



## **Salt Lake Valley Coalition to End Homelessness (SLVCEH)**

**Problem:** Individuals in Utah experience periods of Homelessness for a variety of reasons.

**Solution:** Provide transformational interventions tailored to help those experiencing homelessness resolve their immediate crisis and rapidly return to stable housing.

**Goal:** Ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) - April 2021**

### **What is the purpose of the new homeless resource centers (HRCS)?**

The primary goal of the Homeless Resource Center Model is to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring by providing emergency shelter coupled with case management and high-impact transformational interventions tailored to help those experiencing homelessness resolve their immediate crisis and rapidly return to stable housing. There are no pre-qualifications to stay at a resource center. Anyone who follows the rules is welcome. HRCs beds are designated as Case Managed, Night by Night and Referral beds to mental health or drug treatment.

Each Resource Center provides a safe, warm place to sleep, and a wide range of services and resources including: case management, housing navigation, job training, employment services, resource referrals, legal help, life skills, meals, medical care, personal storage, laundry, transportation, and connections to other community resources. Each HRC is served by a mobile medical clinic provided by Fourth Street Clinic.

### **How many shelter beds are in the system? How does that compare to before the closing of the downtown shelter?**

Currently, Salt Lake County has 1,030 permanent emergency shelter beds at the homeless resource centers (MRC, GMRC, GEK, YRC, and MFRC) plus 334-385 additional beds at Domestic Violence Shelters, Rescue Mission, and through hotel vouchers. The total permanent emergency shelter beds in SLCo during the winter of 2020/2021 has ranged from 1,364 to 1,415. The total number in 2019/2020 was 1,422, so permanent capacity was adjusted or slightly reduced due to COVID-19 social distancing needs in the permanent emergency shelters.

Salt Lake County also has 410-465 additional winter overflow or temporary emergency shelter beds during the winter of 2020/2021.

The total number of permanent and temporary emergency shelter beds in SLCo during the winter of 2020/2021 has ranged from 1,774-1880. Last winter it was 1,747, so overall capacity has exceeded the number for winter resources last year.

For more information [endhomelessnessutah.org](http://endhomelessnessutah.org)

### **Do we know how effective the new HRC system has been?**

5,572 unduplicated individuals were served by the 1,030 permanent homeless resource center beds in 2020. These individuals were provided medical services and case management. Of those served, 4,631 have exited shelter, 20% moved into permanent housing, 14% went into temporary housing, and 3% into substance use treatment, hospital or other long term care. Prior to entering shelter, the coordinated entry system supported diversion of 703 individuals to connect with family or friends before entering.

### **What does it mean to be “chronically homeless”?**

“Chronically Homeless” is a technical term used by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (or HUD). “Chronically Homeless” is used to delineate an individual with a disabling condition who has experienced homelessness continually for one year, or has had 4 distinct episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years. Qualifying disabling conditions include challenges like substance use, mental health, and physical conditions that interfere with an individual’s ability to get and keep stable housing.

It is important to differentiate this term from “Unsheltered Homeless,” or those individuals you may see sleeping on the streets, in “encampments” or other places not meant for human habitation. Individuals who “camp” on the streets rather than accessing HRC’s are considered “Unsheltered Homeless,” who may or may not meet the technical, HUD definition of “Chronically Homeless.”

### **Do the HRCs help those who are chronically homeless?**

The HRC’s provide safety and resources to anyone experiencing homelessness. When an individual meets the technical definition of “Chronically Homeless,” this often increases their vulnerability to health problems, safety concerns, and can make it very difficult to obtain employment or navigate complex support systems. HRC’s help assess and prioritize individuals for housing options based on vulnerability, and can quickly connect individuals to supportive case management.

### **What are solutions that work for those who are chronically homeless?**

Housing. And to be more specific, Housing First. Quickly moving an individual from homelessness into an appropriate housing solution leads to increased healthcare access (including substance use disorder and mental health treatment), better overall health, fewer arrests, fewer Emergency Room visits, and overall lower costs to the public. Not to mention that when an individual has stable housing, they are much more able to participate in job training or gain employment.