



WHAT WE DO

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) works to prevent homelessness before it occurs, address unsheltered homelessness, and assist homeless New Yorkers in transitioning from shelter and the street to permanent housing. DHS collaborates with not-for-profit partners to provide temporary shelter and services that New Yorkers experiencing homelessness need to achieve and maintain housing permanency. In February 2017, Mayor de Blasio released a comprehensive plan to turn the tide on homelessness, neighborhood by neighborhood; followed by “The Journey Home” in December 2019, an action plan to end long-term street homelessness.

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, de-institutionalization of persons who have mental illness without sufficient community-based services and discharges from a range of institutions. DHS addresses homelessness by connecting New Yorkers to preventive services that help them remain in their homes and, when prevention is not an option, by providing safe and appropriate transitional shelter, services to unsheltered New Yorkers, 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.

In Fiscal 2016 Mayor de Blasio announced a comprehensive plan to reform the delivery of homeless services in New York City. “Turning the Tide,” a report issued in February 2017, laid out a blueprint for moving forward with the reforms, providing borough-based services and shrinking the footprint of the shelter system by closing 360 facilities, including eliminating the 20-year old “cluster” apartment program.

In December 2019, DHS announced “The Journey Home,” an action plan to end long-term street homelessness with enhanced efforts around new permanent housing, and safe havens, outreach, and cross-agency collaborative interventions to bring these solutions to those New Yorkers who have been the hardest to reach.

People of color, particularly African-Americans, are over-represented among those who are experiencing homelessness, both in New York City and throughout the country. Poverty is a strong predictor of homelessness; and black families and individuals are more likely to experience poverty, especially deep poverty, than their white counterparts. Higher incarceration rates, especially for black men, are also linked to increased risk of homelessness. Mayor de Blasio’s 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.

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 are immediately connected to appropriate mainstream resources.
- Goal 1b Ensure that all temporary shelters for homeless individuals and families are clean, safe and well-run.

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.

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

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

HOW WE PERFORMED IN FISCAL 2020

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

Goal 1a Ensure that individuals and families have access to emergency shelter and are immediately connected to appropriate mainstream resources.

In Fiscal 2020, the average number of adult families and families with children in shelter per day declined by 2.2 percent and 5.6 percent respectively compared to the same period last year, driven primarily by fewer entrants to shelter. Adult families and families with children entering DHS shelter decreased by 22.0 percent and 15.7 percent, respectively. The continued decline of families in shelter can be attributed in part to the increase in legal services funding over the last few years in combination with an increased payment of rent arrears and a resultant decline in evictions, as well as increases in subsidized housing placements since the inception of the City’s rental assistance and rehousing programs in 2014. DHS has made progress driving down the number of families experiencing homelessness and residing in shelter on any given night, with the peak number of individuals in those families declining by nearly 10,000 between 2014 and 2020. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic was correlated with a further decline in family shelter entries, as evictions were suspended and some families may have sheltered in place.

The average number of single adults in shelter per day increased by 5.2 percent over the previous period. While the number of new single adult entrants declined, the average length of stay continued to increase. Compounding the lack of affordable and supportive housing, COVID-19 public health measures to accelerate decarceration initiatives and discharges from other institutions including mental health facilities, led to more adults seeking shelter. DHS continues to focus on addressing the housing and services needs of those longest in shelter, including through targeted interventions for elderly clients and clients with disabilities.

In Fiscal 2020, 55.4 percent of families with children entering shelter received an initial placement according to the youngest school-aged child’s school address, a 2.5 percentage point increase compared to Fiscal 2019. In Fiscal 2020, 76.1 percent of families with children in shelter resided in the borough of their youngest child’s school. In the months for which data could be compared before COVID-19 required the closing of schools, September 2019 through February 2020, the average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system increased by 1.0 percentage point compared with the same period in the prior fiscal year.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Average number of adult families in shelters per day	2,212	2,461	2,475	2,510	2,455	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
★ Average number of families with children in shelters per day	12,089	12,818	12,619	12,415	11,719	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
★ Average number of single adults in shelters per day	12,727	13,626	14,847	16,094	16,934	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ Adult families entering the DHS shelter services system	1,476	1,583	1,469	1,433	1,118	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ Families with children entering the DHS shelter services system	13,311	12,595	12,151	11,965	10,087	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ Single adults entering the DHS shelter services system	19,139	19,800	21,177	21,122	20,296	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
Families with children receiving public assistance (average) (%)	81.6%	81.5%	80.9%	80.3%	80.9%	85.0%	85.0%	Neutral	*
Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system (%)	82.0%	82.7%	82.3%	83.9%	85.0%	*	*	Neutral	Up
Families initially placed in shelter in the borough of their youngest school-aged child’s school address (%)	51.8%	48.9%	49.8%	52.9%	55.4%	85.0%	85.0%	Neutral	Up
Families in shelter living in the borough of their youngest child’s school (%)	NA	NA	NA	73.1%	76.1%	*	*	NA	Up
★ Critical 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.

The rate of serious incidents increased in all three systems (single adults, adult families and families with children,) primarily driven by health-related categories. COVID-related incidents including quarantining of both staff and clients for contagious diseases, hospitalizations, and a change in the reporting categorization of seizures as serious incidents at the direction of the State accounted for more than 75 percent of the overall increase in serious incidents in the single adult system. Additionally, the Agency’s Serious Incident Unit (SIU), a centralized unit for all incident reporting that operates 24 hours a day, year-round, began a new quality assurance review process and staff were retrained during the fiscal year resulting in more accurate reporting and tracking.

There were increases in the daily cost of shelter for all shelter types due to COVID-19 as well as the shelter phase out plan. An increase of 4.8 percent in the cost of adult shelter was primarily due to the use of new commercial hotel rooms, beginning in April 2020 in order to de-densify adult congregate shelters and avoid the spread of COVID-19. Increases in the cost of adult family shelter were the result of the replacement of older, low quality programs with newer borough-based shelters.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Adult shelter inspections with safety, maintenance or cleanliness deficiencies per 1,000 beds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	*	*	Neutral	*
★ Serious incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	NA	NA	20.6	26.6	↓	↓	NA	Down
Serious violent incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	1.6	1.6	2.0	2.2	*	*	NA	Down
★ Serious incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	NA	NA	10.5	13.8	↓	↓	NA	Down
Serious violent incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	*	*	NA	Down
★ Serious incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	NA	NA	5.6	7.5	↓	↓	NA	Down
Serious violent incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	NA	0.6	0.3	0.8	0.9	*	*	NA	Down
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Single adult facilities (\$) (annual)	\$94.57	\$99.46	\$117.43	\$124.38	\$130.63	*	*	Up	*
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Family facilities (\$) (annual)	\$120.22	\$167.84	\$187.46	\$196.23	\$198.67	*	*	Up	*
– Adult families	\$110.69	\$138.13	\$147.49	\$158.71	\$171.40	*	*	Up	*
– Families with children	\$121.40	\$171.21	\$192.10	\$201.60	\$202.69	*	*	Up	*
★ Critical 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.

Homeless clients continue to be placed into permanent, stable housing through a variety of City and federally funded rental assistance programs. However, due to efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19 as well as the economic conditions caused by the pandemic, placements to permanent housing across all three populations declined in the last quarter of Fiscal 2020, contributing to overall lower placements compared to Fiscal 2019. Single adult exits to permanent housing decreased by 11.5 percent, adult family exits to permanent housing decreased by 14.4 percent, and families with children exiting to permanent housing decreased by 12.5 percent compared to Fiscal 2019. DHS staff continued to assist clients in finding and moving into permanent housing during the pandemic to the extent possible and in accordance with City safety guidance and have added remote alternatives to the normally in-person housing search process.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
Single adults exiting to permanent housing	8,521	8,043	8,593	8,912	7,890	9,000	*	Neutral	Up
– subsidized	3,885	3,633	4,157	5,001	4,824	*	*	Up	Up
– unsubsidized	4,636	4,410	4,436	3,911	3,066	*	*	Down	Up
Adult families exiting to permanent housing	628	570	513	543	465	*	*	Down	Up
– subsidized	310	313	331	439	379	*	*	Up	Up
– unsubsidized	318	257	182	104	86	*	*	Down	Up
Families with children exiting to permanent housing	8,294	8,571	8,933	9,137	7,992	*	*	Neutral	Up
– subsidized	5,365	5,421	6,446	6,872	6,142	*	*	Up	Up
– unsubsidized	2,929	3,150	2,487	2,265	1,850	*	*	Down	Up
★ Average length of stay for single adults in shelter (days)	355	383	401	414	431	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ Average length of stay for adult families in shelter (days)	563	550	561	580	630	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ Average length of stay for families with children in shelter (days)	431	414	438	446	443	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
★ Critical Indicator	"NA" Not Available	↑↓ Directional Target			* None				

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

The overall rate of clients who have returned to shelter within one year continued to decline for all three systems, 3.1 percentage points for singles adults, 3.9 percentage points for adult families and 1.4 percentage points for families with children. DHS's success in minimizing re-entries reflects the City's investment in subsidized housing that generates sustained and permanent placements within communities. In addition, automatic renewal of the City Family Eviction Prevention Supplement and City Family Exit Plan Supplement (CityFHEPS,) the City-funded rental assistance program, was implemented during COVID-19, to help ensure continuity of services and protect public health. For adult families the return rate for subsidized housing declined to zero and the rate for families with children decreased to 1.0 percent. The single adult return rate for subsidized housing decreased to 5.8 percent in Fiscal 2020. The dramatic declines since 2015 in overall return rates for all groups can be attributed to the implementation of rental assistance programs, expansion of supportive housing development and enhanced access to Section 8 and NYCHA housing for shelter clients since the beginning of the Administration.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ Single adults who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	18.9%	18.3%	17.5%	17.3%	14.2%	20.0%	20.0%	Down	Down
★ – subsidized exits (%)	8.3%	7.9%	6.9%	6.5%	5.8%	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	24.5%	26.3%	26.3%	27.2%	24.8%	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
★ Adult families who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	8.7%	11.5%	8.0%	5.6%	1.7%	12.5%	12.5%	Down	Down
★ – subsidized exits (%)	1.6%	0.6%	1.4%	1.0%	0.0%	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	11.9%	21.6%	16.0%	13.2%	7.7%	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ Families with children who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	10.0%	8.1%	8.3%	7.0%	5.6%	12.5%	12.5%	Down	Down
★ – subsidized exits (%)	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	1.3%	1.0%	↓	↓	Down	Down
★ – unsubsidized exits (%)	19.9%	20.9%	20.4%	21.6%	19.5%	↓	↓	Neutral	Down
★ Critical 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.

The annual Homeless Outreach Population Estimate (HOPE) street homeless survey conducted on January 27, 2020, found that 3,857 unsheltered individuals were on the streets of New York that night, an increase of 7.5 percent compared to Fiscal 2019, but 12.2 percent fewer than the 4,395 in the first survey in Fiscal 2005. The survey also found that the number of unsheltered individuals in the subways declined by 23.3 percent. The Fiscal 2020 HOPE survey was conducted amid continued housing affordability challenges here and across the nation, with economic and social factors, including rising rents outpacing incomes, continuing to cause homelessness.

Through the unprecedented investment to enhance the work of street outreach programs and service providers, significant progress has been made in placing individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness into housing. In Fiscal 2020, HOME-STAT outreach workers referred 5,909 clients to placements in permanent housing, transitional programs, and other stabilized settings, more than doubling the number of clients referred in previous years. Before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, 24/7 outreach efforts have continued—with outreach teams extending a helping hand to New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness on the streets and in the subways around the clock. The End of Line (EOL) initiative during the MTA overnight shutdown contributed to this year's large increase in referrals to placements. The EOL initiative was created to help unsheltered individuals who would otherwise have been displaced due to the unprecedented nightly subway system-wide closures between 1-5am in order for the subway system to be cleaned to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
★ 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	2,794	3,892	3,675	3,588	3,857	↓	↓	Up	Down
★ HOME-STAT clients referred to placement into permanent housing, transitional housing and other settings	NA	2,146	2,849	2,753	5,909	↑	↑	NA	Up
★ Critical Indicator	"NA" Not Available	↑↓ Directional Target				* None			

AGENCY-WIDE MANAGEMENT

In Fiscal 2020, the number of workplace injuries reported decreased by 29.0 percent from 210 in Fiscal 2019, to 149 in Fiscal 2020. This is due in part to the implementation of a telework policy instituted in March 2020 for many staff in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure continuity of services. Permitting employees to work from home has resulted in fewer employees having to report to an agency work site, which contributed to the decrease in workplace injuries and collisions involving City vehicles, specifically for the months of March through June. The agency has also implemented new technology to track agency vehicles and reduce dangerous driving, which further drove down collisions.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
Collisions involving City vehicles	60	46	41	65	39	*	*	Down	Down
Workplace injuries reported	147	189	198	210	149	*	*	Neutral	Down
★ Critical Indicator	"NA" Not Available	↑↓ Directional Target				* None			

AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

In Fiscal 2020, the rate of letters responded to in 14 days increased by 10.0 percentage points to 98.0 percent compared to Fiscal 2019. The Department of Social Services (DSS) created new processes which included a dedicated team to follow up on and send reminder alerts to responsible programs if they have not responded within the required timeframe. Additionally, the DSS correspondence system, Intranet Quorum (IQ) was updated to auto generate daily reports with all letters that still have outstanding responses; the reports are monitored daily by DSS managers. This contributed greatly to the increase in response time.

Completed requests for interpretation increased by 16.9 percent from 15,957 in Fiscal 2019, to 18,660 in Fiscal 2020. A large portion of the increase is a change implemented in Fiscal 2020 that allows DHS shelter providers access to Agency interpretation services.

Performance Indicators	Actual					Target		Trend	
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	5-Year	Desired Direction
Customer Experience									
Completed requests for interpretation	8,164	13,357	16,644	15,957	18,660	*	*	Up	*
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	65%	NA	82%	88%	98%	*	*	NA	Up
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	61%	NA	65%	99%	99%	*	*	NA	Up
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	10	6	5	4	1	*	*	Down	Down
CORE facility rating	100	92	100	NA	94	*	*	NA	Up
★ Critical Indicator "NA" Not Available ⬆️⬆️ Directional Target * None									

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual ¹					Plan ²		5yr Trend
	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY20	FY21	
Expenditures (\$000,000) ³	\$1,400.6	\$1,823.7	\$2,146.0	\$2,184.1	\$2,288.5	\$2,150.8	\$2,059.8	Up
Personnel	2,404	2,349	2,370	2,319	2,119	2,384	2,237	Neutral
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$13.6	\$13.8	\$16.9	\$17.8	\$3.9	\$3.9	\$3.9	Down
Capital commitments (\$000,000)	\$11.6	\$28.5	\$53.1	\$47.0	\$11.0	\$59.5	\$96.3	Up
Human services contract budget (\$000,000)	\$1,120.6	\$1,468.1	\$1,762.0	\$1,851.5	\$1,848.1	\$1,804.5	\$1,756.7	Up
¹ Actual financial amounts for the current fiscal year are not yet final. Final fiscal year actuals, from the Comptroller's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, will be reported in the next PMMR. Refer to the "Indicator Definitions" at nyc.gov/mmr for details. ² Authorized Budget Level ³ Expenditures include all funds "NA" - Not Available * None								

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 FY19 ¹ (\$000,000)	Modified Budget FY20 ² (\$000,000)	Applicable MMR Goals ³
100 - Shelter Intake and Program	\$161.5	\$142.2	All
101 - Administration ⁴	NA	\$17.2	All
102 - Street Programs ⁴	NA	\$1.9	3a
200 - Shelter Intake and Program	\$2,022.6	\$2,127.3	All
Agency Total	\$2,184.1	\$2,288.5	
¹ Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2019. Includes all funds. ² City of New York Adopted Budget for Fiscal 2020, as of June 2020. Includes all funds. ³ Refer to agency goals listed at front of chapter. ⁴ This unit of appropriation originated in Fiscal 2020 "NA" Not Available * None			

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services was calculated using data from September 2019 to February 2020 because March 2020 through June 2020 data was not available due to the shift to remote learning for NYC school children.
- The Fiscal 2021 target for single adults exiting to permanent housing has been suspended due to the challenges of connecting clients to safe and stable housing during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Evaluations for human services contracts completed on time, as compared to the goal (%) is no longer being reported on in the MMR. The Procurement and Sourcing Solutions Portal (PASSPort) creates a draft Performance Evaluation (PE) for a contract 12 months after the contract start date, which agencies may complete and finalize on a rolling basis. Further, the Procurement Policy Board Rules state that PEs must be done at least once annually but do not provide a fixed deadline to complete PEs.
- DHS revised the following indicator name for clarity: 'HOME-STAT clients placed into permanent housing, transitional housing and other settings' was revised to 'HOME-STAT clients referred to placement into permanent housing, transitional housing and other settings'

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>
- Fiscal Year 2016 Comprehensive Homeless Services Plan:
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/home/downloads/pdf/reports/2016/90-day-homeless-services-review.pdf>
- Turning the Tide on Homelessness in New York City:
<http://www1.nyc.gov/site/dhs/about/tide.page>
- The Journey Home Action Plan to End Long-Term Street Homelessness
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dhs/downloads/pdf/the-journey-home-2019-print-web.pdf>

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

