

# PREVENTION PRINCIPLES

## **All individuals and families should have safe, affordable housing.**

- Ensuring safe, affordable housing for all New Yorkers requires effective collaboration among stakeholders – including providers, public agencies, community organizations, and clients.
- Services and support should assist individuals and families to avoid becoming homeless by maintaining current, appropriate accommodations.
- Every effort must be made to prevent individuals and families who have appropriate housing from entering the shelter system.

## **All efforts should be made to assist individuals and families as soon as possible to avoid crises that cause homelessness.**

- Interventions should be delivered at the community level before points of crisis, to avoid the disruption and instability created by homelessness or the risk of becoming homeless.
- Coordination should occur to serve individuals and families holistically, addressing the circumstances that can cause homelessness.
- Agencies and providers should provide cohesive services for individuals and families being served by multiple systems.

## **Homeless preventive services should provide flexible assistance to meet individual and family needs.**

- Preventive services should be culturally sensitive and easy to access at the community level, if appropriate.
- Services should be flexible and responsive to client needs, ensuring the earliest possible interventions through a range of services.

## **Agencies that provide services to clients in institutional settings should ensure successful discharges to stable, permanent housing.**

- Discharge planning and resource coordination should occur to facilitate a safe and appropriate transition that ensures individuals and families do not become homeless.
- Discharge planning should include provision of or referral to appropriate support services, when necessary.

## **All individuals and families receiving services deserve respect and must be respectful.**

- Individuals and families should have knowledge about available preventive services.
- Individuals and families should be aware of their rights and responsibilities as tenants and clients, as well as the rights and responsibilities of landlords.
- Individuals and families receiving preventive assistance should receive clear information, responsive services, and information about their rights as clients and the responsibilities of agencies.

## **Preventive services should be guided by data and research.**

- Data should inform prevention interventions that address the causes of homelessness.
- Research should routinely inform policy development.
- Service delivery should be based on both quantitative and qualitative data, including client and staff feedback.
- Agencies and providers must be accountable for meeting standards and achieving successful outcomes for clients.