

Homelessness Resource List

OVERVIEW

Homelessness is an issue that can often arise when working with TANF participants. It can be complex for human service professionals to address as there are multiple factors that contribute to a family's homelessness and a variety of services and agencies that are needed to wrap around a family to ensure they remain safely housed. Recently, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), together with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has provided guidance and support to housing and homelessness prevention agencies encouraging these organizations to partner with other support services such as TANF and SNAP to fully address housing issues. There is a recognition that no one program can meet all of a family's needs and that establishing partnerships and linkages across service sectors results in improved support for homeless families.

For TANF professionals, it is important to understand the current philosophies of Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention that are prominent in the homelessness prevention and services field. Housing First refers to a program model in which permanent, stable housing is secured first, before other issues, such as employment, substance abuse, and food insecurity are addressed. Services are provided for a period of time but the most critical need of housing is addressed first. Rapid Re-Housing is a similar approach of moving families into permanent, stable housing as quickly as possible but services are often provided for a shorter duration than in a Housing First program. These two program models are particularly relevant to TANF stakeholders because TANF is one of the services that may be needed once a family is housed. In addition to the resources provided below, more information can be found about these two approaches, as well as other solutions at:

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/solutions>.

Homelessness Resource List

SELECTED RESOURCES

National Research Agenda: Priorities for Advancing our Understanding of Homelessness

This document lays out the current research agenda of the Interagency Council on Homelessness, which was informed by an extensive review of over 200 studies conducted on homeless from 1989 to 2011. The agenda is divided into eight key domain areas, each with specific topics and research questions identified. For TANF stakeholders, this document is an excellent resource for exploring the current evidenced-based knowledge and practices being used and researched by those seeking to end homelessness.

Online at: <https://www.opressrc.org/content/national-research-agenda-priorities-advancing-our-understanding-homelessness>

ASPE Research Brief: Human Services and Housing Supports to Address Family Homelessness: Promising Practices in the Field

This ASPE Research Brief explores local programs for linking human services and housing supports to prevent and end family homelessness. The Research Brief is based on interviews with stakeholders in 14 communities nationwide, highlighting key practices that facilitated the implementation and ongoing sustainability of the programs.

Online at: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/11/familyhomelessness/rb.shtml>

Webinar: Leveraging Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Funds and Strategic Partnerships to Improve Housing Stability and Economic Outcomes for Low-Income Families

In March of 2013, The Office of Family Assistance hosted a Webinar, "Leveraging TANF Funds and Strategic Partnerships to Improve Housing Stability and Economic Outcomes for Low-Income Families." The Webinar provided an overview of Federal regulations relating to the use of TANF and Maintenance of Effort funds, highlighted promising State and local program models for individuals at-risk, provided examples of allowable uses of TANF funds for homeless stability and employment services, and discussed strategies for choosing and implementing various program models and partnerships.

Online at:
<https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=viewTopic§ionTopicId=60&topicId=20&tabtopic=20§ionId=2&nav=20#posting2695>

Homelessness Resource List

TANF-ACF-IM-2013-01: Use of TANF Funds to Serve Homeless Families and Families at Risk of Experiencing Homelessness

This Information Memorandum from the Office of Family Assistance to State, local and Tribal TANF agencies discusses the importance of addressing family homelessness with allowable uses of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds for families experiencing and at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Online at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resource/tanf-acf-im-2013-01>

Homelessness: Targeted Federal Programs and Recent Legislation

This document from the Congressional Research Service provides a thorough overview of existing Federal legislation designed to help homeless individuals and families. Each description provides an overview of the program, the legislation responsible for creating it and additional legislation that impacts it.

Online at: <https://www.opressrc.org/content/homelessness-targeted-federal-programs-and-recent-legislation>

Welfare Peer Technical Assistance (WPTA) Network: Resources on Housing and Economic Development

The Welfare Peer TA Network maintains a section of its website dedicated to providing information and links on housing issues and economic development. Research reports, webinars, journal articles, federal studies and other helpful information can be viewed on Welfare Peer TA.

Online at:
<https://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?event=viewTopic§ionTopicId=60&topicId=20&tabtopic=20§ionId=2&nav=20#housing>

Helping Homeless Individuals with Co-Occurring Disorders: The Four Components

This article from the journal Social Work, highlights four practical steps for practitioners when working with homeless individuals struggling with mental illness and substance abuse issues. This population is particularly vulnerable and often hard to serve. Of interest to TANF professionals is a section related to connecting these individuals with employment. The author cites a number of research studies which shed light on best practices for connecting homeless individuals with co-occurring disorders with employment and other services.

Online at: <https://www.opressrc.org/content/helping-homeless-individuals-co-occurring-disorders-four-components>

Homelessness Resource List

HHS/HUD Joint Guidance on Preventing and Ending Homelessness

Developed during the recent recession, this joint letter from the Department of Health and Human Service and the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides guidance to TANF agencies regarding how to best partner with housing program to prevent and respond to homelessness. The letter suggests a number of strategies for states and localities to utilize when partnering.

Online at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resource/hhs-hud-joint-guidance-on-preventing-ending-homelessness>

An Evaluation of the Utilization and Effectiveness of Four Homeless Assistance Programs for CalWORKs Families

This 2012 evaluation of four homeless assistance programs in Los Angeles County. The programs evaluated were Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction, Permanent Homeless Assistance, Moving Assistance, and Four-Month Rental Assistance. These programs offer funds to families to cover expenses such as rent, rental arrearages, utilities, security deposits, cleaning fees, and moving costs. The evaluation found that when these programs were utilized it prevented homelessness and encouraged housing stability.

Online at: <https://www.opressrc.org/content/evaluation-utilization-and-effectiveness-four-homeless-assistance-programs-calworks-families>

Strategies for Improving Homeless People's Access to Mainstream Benefits and Services

This document examines how seven communities sought to connect homeless individuals with mainstream services following HUD's policy shift in which funds under the McKinney-Vento Act were to be directed to housing instead of supportive services. The rate at which formerly homeless individuals exiting HUD programs were connected with supportive services such as TANF, Medicaid, and SNAP was studied and strategies and program models are provided.

Online at: http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/povsoc/homeless_access.html

Linking Human Services and Housing Assistance for Homeless Families and Families at Risk for Homelessness

This study, commissioned by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, examines local programs that connect homeless individuals and families with other support services in order to best prevent future homelessness. Fourteen programs that have defined partnerships with other supportive service agencies were chosen for this study and promising practices of these programs and partnerships are highlighted.

Online at: <https://www.opressrc.org/content/linking-human-services-and-housing-assistance-homeless-families-and-families-risk>

Homelessness Resource List

Employment Program Models for People Experiencing Homelessness: Different Approaches to Program Structure

This brief from the Transitional Jobs Network highlights a variety of models currently being used to connect homeless individuals with employment. Models highlighted include transitional jobs, individualized placement support, alternative staffing, customized employment, contextualized basic adult education, adult education bridge programs and sector-based training. Within each model a program example is provided for readers to better understand how the strategy is being used in the real world.

Online at: <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/ntjn/ntjn-weh-models-1-24-2012.pdf>