



Status of Homelessness for Families with Children in Pinellas County Presented to the Health and Human Services Leadership Board March 6, 2017

Since 2013, the annual Point-In-Time (PIT) count in Pinellas County has shown that the number of individuals and children experiencing homelessness fluctuates, with no sign of a steady reduction. The PIT numbers are as follows:

Table with 5 columns: PIT Count 2013-2016, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016. Rows include Total Number Homeless and Total Number Children.

Barriers to Obtaining Permanent Housing

Front Door

- No easy way to access services
- Difficulties navigating the complex system of care
- Different definitions of "homelessness"

Back Door

- Locating affordable housing
- Inability to pay upfront housing costs
- Imperfect background check histories

Housing First Initiatives and Resources

5000 assessed 2000 on List

HOT Team - all meet

Coordinated Entry System (CES) - HUD - \$168,211; Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) - \$100,000

Administered by the HLB - consists of a Manager, 2 Community Navigators and a Housing Specialist.

- Coordinates the assessment of all persons who touch the homeless system through the use of standardized tools;
- Manages the master list of all those assessed and prioritizes housing the most vulnerable first;
- Oversees the system's inflow and outflow and monitors the utilization of the system's various housing-type beds;
- Builds relationships with landlords to work with homeless individuals and families.

Rapid Rehousing (RRH) - HUD - \$485,000; Pinellas County - \$1,050,000; City of St. Pete - \$500,000

RRH places homeless individuals/families into permanent housing as quickly as possible and provides intensive wrap-around services. Assistance is available for up to six months and includes:

- Payment of security deposits, rent, utility deposits, and move-in costs;
- Wrap-around case management provides linkages to mainstream services such as: employment, entitlement benefits, behavioral health, medical care, childcare, etc.

System Needs and Partnership Opportunities

School Board provides

HEAT Team - develop a stronger partnership with the HLB and explore new ways to collaborate and share information.

Flexible Diversion Funds - to divert those who are not yet literally homeless from entering the homeless system.

One-Stop Shop - establish a community one-stop shop for families to easily access mainstream services.

Centralized Access for Coordinated Entry - assessments conducted immediately, divert from front door if possible, link to appropriate prevention or emergency resources, and provide a warm hand-off to referral agencies. Services would be provided via a dedicated Call Center and/or at site-based locations throughout the county. The HLB is requesting an additional \$500k in its FY18 Local Funding request to establish a Homeless Call Center. If funded, a competitive process would be implemented to procure these services from a qualified community agency.

The HLB, Pinellas County Government, the Juvenile Welfare Board, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and Pinellas County Schools all have a stake in the quest to end homelessness and, through their respective governing policies, each entity has demonstrated a deep commitment towards the achievement of this goal. Although there is a long way to go to end homelessness, the collective impact of our ongoing partnerships will continue to lead us forward toward our goal.