



Increase Public Awareness and Support for Efforts to End Homelessness

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2023)

Objective

Raise public awareness about homelessness and empower residents and other stakeholders with strategies to address and end homelessness and in collaboration with the Coordinated Access Networks (CANs).

Complementary Actions:

- [Strengthen Municipal Workforce Capacity to Address Homelessness](#)
- [Collect and Share Homelessness Data](#)
- [Provide or Mobilize Resources to Address Homelessness](#)

What to Do

1. Pass a municipal resolution issuing a call-to-action to:

- Increase public awareness and support for efforts to end homelessness;
- Strengthen municipal workforce capacity to address homelessness;
- Collect and share homelessness data, especially with your Coordinated Access Network (CAN);
- Coordinate municipal services to address homelessness;
- Provide or mobilize resources to address homelessness and;
- Improve outcomes for people experiencing homelessness including steps to decriminalize homelessness and connect with systems

Share your municipality's call-to-action with municipal staff and residents through both internal municipal communication and externally through municipal social media, local press or any other strategy appropriate for your municipality. Please provide at least one specific example of how each component of the call-to-action (listed in the bullets above) will be approached and implemented (**10 points**)

Note: You may use or edit this [resolution template](#) or write your own municipal resolution, so long as it includes the required elements listed above.

Submit: The officially adopted resolution and at least one internal (municipal) communication and one external communication, which may include screenshots of your communication to municipal staff, social media, and newspaper articles reporting on the passage of your community's resolution.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Develop and post information on your municipality's website or other platforms that includes guidance and resources for individuals or families experiencing homelessness and/or housing instability. The information should include:

- a. Guidance for those experiencing homelessness, ideally including a link to 211, contact information of your municipality's local education agency liaison for homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act, a link to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families website, link(s) to mental health services and resources, information on runaway

homelessness and youth providers, and any other relevant resources available through your municipality; and

- b. Guidance for ways that residents can support local and regional homelessness prevention efforts.

Note: This guidance may include information on the suggested training topics outlined in the Sustainable CT Action [Strengthen Municipal Workforce Capacity to Address Homelessness](#) (12.1.1), as well as other measures that address homelessness, such as affordable housing, reliable public transportation, eliminating food deserts, and public health and safety.

Share the information with municipal staff and residents through both internal municipal communications strategies appropriate for your municipality. **(5 points)**

Submit: A hyperlink and a screenshot of the webpage that includes the homelessness resources as described above, a description of your strategy for sharing the website, and if possible, samples of internal and external communications.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

3. Organize one or more community conversations or forums annually with a broad group of stakeholders to discuss homelessness in your community or region, focused on meeting the goal of making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring in the municipality and larger region. Ideally, depending on the size of your community and extent of municipal staff, the forum should include representatives from:
 - Residents experiencing homelessness now or in the past;
 - Community residents;
 - Schools, including your municipality's Local Education Agency Liaison for homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act and any other key stakeholders;
 - Youth Services, Parks and Recreation, and/or Youth Service Bureaus;
 - Police, hospitals, emergency medical services, and/or other municipal outreach staff or volunteers;
 - Social workers employed or funded by the municipality;
 - Nursing homes (public and private), and elder and disability community networks;
 - Department of Corrections liaisons;
 - Library staff; and
 - Other community partners, such as community centers, food pantries and other nonprofits (e.g., YMCA/YWCA, Boys & Girls, Community Action Agencies, etc.).

Depending on your community, the format may include:

- Conversations with those on the brink of homelessness and unsheltered individuals;
- Discussion of any partnerships between municipal staff and nonprofit partners assisting in efforts to end homelessness; and
- An opportunity for residents to ask questions and propose or critique ideas.

The moderator should ideally be your municipal liaison for homeless or an individual versed in the principles of the "housing first" approach to homelessness, housing problem-solving (including shelter diversion), and how the Coordinated Access Network (CAN) system works in Connecticut, through training provided by the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness or through alternative training or experience. Ideally, share a meeting summary with your community's CAN and other stakeholders. **(5 points)**

Submit: Your completed worksheet and at least one additional piece of documentation related to the community conversation or forum, such as a promotional flyer, agenda, minutes presentations, sign-in sheets, photographs, recordings or press coverage, and ideally, the date on which you shared a summary of the conversation with your CAN and other stakeholders.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type

"Events, Meetings, Trainings" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim *New Action Credit* for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for *Rolling Credit* for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. For additional information, please see the Partners Guidance Document.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Key collaborators to implement this action include representatives from schools (including your municipality's liaison for homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act); Youth Services, Parks and Recreation, and/or Youth Service Bureau; police, hospital, and emergency medical services, and other municipal outreach staff; nursing homes and other elder and disability services liaisons; Department of Corrections liaisons; human services, community services, or social workers employed or funded by the municipality; your municipal health department or health district; library staff; municipal communications professionals; community centers; faith-based organizations; community residents, relevant local businesses, and nonprofit groups (e.g., YMCA/YWCA, Boys & Girls, etc., Food pantries, Community Action Agencies); and your local elected officials and other representatives from your municipality's governing board.

Benefits

Committing to ending homelessness signals to your municipality and its residents your commitment to lending a helping hand to residents in times of need. Sharing resources online and through a town hall format ensures that individuals experiencing homelessness know what resources are available to them. It also ensures that residents are aware of options available to them to make meaningful contributions to efforts to end homelessness.

For a complete list of funding opportunities, implementation resources, and success stories specific to this action, please visit the full Action write-up on the [Sustainable CT Actions webpage](#).