

# DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES

Gilbert Taylor, Commissioner



## WHAT WE DO

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) provides transitional shelter for homeless single adults, adult families and families with children at directly operated and contracted sites. DHS also provides homeless prevention services through community-based programs, access to permanent housing and 24 hour, seven day street outreach services. DHS also provides placement into safe havens and stabilization beds for street homeless New Yorkers.

## FOCUS ON EQUITY

Increasing homelessness is an unfortunate by-product of current economic realities—growing income inequality, rising housing costs and stagnant wages. DHS programs address the crisis of homelessness by connecting New Yorkers to prevention services to help them remain in their homes and, when prevention is not an option, DHS provides safe and appropriate transitional shelter. DHS also supports families and individuals in exiting shelter to permanent independent and supportive housing. DHS continues to expand homeless prevention efforts through its Homebase program, including new services for single adults, and has partnered with the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to create targeted rental assistance programs tailored to eligible families and individuals in shelter. DHS is also enhancing outreach efforts through HOME-STAT, the City's new program to engage homeless individuals and connect them to support services, is adding new daytime programs and services in adult shelters and is working with multiple agencies to improve shelter conditions.

## OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

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### **SERVICE 1 Help prevent at-risk individuals and families from becoming homeless.**

Goal 1a Provide effective interventions to households most at risk of homelessness.

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### **SERVICE 2 Provide temporary emergency housing to homeless individuals and families.**

Goal 2a Ensure that individuals and families have access to emergency shelter and are immediately connected to appropriate mainstream resources.

Goal 2b Ensure that all temporary shelters for homeless individuals and families are clean, safe and well-run.

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### **SERVICE 3 Coordinate and/or provide support services to help individuals and families who are homeless exit shelter as quickly as possible.**

Goal 3a Facilitate exits and minimize clients' length of stay in shelters.

Goal 3b Minimize re-entries into the shelter services system.

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### **SERVICE 4 Help chronically unsheltered homeless individuals find stable, safe living situations.**

Goal 4a Reduce the number of unsheltered homeless individuals.

## HOW WE PERFORMED

- DHS' community-based homelessness prevention program, Homebase, served 3,055 more households during the first four months of Fiscal 2016 and helped more than 90 percent of families, and more than 80 percent of single adults, receiving prevention services to stay in their communities and avoid shelter entry within the 12 months following the service. The rate remained stable for families with children while declining by eight percentage points for adults and 2.9 percentage points for adult families. In Fiscal 2015 and 2016, DHS increased Homebase capacity and the outreach for this expansion reached new clients, including some higher-risk populations.
- The average number of individuals and families in shelter was higher than in the previous period. The new rental assistance programs that began in Fiscal 2015 are providing access to permanent housing for families and single adults. The percentage of adult families and families with children who exited shelter compared to monthly goals increased by 14 and 10 percentage points, respectively. The number of single adults exiting shelter to permanent housing declined by five percent, from 3,092 to 2,946, during the first four months of Fiscal 2016, reflecting more limited housing options for this group.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2016, single adults' average length of stay in shelter increased by eight percent, adult families' by six percent and families with children by two percent. The new rental assistance programs, including Living in Communities (LINC), target the needs of long-term stayers and are intended to reduce the length of stay among individuals and families in shelter.
- DHS clients exit the shelter system to both subsidized and unsubsidized housing placements. Examples of subsidized placements include rental assistance, public housing and supportive housing. To minimize shelter returns, DHS focuses on connecting clients to mainstream resources in the community, including targeted aftercare services to help stabilize clients after they move from shelter to housing. DHS tracks the number of clients across all three populations who return to shelter within one year of exit to housing. The percentage of adult families and families with children who returned to shelter within one year declined by approximately four percentage points each during the reporting period in Fiscal 2016 compared to the previous year. The percentage of single adults who returned to shelter within a year increased slightly, from 2.9 percent to 3.3 percent. During both periods, most shelter exits were to unsubsidized placements and these numbers do not reflect activity related to the new rental assistance programs that began in October of 2014. In the Fiscal 2016 Mayor's Management Report, DHS will break out shelter returns within one year between exits to unsubsidized housing and permanent subsidized housing placements.
- DHS enhanced the ability of its street outreach providers to engage chronically homeless individuals and connect them to support services. During the first four months of Fiscal 2016, DHS providers placed 306 chronically homeless individuals into permanent and temporary housing, a decrease of three percent from the prior year. In Fiscal 2016 DHS will increase its outreach efforts with enhancements to the outreach teams and with the creation of HOME-STAT (Homeless Outreach & Mobile Engagement Street Action Teams), a multi-agency effort to combat persistent street homelessness.

## SERVICE 1 Help prevent at-risk individuals and families from becoming homeless.

**Goal 1a** Provide effective interventions to households most at risk of homelessness.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★Adults receiving preventive services who did not reside 21 days or more in the shelter system (%)	96.7%	96.0%	93.5%	70.0%	70.0%	96.5%	88.4%
★Adult families receiving preventive services who did not enter the shelter system (%)	95.5%	97.3%	91.5%	70.0%	70.0%	94.4%	91.5%
★Families with children receiving preventive services who did not enter the shelter system (%)	93.0%	94.0%	94.5%	70.0%	70.0%	95.3%	94.8%

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target ↕ shows desired direction

## SERVICE 2 Provide temporary emergency housing to homeless individuals and families.

### Goal 2a

Ensure that individuals and families have access to emergency shelter and are immediately connected to appropriate mainstream resources.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★Adult families entering the DHS shelter services system	1,156	1,283	1,385	↓	↓	521	466
★Families with children entering the DHS shelter services system	12,306	11,848	12,671	↓	↓	5,225	4,531
★Single adults entering the DHS shelter services system	16,448	17,547	18,091	↓	↓	6,337	6,647
★Average number of adult families in shelters per day	1,723	1,866	2,110	1,950	1,950	2,031	2,138
★Average number of families with children in shelters per day	9,840	10,649	11,819	11,360	11,360	11,574	11,817
★Average number of single adults in shelters per day	9,536	10,116	11,330	10,475	10,475	10,685	12,195
Families with children applying for or receiving public assistance (average) (%)	94.0%	90.9%	85.4%	*	*	86.8%	83.6%
Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system (%)	83.6%	85.4%	83.9%	*	*	84.5%	84.5%
Families placed in the shelter services system according to their youngest school-aged child's school address (%)	70.5%	65.4%	52.9%	85.0%	85.0%	48.5%	51.8%

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### Goal 2b

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

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★Adult shelter inspections with safety, maintenance or cleanliness deficiencies per 1,000 beds	0.2	0.0	0.0	↓	↓	NA	NA
★Critical incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	0.5	0.7	0.8	↓	↓	0.8	0.8
★Critical incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	2.5	3.3	2.0	↓	↓	2.3	1.5
★Critical incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	1.2	1.4	1.0	↓	↓	1.3	0.8
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Single adult facilities (\$) (annual)	\$74.80	\$78.38	\$78.80	*	*	NA	NA
- Family facilities (\$) (annual)	\$102.74	\$101.50	\$105.37	*	*	NA	NA
Evaluations for human services contracts completed on time, as compared to the goal (%)	97.2%	98.9%	99.4%	*	*	NA	NA

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## SERVICE 3 Coordinate and/or provide support services to help individuals and families who are homeless exit shelter as quickly as possible.

### Goal 3a

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

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Single adults exiting to permanent housing	8,526	10,012	8,734	9,000	9,000	3,092	2,946
Exits from the adult family shelter system, as compared to monthly goal (%)	104%	78%	75%	*	*	66%	80%
Exits from the families with children shelter system, as compared to monthly goal (%)	103%	90%	107%	*	*	99%	109%
★Average length of stay for single adults in shelter (days)	293	305	329	↓	↓	318	345
★Average length of stay for adult families in shelter (days)	469	515	534	↓	↓	522	553
★Average length of stay for families with children in shelter (days)	375	427	430	↓	↓	425	435

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**Goal 3b** Minimize re-entries into the shelter services system.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★ Single adults who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	4.5%	4.4%	2.0%	4.4%	4.4%	2.9%	3.3%
★ Adult families who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	15.0%	12.5%	14.2%	12.5%	12.5%	17.2%	13.0%
★ Families with children who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	9.5%	12.5%	16.5%	12.5%	12.5%	15.5%	11.4%

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**SERVICE 4** Help chronically unsheltered homeless individuals find stable, safe living situations.

**Goal 4a** Reduce the number of unsheltered homeless individuals.

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
★ 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	3,180	3,357	3,182	↓	↓	NA	NA
Number of chronically homeless individuals placed into permanent and temporary housing by outreach teams	720	562	1,101	*	*	316	306
Response rate to 311 calls for homeless person assistance from constituents requesting a call back	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	*	*	100.0%	100.0%

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**AGENCY-WIDE MANAGEMENT**

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Collisions involving City vehicles	48	27	58	*	*	24	26
Workplace injuries reported	119	112	39	*	*	1	6

"NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target

**AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY15	FY16
Customer Experience							
Completed requests for interpretation	4,087	4,195	5,787	*	*	1,484	1,795
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	67.4%	83.5%	70.4%	*	*	67.3%	72.2%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	66.7%	80.5%	68.6%	*	*	72.1%	69%
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	NA	24	15	*	*	NA	NA
CORE facility rating	91	89	95	*	*	NA	NA

"NA" - means Not Available in this report \* No Target

# AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2015 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY16 <sup>1</sup>	FY17 <sup>1</sup>	FY15	FY16
Expenditures (\$000,000) <sup>2</sup>	\$984.3	\$1,043.3	\$1,169.8	\$1,080.9	\$1,311.4	\$1,108.6	\$676.5	\$681.3
Personnel	1,848	1,859	1,977	2,317	2,641	2,428	1,947	2,131
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$9.6	\$9.0	\$9.4	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$3.0	\$3.7
Capital commitments (\$000,000)	\$14.4	\$21.9	\$20.4	\$36.6	\$48.7	\$65.1	\$10.6	\$0.0
Human services contract budget (\$000,000)	\$769.2	\$826.3	\$941.2	\$815.2	\$1,011.1	\$819.7	\$299.5	\$316.9
<sup>1</sup> January 2016 Financial Plan <sup>2</sup> Expenditures include all funds      "NA" - Not Available in this report								

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- DHS revised the indicator names for shelter cost indicators to more clearly reflect the annual reporting period.
- The target for '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' has been revised to reflect the downward desired direction of the indicator.
- Fiscal 2015 four-month actual figures were revised for the following indicators: 'Single adults who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)', from 3.8 percent to 2.9 percent; 'Collisions involving City vehicles,' from 18 to 24; and 'Workplace injuries reported,' from 55 to 6.
- Gilbert Taylor stepped down as Commissioner of DHS in December 2015. HRA Commissioner Steven Banks, as the Administrator of the New York City Department of Social Services, is overseeing DHS during a 90 day review period of homeless services ordered by the Mayor in December 2015.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information go to:

- Stats & Reports:  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dhs/html/communications/stats.shtml>
- Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE) count results:  
<https://a071-hope.nyc.gov/hope/statistics.aspx>
- DHS daily report, including census & intake statistics:  
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dhs/downloads/pdf/dailyreport.pdf>

For more information on the agency, please visit: [www.nyc.gov/dhs](http://www.nyc.gov/dhs).

