

# DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES

Gilbert Taylor, Commissioner



## WHAT WE DO

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) manages 255 shelter facilities, consisting of 69 adult facilities, 21 adult family facilities and 152 facilities for families with children. DHS also provides homeless prevention services through community-based programs known as Homebase, as well as street outreach services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with options for placement into safe havens and stabilization beds.

## FOCUS ON EQUITY

Despite growing income inequality and a crisis in housing affordability that have led to a rise in homelessness across New York City, DHS is leading citywide efforts to address the many drivers of homelessness and develop dynamic approaches to combat this growing and complex problem. DHS has expanded homeless prevention efforts through its Homebase program, rolled out targeted rental assistance programs tailored to the strengths and needs of eligible families and individuals in shelter, and enhanced the ability of its street outreach providers to engage chronically homeless individuals and connect them to support services. Beyond just providing shelter, DHS has an obligation to help rebuild the lives of people who are unable to make ends meet and ensure that those who leave shelter are on the path to housing stability.

## OUR SERVICES AND GOALS

---

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

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

---

### **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.

---

### **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.

---

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

Goal 4a Reduce the number of unsheltered homeless individuals.

## HOW WE PERFORMED

- During the first four months of Fiscal 2015, DHS' community-based homelessness prevention program, Homebase, continued to exceed its prevention target for families with children, adult families, and single adults. Over 90 percent of Homebase clients were able to avoid shelter entry, allowing them to stay in their homes and communities. The success rate for all three populations ranged from 94 to 97 percent.
- DHS continued to see evidence of a growing shelter census across all three populations. Shelter residents are staying longer and fewer are able to exit the system permanently – trends that have been consistent since the loss of the last rental subsidy program in 2011, coupled with the City's ongoing need for affordable housing. The growing shelter census impacts DHS' temporary shelter operations and capacity to assist individuals and families to exit shelter quickly. DHS is expanding preventive services and implementing large scale rental subsidy initiatives to help reduce the need for or length of time spent in shelter.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2015, the average school attendance rate for children in shelter remained high at 85 percent, compared to 86 percent during the same reporting period in Fiscal 2014.
- In comparison to the first four months of Fiscal 2014, the rate of critical incidents per 1,000 residents increased for single adults, from 0.5 to 0.8. The rate of critical incidents for adult families and families with children declined to 2.3 and 1.3, respectively, due in part to the Department's efforts to conduct more targeted performance reviews, train all providers on mandated reporting, and implement child safety meetings and cluster reviews.
- During the first four months of Fiscal 2015, the average length of stay in shelter increased across all populations for the second year in a row. Specifically, single adults' length of stay increased by six percent, adult families' by four percent and families with children by four percent. DHS' new Living in Communities (LINC) rental assistance program targets the needs of long-term stayers and is intended to reduce the length of stay among individuals and families in shelter.
- 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 exiting to housing. This percentage remained around 4 percent during first four months of Fiscal 2015 for single adults, similar to prior years, but increased for adult families and families with children compared to the first four months of Fiscal 2014, to 17 percent from 15 percent and 16 percent from 11 percent, respectively.
- 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 2015, DHS providers placed 316 chronically homeless individuals into permanent and temporary housing – an increase of 78 percent from the prior year. For the third consecutive year, DHS and its outreach providers reached out to 100 percent of citizens who called 311 to assist a street homeless individual and requested a call back.

## 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	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★ Adults receiving preventive services who did not reside 21 days or more in the shelter system (%)	91.4%	96.7%	96.0%	70.0%	70.0%	94.9%	96.5%
★ Adult families receiving preventive services who did not enter the shelter system (%)	97.0%	95.5%	97.3%	70.0%	70.0%	98.3%	94.4%
★ Families with children receiving preventive services who did not enter the shelter system (%)	93.9%	93.0%	94.0%	70.0%	70.0%	93.7%	95.3%

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↓↑ 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	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★ Adult families entering the DHS shelter services system	1,109	1,156	1,283	↓	↓	466	521
★ Families with children entering the DHS shelter services system	10,878	12,306	11,848	↓	↓	4,281	5,225
★ Single adults entering the DHS shelter services system	17,872	16,448	17,547	↓	↓	5,975	6,337
★ Average number of adult families in shelters per day	1,450	1,723	1,866	1,950	1,950	1,820	2,031
★ Average number of families with children in shelters per day	8,445	9,840	10,649	11,360	11,360	10,336	11,574
★ Average number of single adults in shelters per day	8,622	9,536	10,116	10,475	10,475	9,891	10,685
Families with children applying for or receiving public assistance (average) (%)	NA	94.0%	90.9%	*	*	93.0%	86.8%
Average school attendance rate for children in the DHS shelter services system (%)	82.7%	83.6%	85.4%	*	*	85.8%	84.5%
Families placed in the shelter services system according to their youngest school-aged child's school address (%)	76.5%	70.5%	65.4%	85.0%	85.0%	69.4%	48.5%

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↓↑ shows desired direction

**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	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★Adult shelter inspections with safety, maintenance or cleanliness deficiencies per 1,000 beds	0.3	0.2	0.0	↓	↓	NA	NA
★Critical incidents in the adult shelter system, per 1,000 residents	0.3	0.5	0.7	↓	↓	0.5	0.8
★Critical incidents in the adult family shelter system, per 1,000 residents	0.8	2.5	3.3	↓	↓	2.8	2.3
★Critical incidents in the families with children shelter system, per 1,000 residents	1.1	1.2	1.4	↓	↓	1.6	1.3
Cost per day for shelter facilities - Single adult facilities (\$)	\$77.58	\$74.80	\$78.38	*	*	NA	NA
- Family facilities (\$)	\$100.82	\$102.74	\$101.50	*	*	NA	NA
Evaluations for human services contracts completed on time, as compared to the goal (%)	97.8%	97.2%	98.9%	*	*	NA	NA

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↓↑ shows desired direction

**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	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Single adults exiting to permanent housing	7,541	8,526	10,012	9,000	9,000	3,422	3,092
Exits from the adult family shelter system, as compared to monthly goal (%)	70	104	78	*	*	120	66
Exits from the families with children shelter system, as compared to monthly goal (%)	99	103	90	*	*	110	99
★Average length of stay for single adults in shelter (days)	275	293	305	↓	↓	299	318
★Average length of stay for adult families in shelter (days)	416	469	515	↓	↓	502	522
★Average length of stay for families with children in shelter (days)	337	375	427	↓	↓	409	425

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↓↑ shows desired direction

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

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★Single adults who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	3.9%	4.5%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.3%	3.8%
★Adult families who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	5.6%	15.0%	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	15.1%	17.2%
★Families with children who exited to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year (%)	4.4%	9.5%	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	11.2%	15.5%

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↓↑ shows desired direction

## 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	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
★ 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	3,262	3,180	3,357	3,350	3,350	NA	NA
Number of chronically homeless individuals placed into permanent and temporary housing by outreach teams	545	720	562	*	*	178	316
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%

★ Critical Indicator "NA" - means Not Available in this report ↕ ↑ shows desired direction

## AGENCY-WIDE MANAGEMENT

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Collisions involving City vehicles	NA	48	27	*	*	NA	18
Workplace injuries reported	NA	119	112	*	*	23	55

## AGENCY CUSTOMER SERVICE

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY14	FY15
Customer Experience							
Completed requests for interpretation	3,230	4,087	4,195	*	*	NA	NA
Letters responded to in 14 days (%)	70%	67.4%	83.5%	*	*	76%	67.3%
E-mails responded to in 14 days (%)	88%	66.7%	80.5%	*	*	74.8%	72.1%
Average wait time to speak with a customer service agent (minutes)	22	NA	24	*	*	NA	NA
CORE facility rating	81	91	89	*	*	NA	NA

# AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Statistics	Actual			Sept. 2014 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY15 <sup>1</sup>	FY16 <sup>1</sup>	FY14	FY15
Expenditures (\$000,000) <sup>2</sup>	\$900.5	\$984.3	\$1,043.3	\$954.8	\$1,112.4	\$1,033.9	\$715.6	\$676.5
Personnel	1,819	1,848	1,859	1,949	2,239	2,149	1,965	1,947
Overtime paid (\$000,000)	\$7.4	\$9.6	\$9.0	\$6.9	\$6.9	\$6.9	\$2.9	\$3.0
Capital commitments (\$000,000)	\$24.2	\$14.4	\$21.9	\$41.6	\$53.0	\$15.7	\$12.8	\$10.6
Human services contract budget (\$000,000)	\$698.8	\$769.2	\$826.3	\$732.0	\$868.6	\$789.5	\$280.7	\$299.5
<sup>1</sup> February 2015 Financial Plan <sup>2</sup> Expenditures include all funds.      "NA" - Not Available in this report								

## NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

None.

## 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).