12.2 Increase Public Awareness and Support for Efforts to End Homelessness

5 Points | 10 Points | 20 Points | 25 Points | 30 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2025. The previous version of this action is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow.

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: **(20 points)**
    - 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.

    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 documentation that the resolution has been adopted (such as meeting minutes, a copy of the municipal zoning regulations with relevant portions highlighted, a link to municipal ordinances, or similar verification).
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. Examples might include local community organizations, local emergency funding sources, and known mutual aid networks. If there are emerging needs for resources to support groups experiencing homelessness, such as refugees and immigrants, seniors, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and BIPOC, and those with needs related to mental or behavioral health or substance use disorder, the website should include such information. **(5 points)**

    The information must include: a link to 211.

    The information should include:

- Contextual information for why an individual may might need to engage with 211, specific to emergency shelter, affordable housing, and housing insecurity;
- Additional information that 211 and local providers are part of a larger Coordinated Access Network system;
- Guidance for those experiencing homelessness, ideally including the 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.

Submit: A hyperlink and a screenshot of the webpage that includes the homelessness resources as described above.

3. Organize a community conversation or forums 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. Please see Appendix A for more detailed guidance about the community conversation or forum, including attendees and audience, formats and topics of discussion, and event moderation. The community conversation or forum must have been held in the last three years. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A brief overview of the community conversation or forum (suggested 5 sentences maximum), including target populations (if any) and topics discussed; date of event; and at least one example of educational materials disseminated, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

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. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. 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.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- State Funding Readiness Project

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Sustainable CT resolution template
- List of McKinney-Vento (LEA) Liaisons
- List of Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Providers
- Hamden Virtual Town Hall (model for community conversation)
- CDC, Interim Guidance on People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
- CT Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, DEMHS Regional Offices

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness
- United Way 211 Connecticut website
  - Mobile crisis intervention services for youth and adults
- Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Federal Communications Commission, Lifeline Support for Affordable Communications

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.

CT Success Stories

- Manchester - Oct 2022 Certification
- Winchester - Jun 2023 Certification
- New Haven - Sep 2023 Certification
- Barkhamsted - May 2024 Certification
- Deep River - Oct 2024 Certification
- Southbury - Oct 2024 Certification
- Vernon - May 2025 Certification