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System (Coordinated Entry\*).** A centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals. The system covers the geographic area, is easily accessible and should ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.

*\* Our Path Home Connect is the coordinated entry system for Our Path Home (Boise City/Ada County Continuum of Care).*

**Developmental Disability.** A severe, chronic disability of an individual that: (1) Is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments; (2) Is manifested before the individual attains age 22; (3) Is likely to continue indefinitely; and (4) Results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity: (i) Self-care; (ii) Receptive and expressive language; (iii) Learning; (iv) Mobility; (v) Self-direction; (vi) Capacity for independent living; and (viii) Economic self-sufficiency, (ix) Reflects the individual's need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or generic services, individualized supports, or other forms of assistance that are of lifelong or extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated.

**Disability.** A person is considered to have a disability if the disability meets all of the following four criteria: 1. is expected to be of long, continuing, or indefinite duration; 2. substantially impedes the individual's ability to live independently; 3. could be improved by the provision of more suitable housing conditions; and 4. is one or more of the following: (a) physical, mental, or emotional impairment, including an impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury; and/or (b) developmental disability (please review full definition); and/or (c) the disease of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or any condition arising from the etiologic agency for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.

**Equal Access Rule.** Requires agencies who receive HUD funding to serve program participants, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, family composition, or marital status. It requires that all program participants have equal access to HUD's programs, shelters, other buildings and facilities, benefits, services, and accommodations. The Equal Access Rule also set a standard definition of family.

**Emergency Shelter.** Emergency shelter is defined in [24 CFR part 576](#) as follows: Emergency shelter means any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

**Fair Housing Act.** Federal regulations that protect people from discrimination when they are renting or buying a home, getting a mortgage, seeking housing assistance, or engaging in other housing-related activities. Additional protections apply to federally assisted housing.

**Fair Market Rent (FMR).** Published annually by HUD to establish estimates of gross rent, taking into account both rent and the cost of necessary utilities (e.g., water and power), excluding option utilities (e.g., cable, internet). FMRs vary depending upon the geographic area in which the housing unit is located.

**Functional Zero.\*** Functional zero is a milestone, which must be sustained, that indicates a community has measurably ended homelessness for a population. When it’s achieved, homelessness is rare and brief for that population.

*\*May also be referred to as Net Zero. Examples of a homeless population are Veterans, Families or Chronically Homeless.*

**Homeless.** *Homeless* means:\*

- (1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
  - (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
  - (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
  - (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
  
- (2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
  - (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
  - (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
  - (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing;
  
- (3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

(i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act ([42 U.S.C. 5732a](#)), section 637 of the Head Start Act ([42 U.S.C. 9832](#)), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 ([42 U.S.C. 14043e-2](#)), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act ([42 U.S.C. 254b\(h\)](#)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 ([7 U.S.C. 2012](#)), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 ([42 U.S.C. 1786\(b\)](#)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11434a](#));

(ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;

(iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and

(iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or

(4) Any individual or family who:

(i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;

(ii) Has no other residence; and

(iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, *e.g.*, family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

*\*In some cases, publicly funded programs are authorized to screen program participants using alternative definitions for who qualifies as Homeless.*

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).** A local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each CoC is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards.

**Homelessness Prevention.** A component of ESG assistance where funds are provided to individuals and families who meet the "at risk of homelessness" definition or who meet the criteria in paragraphs (2), (3), or (4) of the "homeless" definition in 24 CFR 576.2 and have an annual income below 30% of the median family income as determined by HUD, and lack the resources to obtain permanent housing. See 24 CFR 576.103 of the ESG Interim Regulations.

**Housing First.** A model of housing assistance that prioritizes rapid placement and stabilization in permanent housing that does not have service participation requirements or preconditions (such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold).

**Permanent Housing.** Permanent housing means community-based housing without a designated length of stay, and includes both permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing. To be permanent housing, the program participant must be the tenant on a lease for a term of at least one year, which is renewable for terms that are a minimum of one month long, and is terminable only for cause.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).** *Permanent supportive housing* means permanent housing in which supportive services are provided to assist homeless persons with a disability to live independently.

**Point-in-Time (PIT) Count.** An unduplicated count on a single night within the last 10 days of January of the people in a community who are experiencing homelessness including both sheltered and unsheltered populations.

**Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA).** A rental assistance model in which a recipient or subrecipient contracts for a particular unit or property and the program participant enters into a lease with the property owner. If the participant moves, the PBRA stays with the unit for the next eligible program participant.

**Rapid Re-Housing (RRH).** A permanent housing solution emphasizing housing search and relocation services and short- and medium-term rental assistance to move homeless persons and families (with or without a disability) as rapidly as possible into housing.

**Reasonable Accommodation.** Changes, exceptions, or adjustments to a program, service, or procedure that allow a person with a disability to have equal enjoyment of the housing program.

**Reasonable Modification.** Requires owners to allow tenants with disabilities to make reasonable access related modifications to their private living space and common use spaces at the tenant's expense.

**Rental Assistance.** Rental Assistance is a subsidy that lowers the cost of rental housing for low-income households. Not all rental assistance is dedicated for homeless households, but unhoused families and individuals may be eligible.

**Safe Haven.** Safe haven means, for the purpose of defining chronically homeless, supportive housing that meets the following:

- (1) Serves hard to reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who came from the streets and have been unwilling or unable to participate in supportive services;
- (2) Provides 24-hour residence for eligible persons for an unspecified period;
- (3) Has an overnight capacity limited to 25 or fewer persons; and
- (4) Provides low-demand services and referrals for the residents.

**Sponsor Based Rental Assistance (SBRA).** A rental assistance model in which a sponsor agency rents units in the private market and then sublets the units to program participants. A lease is maintained between the sponsor agency and the property owner and sublease is maintained between the sponsor agency and program participant.

**Street Outreach.** Essential services related to reaching out to all unsheltered individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the CoC's geographic area, including those least likely to request assistance. Services include connection to emergency shelter, housing, critical/crisis services, and urgent, non-facility-based care.

**Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA).** A rental assistance model in which program participants locate housing in the private rental market and enter into a lease with the property owner.

**Transitional Housing (TH).** Housing designed to provide homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing.

**Victim Service Provider.** Victim service provider means a private nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to provide services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. This term includes rape crisis centers, battered women's shelters, domestic violence transitional housing programs, and other programs.

**Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).** Creates and supports comprehensive, cost-effective responses to the pervasive crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.