

Zero Returns to Homelessness

Resource and Technical Assistance Guide



This project was supported by Grant No. 2020-CZ-BX-K001 awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice or the Council of State Governments.

About the CSG Justice Center: The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities. For more information about the CSG Justice Center, visit www.csgjusticecenter.org.



Justice Center
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS



Project Credits

Writing: Thomas Coyne, Sean Quitzau, and Joseph Hayashi, CSG Justice Center

Research: Thomas Coyne, CSG Justice Center

Advising: Charley Francis, CSG Justice Center

Editing: Darby Baham, CSG Justice Center

Design: Michael Bierman

Web Development: Yewande Ojo,
CSG Justice Center

Public Affairs: Aisha Jamil and Sarah Kelley,
CSG Justice Center

© 2024 by The Council of State Governments
Justice Center

Suggested Citation: Thomas Coyne, Sean Quitzau, and Joseph Hayashi, *Zero Returns to Homelessness: Resource and Technical Assistance Guide* (New York: The Council of State Governments Justice Center, 2024).

Table of Contents

Glossary	5
Zero Returns to Homelessness Vision	6
Achieving Zero Returns to Homelessness by Applying Four Steps to Expand Housing Access	8
Section 1: Collaborate	9
Section 2: Assess	20
Section 3: Connect	35
Section 4: Expand	50
Next Steps	65

Introduction

Every year, tens of thousands of people experience homelessness as they return to their communities from incarceration.¹ Gaps and barriers, such as housing policies that bar people with conviction histories from renting, persist that reduce even the limited amount of housing people can access when returning.² Because of this, people returning from incarceration are almost 10 times more likely to experience homelessness and more often cycle through public systems designed to respond to emergencies and not provide long-term solutions.³

However, in states such as Ohio, Connecticut, and Utah, communities are making strides in preventing homelessness when people return from incarceration. These communities are working toward a bold, new vision—Zero Returns to Homelessness—which aims to ensure that all returning residents have access to a safe, permanent place to call home.

This guide serves as a reference for any practitioner working to expand housing access in their communities to move toward this same vision. This includes state leaders working to address homelessness as part of their Reentry 2030 goals. It details best practices and strategies around reentry housing, building from four essential steps that have worked in neighborhoods around the country as leaders have expanded housing opportunities for people reentering their communities: Collaborate, Assess, Connect, and Expand.⁴

1. Office of Planning and Development, *The 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress: Part 2: Estimates of Homelessness in the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2018), <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-2.pdf>; Analysis of HUD AHAR data conducted by CSG Justice Center, 2019.

2. Marie Claire Tran-Leung, *When Discretion Means Denial: A National Perspective on Criminal Records Barriers to Federally Subsidized Housing*, (Chicago: Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, 2015).

3. Lucius Couloute, *Nowhere to Go: Homelessness Among Formerly Incarcerated People* (Northampton, MA: Prison Policy Initiative, 2018).

4. Charley Francis, *Action Points: Four Steps to Expand Access to Housing for People in the Justice System with Behavioral Health Needs* (New York: CSG Justice Center, 2021, <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/action-points-2/>).

How can I use this guide?

The *Zero Returns to Homelessness Resource and Technical Assistance Guide* is a reference map for cross-systems partners, such as those in the criminal justice, homeless, housing, and behavioral health systems, among others. These partners can include state departments of corrections officials, parole and probation department leaders, reentry councils, representatives from public housing authorities and state housing finance agencies, treatment service providers, and more. (Visit [our website](#) for a more comprehensive list.)

This guide helps state and local leaders who have the authority to convene partners, affect policy and practice change in their own systems, and help facilitate cross-systems conversations. Leaders and decision-makers from these systems can work through the guide with their teams or connect with staff at The Council of State Governments Justice Center at ZeroReturns@csg.org.

The guide contains the following:

Markers of success to check progress toward each of the four essential steps.

Approaches and strategies tailored to achieve the markers of success.

Facilitation questions to help promote team and partner conversations around each strategy.

Community successes pulled from experiences around the country to illustrate what is possible.

The four essential steps detailed in the guide outline the elements required to establish effective reentry housing systems, with guidance rooted in national best practices. Leaders and their teams can use the guide in one of the following ways for best results:

If you are not sure where to start, it may be beneficial to read the guide in its entirety to get a macro level view of all the major elements involved in bolstering your reentry housing system. Each section includes questions to evaluate your current system, approaches and strategies that can be used as a starting point for implementation, and the markers of success to help gauge your progress.

Four Essential Steps

If you already have elements and processes of a reentry housing system established, it may be helpful to start with the essential step that corresponds with your community's greatest need. The following breakdown of the essential steps can act as a reference point if you are looking to start with a particular one:

Collaborate

This step is focused on assisting communities with establishing cross-system partnerships.

Assess

This step is focused on establishing housing and homeless assessment processes and using that data related to those processes to inform decision making.

Connect

This step is focused on facilitating connections to all available and existing housing resources in the community.

Expand

This step is focused on leveraging new funding sources to develop more housing units and expand housing access.

Glossary of Common Terms

The following terms are commonly used when speaking about housing services and supports. They are also used throughout the technical assistance guide, so readers should review them and refer to them as needed.

Blending funding: Bringing sources of funding together to spend as one funding source for specific purposes. For example, bringing together flexible state court funding, city funding, and local behavioral health funding to fund any of the following as needed (1) limited rental assistance, (2) housing navigator staff positions, and (3) landlord incentives.

Braiding funding: Bringing sources of funding together to intentionally use as a funding source for coordinated services. For example, under one program, dedicating (1) set-aside housing vouchers for rental assistance, (2) billing Medicaid for Medicaid-eligible behavioral health services staff, and (3) using flexible federal housing funding for a housing navigator position.

Continuum of Care (CoC): Local planning entity that, among other activities, receives homeless assistance funding for housing and supportive services from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), prioritizes housing and services projects for funding, and coordinates intake and prioritization of people for housing and shelter placements.

Coordinated Entry (CE): Unified system of intake and prioritization that governs access to all housing and supportive service resources under the CoC's jurisdiction.

Department of Correction (DOC): An agency overseeing a state or territory system of incarceration.

Flexible Spending Pool: Both a method of procurement reform and a combined fund that brings together multiple sources of funding under an administering authority for a unified purpose.

Housing Choice Voucher (formerly Section 8): One form of rental assistance, provided by Public Housing Authorities, that pays a portion of a person's rent.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A document showing agreement between two or more groups.

National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC): National clearinghouse for resources related to reentry from incarceration.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): Evidence-based model for providing affordable housing, paired with tenant-driven, wraparound services and supports (including case management, mental health treatment, and supported employment). With the high level and intensity of the supports involved, it is best used for people with the greatest behavioral health and housing needs.

Point-in-Time count: A census of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness on a single night required by HUD.

Public Housing Authority (PHA): State or local agency providing public housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, project-based rental assistance, and other forms of subsidized permanent housing.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH): Short-term rental assistance and other supports intended to reduce the likelihood that a person experiences homelessness. Usually beginning with a high level of support, such as case management and rental assistance, rapid rehousing services taper as people achieve stability in the community, making it a better fit for people with fewer long-term needs.

Sequential Intercept Map (SIM): Developed by Policy Research Associates, Inc., this provides a framework for understanding how most people move through the criminal justice system from first point of contact (arrest) through reentry.

Stepping Up: National initiative focused on reducing overincarceration of people with mental illnesses.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) & Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI): Federal disability benefits.

The Vision



People reentering the community from prisons and jails need a place to call home.



When partners come together across sectors and silos, that goal can become a reality.



You can be part of that homecoming and work to transform lives, systems, and communities.

**Zero
Returns
to
Home-
lessness**

Zero Returns to Homelessness: Take-Aways from the Field



Engage your partners across multiple systems.



Commit to increasing housing access by aligning processes and dedicating resources.



Bridge gaps between people and housing programs.



Innovate to increase the pool of resources to expand housing options.



Reduce returns to prison and jail by staying committed to this work.



Achieving Zero Returns to Homelessness by Applying Four Steps to Expand Housing Access



Step 1: Collaborate



Step 2: Assess



Step 3: Connect



Step 4: Expand





Step 1: Collaborate Across Systems



Take stock of or strengthen cross-systems partnerships (such as housing, criminal justice, behavioral health) and determine what formal steps can help the team working on housing succeed long term, even when staff or partners change.

Collaborate Across Systems: Why Is It Worth Your Time?



Step 1: Collaborate

- **Saves time** and leverages joint resources.



Step 2: Assess

- Different system and experience perspectives help identify and **close gaps** when people return.



Step 3: Connect



Step 4: Expand

- **Avoids duplication** of existing efforts.

The End Goal of Collaborating



Step 1: Collaborate

- A team that fully represents the systems involved as well as the community where people return



Step 2: Assess

- Shared language



Step 3: Connect

- Collaboration formalized in agreements



Step 4: Expand

Collaborate: Approaches

- 1) **Cross-systems representation**
- 2) **Formal agreements**
- 3) **Shared terminology**

Markers of Success



- Variety of experiences and systems** at the decision-making table
- Collaborative agreements** formalized (MOU, etc.)
- Shared population** identified
- Cross-system definitions** (such as “homelessness,” “housed,” “serious mental illness”) adopted

Collaborate: Cross-Systems Representation Strategies



1) Cross-systems representation

2) Formal agreements

3) Shared terminology

- Ensure key systems (justice, housing, homeless, etc.) are included.
- Empower people with lived experience to lead discussions.
- Enable meaningful partner engagement.
- Determine level of staff for appropriate meetings.

Collaborate: Making Cross-Systems Representation a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- Which agencies make the decisions locally in your community?
- What leadership with lived experience already exists?
- Who needs to be involved (agency leadership, line staff, etc.) to ensure full representation?

Community Success

Lane County, OR, **brings together cross-sector partners** (including the local housing authority, a reentry provider led by people with lived experience, and parole/probation) to develop, run, and staff permanent supportive housing for people on parole.

Collaborate: Formal Agreements Strategies



1) Cross-systems representation

2) Formal agreements

3) Shared terminology

- Clarify responsibilities and roles among partners.
- Identify shared data and who needs access.
- Involve government lawyers early and often, reinforcing the necessity of the formal relationships.

Collaborate: Making Formal Agreements a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What existing agreements can we build upon?
- What agencies need to be in agreement?
- What agreements do we need in place to make the partnership long lasting?

Community Success

A Stepping Up team in Lorain County, OH, **used the template of an existing data sharing agreement** to quickly incorporate housing services into their partnership.

Collaborate: Shared Terminology Strategies



1) Cross-systems representation

2) Formal agreements

3) Shared terminology

- Catalogue system-specific language.
- Meet regularly for cross-training, terminology reviews, and Sequential Intercept Model mapping.
- Define what success in housing means to your organizations.

Collaborate: Making Shared Terminology a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What terminology do we use to talk about the same population?
- What do we mean by “housing”?
- How can we host cross-agency trainings?

Community Success

A Stepping Up team in Cuyahoga County, OH, spent their first year of meetings **learning each other’s terminology, cross-training on systems, and understanding the population** from each system’s perspective.

Collaboration in Action



The South Carolina Department of Corrections, Midlands Reentry Council, and other regional partners used the Collaborate section of this guide to develop a reentry housing plan focused on establishing formal agreements with new housing partners.

Step 2: Assess for Housing Need and Use Data for Ongoing Tracking



Evaluate current assessment and data collection practices, determine a target population, and understand the target population's demographics and needs.

Assess for Housing Need: Why Is It Worth Your Time?



Step 1: Collaborate

- Ensures a **baseline understanding** of the population and needs.



Step 2: Assess

- **Facilitates** housing referrals and connections (refer to *Connect* section).



Step 3: Connect

- Use of assessment data helps teams track **progress**, celebrate **successes**, gauge **racial equity**, & adjust as needed.



Step 4: Expand

The End Goal of Assessing



Step 1: Collaborate

- Universal housing and service assessments provide a clear picture of individualized needs.



Step 2: Assess

- Universal assessments help ensure staff capacity to conduct individual housing assessments and in-reach from community partners.



Step 3: Connect

- The full scale of reentry housing need in the community is captured using available data.



Step 4: Expand

Assess: Approaches

- 1) **Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)**
- 2) **In-Reach Facilitation**
- 3) **Streamlined Workflows**
- 4) **Data and Information Sharing**
- 5) **Analyzation of Assessment Data**

Markers of Success



- Adopted/updated** assessment is tailored for your community.
- High percentage of the population** is assessed for need.
- Number of people in need** and their demographics are identified.
- Data is analyzed** for service needs and equity.

Assess: Screening/ Assessment Tool(s) Strategies



1) Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)

2) In-Reach Facilitation

3) Streamlined Workflows

4) Data and Information Sharing

5) Analyzation of Assessment Data

- Identify the population being served and any known gaps in the assessment process.
- Get input from people with lived experience to inform the assessment and the process.
- Ensure the assessment questions can connect people to the most appropriate interventions.

Assess: Making Adopted Screening/ Assessment Tool(s) a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How does our tool compare to the NRRC Housing Questionnaire?
- What feedback on current questions (if any) can we get from cross-system partners?
- How are the results of the assessment useful to the people being assessed and partner organizations?

Community Success

The Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections **modified the NRRC housing questionnaire and combined it with a risk assessment** to prioritize people for housing interventions.

Assess: In-Reach Facilitation Strategies



- 1) **Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)**
 - 2) **In-Reach Facilitation**
 - 3) **Streamlined Workflows**
 - 4) **Data and Information Sharing**
 - 5) **Analyzation of Assessment Data**
- Identify partners with interest and capacity.
 - Consider the usefulness of aligned assessment questions and ability to share responses across agencies.
 - Discuss how the tool connects people to services.

Assess: Making In-Reach Facilitation a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How do existing policies affect in-reach?
- What information does each partner need to be able to connect people to housing?
- How are assessment results shared with partner organizations?

Community Success

Delaware County, OH, implemented **in-jail teleconnections at the outset of the pandemic to allow community providers** to meet virtually with people who are incarcerated. This policy continues to allow community providers to more quickly and easily connect with people in jail.

Assess: Streamlined Workflows Strategies



- 1) Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)
 - 2) In-Reach Facilitation
 - 3) Streamlined Workflows
 - 4) Data and Information Sharing
 - 5) Analyzation of Assessment Data
- Build on what's already working to incorporate new questions into the assessment.
 - Identify opportunities to reduce the number of times people get asked certain questions.
 - Develop a process map for newer partnerships and processes.

Assess: Making Streamlining Workflows a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What does universal assessment mean for our team?
- How can we minimize the number of times people are assessed?
- What questions do people need to be asked to assess their housing need pre and post release?

Community Success

Pennsylvania's DOC **piloted a questionnaire to universally assess** people going to Community Correction Centers for housing instability, increasing the reach of new housing interventions.

Assess: Data and Information Sharing Strategies



- 1) **Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)**
 - 2) **In-Reach Facilitation**
 - 3) **Streamlined Workflows**
 - 4) **Data and Information Sharing**
 - 5) **Analyzation of Assessment Data**
- Catalogue existing agreements and MOUs.
 - Identify low barrier ways to share information.
 - Involve lawyers and IT or data staff early to avoid later backtracking on data and information sharing agreements.

Assess: Making Data and Information Sharing a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What data and information sharing guidance exists in our community?
- How can we leverage existing agreements?
- What processes require agreements, and what can be handled via case conferencing?

Community Success

In Camden County, NJ, local law enforcement **formalized an agreement to share data** with the local health system for ongoing analysis and to better understand the needs of people impacted by multiple systems.

Assess: Analyzation of Assessment Data Strategies



- 1) **Adoption of National Best Practice Screening/ Assessment Tool(s)**
 - 2) **In-Reach Facilitation**
 - 3) **Streamlined Workflows**
 - 4) **Data and Information Sharing**
 - 5) **Analyzation of Assessment Data**
- Catalogue expected public savings from new housing interventions.
 - Quantify how many people frequently cycle through public systems.
 - Identify the overlap between homelessness and incarceration, as well as other system contact.

Assess: Making Analyzation of Assessment Data a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What analytical capabilities do any of our partners have?
- How can we use data to scale/advocate for additional resources?
- How closely do referrals match the needs of our target population?

Community Success

In Ventura County, CA, the Continuum of Care (CoC) **incorporated questions on jail stays and interactions with law enforcement** into its annual Point-in-Time count census, with hopes to target interventions based on data.

Assessment in Action



The Pennsylvania DOC used the Assess section of this resource guide to amend the housing assessment tool used in their discharge process and ensure that they are connecting their reentry population to the right housing interventions based on their needs.

Step 3: Connect People to Existing Housing Opportunities



Bridge gaps between systems as people return, build on strengths within housing referral processes, and determine what refinements can be made to enable direct connections to housing and supportive services for people exiting the justice system.

Connect to Existing Housing Opportunities: Why Is It Worth Your Time?



Step 1: Collaborate

- Connections to the right programs **increase client and program success.**



Step 2: Assess

- Warm hand-offs **prevent missed housing opportunities.**



Step 3: Connect

- **Breaking down stigma** can create greater access to evidence-based housing interventions.



Step 4: Expand

- Connections to existing housing programs **leverages all available resources.**

The End Goal of Connecting



Step 1: Collaborate

- Available funding is fully leveraged to maximize services.



Step 2: Assess

- Entry points to CoC Coordinated Entry are embedded into the reentry planning process (incl. discharge).



Step 3: Connect

- Evidence-based interventions are offered based on reentry population need.



Step 4: Expand

- Routine connections are made to housing, services, and benefits.

Connect: Approaches

- 1) Reducing Policy Barriers
- 2) Re-Prioritization of Funding
- 3) Embedding Access Points
- 4) Expanding Access to Existing Units
- 5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing

Markers of Success



- Number of people connected to **permanent housing**
- Number of units/ services** available by type
- Reduction in the number of people **returning to homelessness**
- Percentage of people **connected to services and employment opportunities**

Connect: Reducing Policy Barriers Strategies



- 1) Reducing Policy Barriers**
- 2) Re-Prioritization of Funding**
- 3) Embedding Access Points**
- 4) Expanding Access to Existing Units**
- 5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing**

- Identify barriers to housing within your control.
- Obtain feedback from the community regarding which barriers are the most important areas of focus.
- Revise policy and procedures based on identified barriers and feedback.

Connect: Making Reducing Policy Barriers a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- Who (housing, parole, people with lived experience, etc.) can help propose solutions?
- What policy barriers are discretionary?
- What steps have already been taken to reduce barriers?

Community Success

The Union County, PA, Public Housing Authority, working with the local criminal justice advisory board, **makes housing vouchers available** to prioritize people referred by a parole officer.

Connect: Re-Prioritization of Funding Strategies



1) Reducing Policy Barriers

2) Re-Prioritization of Funding

3) Embedding Access Points

4) Expanding Access to Existing Units

5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing

- Identify where resources can be re-prioritized to focus on housing access.
- Identify the population being served and any potential housing connection gaps.
- Meaningfully engage people previously served and frontline staff on existing gaps.

Connect: Making Re-Prioritization of Funding a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What flexibility do we have in prioritization?
- How are we listening to the community and people who experience these programs?
- What gaps are prevalent with our current housing prioritization?

Community Success

Albany, NY, **used re-prioritized CoC funding for rapid rehousing for people returning from prison.** Because of this, returning residents were able to access CoC services through Coordinated Entry.

Connect: Embedding Access Points Strategies



- 1) Reducing Policy Barriers
 - 2) Re-Prioritization of Funding
 - 3) Embedding Access Points**
 - 4) Expanding Access to Existing Units
 - 5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing
- Identify existing policies that allow for referrals and warm hand-offs.
 - Map out the most significant housing connection gaps in your community.
 - Brainstorm where in-reach can occur to facilitate more routine connections to housing.

Connect: Making Embedding Access Points a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How do our existing policies allow in-reach?
- What trainings do staff need to address stigma?
- How are we listening to people who have gone through our programs?

Community Success

King County, WA's, Coordinated Entry for All can **begin services for people in jail** if they request services two or more weeks before their release date.

Connect: Expanding Access to Existing Units Strategies



- 1) Reducing Policy Barriers
 - 2) Re-Prioritization of Funding
 - 3) Embedding Access Points
 - 4) Expanding Access to Existing Units**
 - 5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing
- Build on existing relationships with landlords to recruit additional landlords and ensure greater access to housing.
 - Hire staff who have experience working with landlords and property management.
 - Identify incentives that work locally.

Connect: Making Expanding Access to Existing Units a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What contacts do we have with landlords and property management companies in our community?
- What funding can we leverage as incentives for landlords to make existing units available for people in reentry?
- How much funding do we need for these incentives?

Community Success

The Kansas DOC **partners with landlords for 3-year contracts** to cover rent and provide utilities and a basic level of furnishing to people leaving prison until they can obtain employment.

Connect: Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing Strategies



1) Reducing Policy Barriers

2) Re-Prioritization of Funding

3) Embedding Access Points

4) Expanding Access to Existing Units

5) Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing

- Catalogue state and federal funding to understand what is available.
- Identify limitations and strengths of service-related funding.
- Work with partners who have experience billing certain sources (Medicaid, etc.) to assist where service providers may not have expertise.

Connect: Making Leveraging Funding to Connect People to Housing a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What funding do our partners traditionally use; what do other systems use?
- What technical assistance on billing can we bring to partners?
- How can we fully leverage different funding streams to address gaps?

Community Success

Riverside County, CA's, local Coordinated Entry System identifies people in jail, prioritizes them for services, and **connects them to permanent supportive housing via in-reach funded by Medicaid.**

Connection in Action



The Kansas DOC used the Connect section of this resource guide to develop a reentry housing plan to open more pathways to permanent housing using landlord education and incentive strategies.

Step 4: Expand Housing at Every Opportunity

Identify the partnerships and funding mechanisms needed to expand the housing supply through development and innovation, while making a case for more investment in housing and supportive services.

Expand Housing at Every Opportunity: Why Is It Worth Your Time?



Step 1: Collaborate

- Every community **needs more** affordable housing.



Step 2: Assess

- No-cost and low-cost **resources exist.**



Step 3: Connect

- There is interest from non-traditional and private funders to **aid in expansion.**



Step 4: Expand

- Expanded housing can **address racial equity** implications of development.

The End Goal of Expansion



Step 1: Collaborate



Step 2: Assess



Step 3: Connect



Step 4: Expand

- Braided and blended funding
- Creation of units accessible to people returning from incarceration
- Establishment of governance structures for program or housing development oversight
- Data and cost estimates on program impact gathered to support continued expansion efforts

Expand: Approaches

- 1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing
- 2) Flexible or Dedicated Funding
- 3) Reinvested Funding
- 4) “Pipeline” Approach
- 5) Multi-System Approach

Markers of Success



- The **costs** associated with not investing in housing are conveyed clearly.
- New housing units** are created.
- Funding streams are aligned** to support the development of new housing.
- System savings are reinvested** to address housing needs.

Expand: “Business Case” Strategies



1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing

2) Flexible Dedicated Funding

3) Reinvested Funding

4) “Pipeline” Approach

5) Multi-System Approach

- Identify state and local costs associated with homelessness and recidivism.
- Catalogue expected savings by intervening.
- Identify the right decision-makers and craft messaging on the benefits of intervention.

Expand: Making the “Business Case” for Investing a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How are we best positioned to develop an individual case study for the need to invest in housing or show the full scale of housing need?
- What costs and savings information do we already know?
- Which partners are interested in the costs of insufficient housing for people with justice system involvement?

Community Success

Pima County, AZ, used a **pilot program evaluation** to identify jail costs and system savings across different partners, leading to a sustained reentry housing program using multiple funding sources.

Expand: Flexible or Dedicated Funding Strategies



1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing

2) Flexible or Dedicated Funding

3) Reinvested Funding

4) “Pipeline” Approach

5) Multi-System Approach

- Identify funding gaps and housing interventions that can help your community.
- Leverage Bureau of Justice Assistance and state criminal justice funding for housing.
- Identify other funding partners (philanthropy, banks, health plans, etc.) in the community.

Expand: Making Flexible or Dedicated Funding a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How can we leverage our available funding for housing?
- What (for- and nonprofit) development relationships exist (or Community Development Corporations)?
- What services funding gaps do we have?

Community Success

Ohio's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (ODRC) and the state mental health agency **partner to fund permanent supportive housing and rapid rehousing programs** for people with high service needs. ODRC is expanding the program to rural counties with Second Chance Act Pay for Success funds.

Expand: Reinvested Funding Strategies



- 1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing
- 2) Flexible or Dedicated Funding
- 3) Reinvested Funding**
- 4) “Pipeline” Approach
- 5) Multi-System Approach

- Identify the systems that benefit from housing interventions (such as corrections, Medicaid, private insurers, etc.).
- Catalogue reinvestment funding streams.
- Build buy-in among system leaders for intervening for your target population.

Expand: Making Reinvested Funding a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- Which agencies are most likely to save money from housing interventions?
- How can we creatively use funds available locally (such as from opioid settlements, Medicaid reinvestment)?
- What evidence or examples can help us obtain buy-in to reinvest money in housing our population?

Community Success

Lackawanna County, PA, **reinvested opioid settlement funding** for permanent supportive housing for people leaving or diverted from jail.

Expand: “Pipeline” Approach Strategies



- 1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing
- 2) Flexible or Dedicated Funding
- 3) Reinvested Funding
- 4) “Pipeline” Approach
- 5) Multi-System Approach

- Identify the processes, funding, and policies across government needed to create a pipeline for people leaving prison and jail to access housing.
- Establish governance structures for funding and program oversight.
- Consider a pilot program to test aligning these systems, goals, and resources.

Expand: Making a “Pipeline” Approach a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- How can we prove our model (pilot, expand) is successful?
- What will long-term success look like for us?
- How can we align the goals and funding of the involved agencies?

Community Success

Colorado **began with a Second Chance Act grant for a permanent supportive housing pilot among state and local partners & scaled it up with state funding.** The program now includes underwriting, gap funding, and project-based vouchers.

Expand: Multi-System Approach Strategies



- 1) Making the “Business Case” for Investing
- 2) Flexible or Dedicated Funding
- 3) Reinvested Funding
- 4) “Pipeline” Approach
- 5) **Multi-System Approach**

- Identify whether, and if so, where administrative capacity exists to oversee unified housing, service, and administrative funding.
- Blend and braid funding with a cohesive end-goal vision.
- Identify potential components of a Flexible Spending Pool model among multiple partners.

Expand: Making a Multi-System Approach a Reality



Facilitation Questions

- What core components of a flexible spending pool do we already have?
- What specialized roles do we need funded to manage the spending pool or provide in-reach?
- How can we simplify our processes?

Community Success

Los Angeles County, CA's, flexible housing spending pool **leverages public and private funding and cross-system partnerships** to flexibly provide in-reach, staffing, and rental assistance for people experiencing homelessness, including people leaving incarceration.

Expansion in Action



The Georgia DOC used the Expand section of this resource guide to develop a plan to advocate for an increase in housing investment using a “business case study” focused on expected DOC cost savings.

Bringing It All Together: Take the Next Step toward Systems Change

The Minnesota DOC used the Zero Returns to Homelessness vision when collaborating with the Minnesota Governor's Office to establish a statewide mandate to reduce homelessness and provide supportive housing to people exiting the justice system. Building off the initial progress with the state's homeless reduction plan, the Minnesota DOC is now using a Zero Returns to Homelessness framework to advocate for new housing partnerships and the use of state funds for new supportive housing development for people who were previously incarcerated.