

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES

Gary P. Jenkins, Commissioner
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WHAT WE DO

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) works to prevent homelessness, addresses unsheltered homelessness, and assists homeless New Yorkers in transitioning to permanent housing. DHS collaborates with not-for-profit partners to provide temporary shelter and services to New Yorkers experiencing homelessness, helping them to achieve and maintain housing permanency.

In February 2022, New York City released a new “Subway Safety Plan,” to address public safety concerns in the subway and support people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness and serious mental illness. In June 2022, the City released “Housing Our Neighbors: A Blueprint for Housing and Homelessness,” a comprehensive plan addressing affordable housing and homelessness in New York City.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

In New York City and throughout the United States, homelessness is driven by income and racial inequities, lack of affordable and supportive housing and stagnant wages combined with social factors, including domestic violence, deinstitutionalization of persons who have mental illness without sufficient community-based services and discharges from a range of institutions. DHS connects New Yorkers experiencing homelessness to preventive services that help them remain in their homes; provides safe and appropriate transitional shelter and services to unsheltered homeless; and placement into permanent subsidized and supportive housing. In partnership with the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and other agencies, DHS provides access to targeted rental assistance to help eligible families and individuals avoid or exit shelter.

People of color, particularly African Americans, are over-represented among those who are experiencing homelessness, both in New York City and throughout the country.¹ Poverty is a strong predictor of homelessness; and African American families and individuals are more likely to experience poverty, especially deep poverty, than their White counterparts. Higher incarceration rates, especially for African American men, are also linked to increased risk of homelessness.² Investment in services that strengthen communities, services in shelter that provide people with tools to move out of poverty, and the development of stable permanent housing and rental assistance programs provide a foundation to counteract these historic inequities. “Housing Our Neighbors” outlines the steps that the City is taking to better measure and address homelessness and combat housing instability; to help New Yorkers stay housed; to improve shelter and services for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness; to help New Yorkers in shelter move into permanent housing more quickly; and to reduce the risk of returning to shelter.

¹Across the U.S., African Americans comprise 45 percent of the sheltered homeless population compared to 13.6 percent of the country; in NYC, African Americans comprise more than half of the sheltered homeless population compared to 24% percent of the City. (The 2021 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, Part 1: Point in Time Estimates of Sheltered Homelessness, February 2022 <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2021-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>; United States Census Bureau, Quick Facts, Population Estimates, July 1, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/newyorkcitynewyork,US/PST045221>; DHS Data Dashboard Charts FYTD 2022, <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/dashboard/FYTD22-DHS-Data-Dashboard-Charts.pdf>).

²Couloute, Lucius. (2018). Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people. Prison Policy Initiative. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>; Remster, Brianna (2021). Homelessness among formerly incarcerated men: Patterns and predictors. ANNALS, AAPSS, 693, 141-157; Metraux S. and Dennis Culhane (2006). Homeless shelter use and reincarceration following prison release. Criminology & Public Policy, 3 (2), 139-160.

OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

SERVICE 1 Provide temporary emergency housing to homeless individuals and families.

- Goal 1a Ensure that individuals and families have access to emergency shelter and services.
 - Goal 1b Ensure that all temporary shelters for homeless individuals and families are clean, safe and well-run.
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SERVICE 2 Coordinate and/or provide support services to help individuals and families who are homeless exit shelter as quickly as possible.

- Goal 2a Facilitate exits and minimize clients' length of stay in shelters.
 - Goal 2b Minimize re-entries into the shelter services system.
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SERVICE 3 Help chronically unsheltered homeless individuals find stable, safe living situations.

- Goal 3a Reduce the number of unsheltered homeless individuals.

HOW WE PERFORMED

- During the first four months of Fiscal 2023, the average number of individuals in shelter per day increased by 20.8 percent compared to the same period in Fiscal 2022, driven by an unprecedented increase in entrants, primarily related to the influx of asylum seekers from the southern United States border to New York City.
- Towards the end of Fiscal 2022 and continuing through the first four months of Fiscal 2023, the flow of asylum seekers to New York from the southern border drove a 41.8 percent increase in entries to shelter for families with children and a 104.7 percent increase in entries to shelter for single adults. This rapid increase in entries resulted in growth of 26.9 percent in the families with children census and of 9.5 percent in the single adult census, despite increases in exits to permanent housing over that same period.
- In the first four months of Fiscal 2023, the percent of families with children receiving public assistance declined by 11.2 percentage points compared to the prior period. Partly this is a result of families remaining in conditional eligibility status for longer periods, contributing to a delay in the public assistance application process, as well as to the unprecedented increase in entries of asylum seekers in Fiscal 2023.
- DHS continues to work to place families in the borough of their youngest child's school. There was a 2.7 percentage point decrease in Fiscal 2023 to-date compared to the previous period due to one lower than average month, which has since rebounded and is on-par with prior years. The average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter system increased to 85.0 percent compared to 82.1 percent during the same period last year, a return to pre-pandemic rates that reflects the impact of the return to in-person schooling.
- DHS provides access to screening by dedicated licensed social workers in families with children shelters. These staff conduct behavioral health assessments, developmental screenings for children, and provide services to help address barriers to permanent housing. These clinicians served 61.5 percent of families in shelter in the first four months of Fiscal 2023, a decrease from 77.8 percent in the same period in Fiscal Year 2022 due to both the rapid increase in the families with children population as well as a shortage of social workers available to administer the screenings.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2023, the rate of serious and violent incidents per 1,000 residents decreased across all three populations, which include families with children, single adults, and adult families. The decline of serious incidents within the families with children system was attributable to the decrease in COVID-19-related incidents, including quarantining of both staff and clients. Within the single adult shelter system, the decrease in serious incidents was in large part due to a decrease in facility-related incidents—including heating, water, and electrical failures that last more than four hours. The Agency's Serious Incident Unit (SIU), a centralized unit for all incident reporting that operates 24 hours a day, year-round, continues to ensure accurate reporting and tracking through its quality assurance review process.
- Exits to permanent housing increased for all three populations, with the largest increase in the subsidized exit category. In the first four months of Fiscal 2023, placements increased by 34.5 percent for single adults, by 22.5 percent for families with children, and by 19.7 percent for adult families. Increases to rent levels for City funded housing vouchers went into effect in September 2021, facilitating the growth in single adult subsidized exits. Additionally, increases in Supportive Housing and the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program placements contributed to the growth in subsidized exits compared to the prior period.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2023, the average length of stay in shelter decreased across all systems, by 14.7 percent for single adults, 12.0 percent for families with children, and 7.0 percent for adult families compared to the same period in Fiscal 2022. The marked increase in new entrants compared to the same period in the prior year, led to a change in the proportion of clients with shorter term stays. This, along with the growth in exits, contributed to the lower average length of stay in the reporting period.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2023, returns to shelter within one year increased by 2.2 percentage points for single adults and remained essentially flat for families with children and adult families. Despite fluctuations, the overall return rate remains lower than prior to the pandemic. DHS's success in minimizing re-entries reflects the City's investment in subsidized housing that generates sustained and permanent placements within communities.

- The number of unsheltered clients referred to placement into permanent housing, transitional housing, and other settings was 2,319 in the first four months of Fiscal 2023, a 73.6 percent increase compared to the prior period. Outreach teams provide 24/7 services, engaging New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness by offering services, support, and safe housing.
- The average number of clients who were placed in low barrier safe haven and stabilization beds increased by 33.5 percent during the first four months of Fiscal 2023, due to increased capacity, with over 700 beds added during calendar 2022.

SERVICE 1 Provide temporary emergency housing to homeless individuals and families.

Goal 1a Ensure that individuals and families have access to emergency shelter and services.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
★ Average number of individuals in shelter per day	58,591	52,409	45,563	↓	↓	45,381	54,838
★ ● Average number of adult families in shelters per day	2,455	1,983	1,493	↓	↓	1,610	1,747
★ Average number of individuals in adult families in shelters per day	5,177	4,186	3,130	↓	↓	3,380	3,687
★ ● Average number of families with children in shelters per day	11,719	9,823	8,505	↓	↓	8,395	10,651
★ Average number of individuals in families with children in shelters per day	36,548	30,212	25,969	↓	↓	25,659	33,257
★ ● Average number of single adults in shelters per day	16,866	18,012	16,465	↓	↓	16,341	17,895
★ Adult families entering the DHS shelter services system	1,118	528	598	↓	↓	184	182
★ Families with children entering the DHS shelter services system	10,087	6,107	7,061	↓	↓	2,011	2,851
★ Single adults entering the DHS shelter services system	20,296	18,127	19,968	↓	↓	6,210	12,710
Families with children receiving public assistance (average) (%)	80.9%	84.7%	77.1%	85.0%	85.0%	78.8%	67.6%
Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system (%)	85.0%	77.9%	82.1%	*	*	82.1%	85.0%
Families in shelter living in the borough of their youngest child's school (%)	76.1%	75.4%	76.1%	*	*	77.3%	74.6%
Families initially placed in shelter in the borough of their youngest school-aged child's school address (%)	55.4%	57.6%	60.8%	85.0%	85.0%	59.6%	58.6%
Families living in shelter who received biopsychosocial screenings from mental health clinicians (%)	79%	80%	72%	*	*	78%	62%
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

Goal 1b Ensure that all temporary shelters for homeless individuals and families are clean, safe and well-run.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
★ Adult shelter inspections with safety, maintenance or cleanliness deficiencies per 1,000 beds	NA	NA	1.70	*	*	NA	NA
Serious incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	26.6	38.1	54.7	*	*	45.8	45.1
Serious violent incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	2.2	2.5	4.8	*	*	4.6	4.3
Serious incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	13.8	16.3	21.8	*	*	17.3	14.6
Serious violent incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	1.4	1.0	1.6	*	*	1.8	0.8
Serious incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	7.6	11.5	16.0	*	*	12.8	10.8
Serious violent incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	0.9	1.0	1.1	*	*	1.2	0.9
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Single adult facilities (\$) (annual)	\$130.63	\$137.74	\$135.83	*	*	NA	NA
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Family facilities (\$) (annual)	\$198.67	\$191.36	\$186.01	*	*	NA	NA
- Adult families	\$171.40	\$172.99	\$172.31	*	*	NA	NA
- Families with children	\$202.69	\$193.76	\$188.20	*	*	NA	NA
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

SERVICE 2 Coordinate and/or provide support services to help individuals and families who are homeless exit shelter as quickly as possible.

Goal 2a Facilitate exits and minimize clients' length of stay in shelters.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
Single adults exiting to permanent housing	7,890	6,539	7,043	*	*	2,030	2,731
– subsidized	4,824	4,603	5,243	*	*	1,366	1,969
– unsubsidized	3,066	1,936	1,800	*	*	666	762
Adult families exiting to permanent housing	465	496	504	*	*	137	164
– subsidized	379	393	443	*	*	114	145
– unsubsidized	86	103	61	*	*	23	19
Families with children exiting to permanent housing	7,992	7,191	5,207	*	*	1,603	1,964
– subsidized	6,142	5,647	4,118	*	*	1,211	1,597
– unsubsidized	1,850	1,544	1,089	*	*	392	367
★ Average length of stay for single adults in shelter (days)	437	483	509	↓	↓	517	441
★ Average length of stay for adult families in shelter (days)	630	773	855	↓	↓	862	802
★ Average length of stay for families with children in shelter (days)	443	520	534	↓	↓	551	485
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

Goal 2b Minimize re-entries into the shelter services system.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
★ Single adults who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	14.2%	11.8%	9.8%	20.0%	20.0%	10.1%	12.3%
★ – subsidized exits (%)	5.8%	5.6%	4.6%	↓	↓	4.7%	5.6%
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	24.8%	21.7%	22.1%	↓	↓	20.0%	25.8%
★ Adult families who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	1.7%	1.3%	1.9%	12.5%	12.5%	1.6%	1.5%
★ – subsidized exits (%)	0.0%	0.7%	0.6%	↓	↓	0.0%	1.2%
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	7.7%	3.6%	7.4%	↓	↓	6.7%	5.0%
★ Families with children who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	5.6%	4.1%	3.7%	12.5%	12.5%	4.4%	4.5%
★ – subsidized exits (%)	1.0%	0.5%	0.3%	↓	↓	0.3%	0.2%
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	19.5%	15.6%	15.2%	↓	↓	15.7%	18.0%
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

SERVICE 3 Help chronically unsheltered homeless individuals find stable, safe living situations.

Goal 3a Reduce the number of unsheltered homeless individuals.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
Unsheltered individuals who are estimated to be living on the streets, in parks, under highways, on subways, and in the public transportation stations in New York City	3,857	2,376	3,439	*	*	NA	NA
HOME-STAT clients referred to placement into permanent housing, transitional housing and other settings	5,909	5,454	5,021	*	*	1,336	2,319
Average number of clients in low barrier beds	NA	NA	2,086	*	*	1,988	2,654
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

AGENCY-WIDE MANAGEMENT

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
Workplace injuries reported	149	104	97	*	*	29	34
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY22	FY23
Customer Experience							
Completed requests for interpretation	18,660	26,123	47,504	*	*	12,716	27,860
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	98%	100%	97%	*	*	98%	96%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	99%	99%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	50	55	70	*	*	76	77
CORE facility rating	94	100	90	*	*	NA	NA
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ⇅ Directional Target * None							

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2022 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY23 ¹	FY24 ¹	FY22	FY23
Expenditures (\$000,000) ²	\$2,369.2	\$3,044.5	\$2,732.8	\$2,404.1	\$3,021.4	\$2,334.9	\$1,701.4	\$1,804.1
Personnel	2,119	2,005	1,849	2,057	2,001	1,920	1,981	1,845
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$19.9	\$19.8	\$19.6	\$14.9	\$14.9	\$14.9	\$5.4	\$6.6
Capital commitments (\$000,000)	\$11.0	\$20.1	\$26.9	\$60.6	\$46.3	\$57.0	\$2.2	\$4.5
Human services contract budget (\$000,000)	\$2,029.8	\$2,709.5	\$2,420.0	\$2,078.5	\$2,676.6	\$2,026.7	\$715.9	\$820.5
¹ January 2023 Financial Plan. ² Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available								

SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Where possible, the relationship between an agency's goals and its expenditures and planned resources, by budgetary unit of appropriation (UA), is shown in the 'Applicable MMR Goals' column. Each relationship is not necessarily exhaustive or exclusive. Any one goal may be connected to multiple UAs, and any UA may be connected to multiple goals.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY22 ¹ (\$000,000)	January 2023 Financial Plan FY23 ² (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals ³
Personal Services - Total	\$154.4	\$164.6	
100 - Shelter Intake and Program	\$114.3	\$118.9	All
101 - Administration	\$31.8	\$33.6	All
102 - Street Programs	\$8.4	\$12.1	3a
Other Than Personal Services - Total	\$2,578.4	\$2,856.8	All
200 - Shelter Intake and Program	\$2,355.3	\$2,535.8	All
201 - Administration	\$27.0	\$27.5	All
202 - Street Programs	\$196.2	\$293.6	3a
Agency Total	\$2,732.8	\$3,021.4	

¹Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2022. Includes all funds. ²Includes all funds. ³Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. "NA" Not Available * None

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system (%) has been updated to reflect the correct value for Fiscal 2022 (July 2021–June 2022). The previously published value (82.6%) reflected the monthly average school attendance rate for June 2022.
- The number of unique requests for interpretation are not available for on-site Spanish interpretation services that were provided at a number of DHS locations in Fiscal 2023. As a result, Fiscal 2023 data do not reflect the full scope of interpretation services provided by DHS.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information go to:

- Stats & Reports:
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/about/stats-and-reports.page>
- DHS daily report, including census & intake statistics:
<http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/dailyreport.pdf>
- Housing our Neighbors: A New York City Blueprint for Housing and Homelessness:
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/office-of-the-mayor/2022/Housing-Blueprint.pdf>
- The Subway Safety Plan:
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/press-releases/2022/the-subway-safety-plan.pdf>
- The Social Indicators and Equity Report, EquityNYC:
<http://equity.nyc.gov/>

For more information on the agency, please visit: www.nyc.gov/dhs.

