



United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

11-0262

Preventing and Ending Homelessness in the United States

Since its creation by the landmark Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has coordinated the federal response to homelessness by creating a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness in the nation while maximizing the effectiveness of the federal government in contributing to the end of homelessness.

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- DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
- DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
- DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
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- DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
- CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
- GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
- OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
- SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
- U.S. POSTAL SERVICE
- WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

OPENING DOORS: FEDERAL STRATEGIC PLAN TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS

In 2010, USICH developed and released the nation's first-ever comprehensive plan to prevent and end homelessness. *Opening Doors* serves as a roadmap for joint action by the 19 USICH member agencies, along with local and state partners in the public and private sectors.

Opening Doors has four key goals:

- Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness in five years
- Prevent and end Veterans' homelessness in five years
- Prevent and end homelessness among families, youth, and children in 10 years
- Set a path to ending all types of homelessness

The Plan presents 52 strategies based on best practices from around the country that build upon the lesson that mainstream housing, health, education, and human service programs must be fully engaged and coordinated to prevent and end homelessness.

Building on the momentum generated across the country by the release of *Opening Doors*, USICH and its 19 member agencies have immediately turned from the development of *Opening Doors* to action. USICH is gathering baseline data around key measures and working with member agencies to prioritize which strategies demand action first. USICH will implement the strategic plan through collaboration with its member agencies and its partners in states and local communities.

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND LEADERSHIP

USICH is an independent agency within the federal executive branch and is composed of 19 Cabinet secretaries and agency heads. The Council annually elects a chairperson and a vice chairperson from among its members. The current chairperson is Department of Labor Secretary Hilda Solis; Department of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius serves as the vice chairperson. Barbara Poppe is the Council-appointed executive director of USICH, bringing expertise on homelessness based on over 25 years of experience at housing-related organizations.

USICH works to prevent and end homelessness by partnering with federal, state and local government, advocates, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness to:

- Establish and maintain effective, coordinated, and supportive relationships with every federal agency;
- Organize and support states and communities to effectively implement local plans to end homelessness;
- Develop an effective portal to federal programs and initiatives;
- Establish and maintain productive communications with Congress;
- Aggregate and promote research/evaluations and manage accountability/results;
- Establish partnerships with public and private sector stakeholders;
- Monitor, evaluate, and recommend improvements;
- Provide professional and technical assistance to states, local governments, and other public and private nonprofit organizations.

For more information, visit the Council's website at www.usich.gov