

Council on Homelessness

2014 Report



Submitted June 2014 to:

Governor Rick Scott

Senate President Don Gaetz

House Speaker Will Weatherford

Council on Homelessness

Department of Children and Families

1317 Winewood Boulevard

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

850-922-4691

www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/homelessness

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**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Rick Scott
Governor

Mike Carroll
Interim Secretary

June 17, 2014

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor
PL-05 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Governor Scott:

On behalf of the Florida Council on Homelessness and its multiple state agency partners, I submit the Council on Homelessness Annual Report for your consideration.

In accordance with state law, the Council has prepared recommendations for reducing homelessness in our state. The report also summarizes the extent of homelessness and characteristics of the men, women and children who do not have their own home.

I want to thank the members of the Council for taking on this responsibility and working diligently to study the issue and identify targeted solutions. Their efforts are making a difference in helping us understand the challenges.

Your work to improve the state's economy and create more jobs has had a very real impact. While obtaining an accurate count of the homeless can be challenging, this year's annual count found a decrease of 4.87 percent over the previous year and a 28.42 percent decrease from four years ago.

But we cannot forget that homelessness affects real people. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reports homelessness among families with children is the fastest-growing homeless population in the nation.

The recommendations in this report are designed to build upon and expand the success Florida has achieved in recent years. The Council encourages several potential solutions, from providing flexible funding to supporting local initiatives to help households with extremely low incomes. The Council also emphasizes the need to continue increasing the supply of affordable housing for our homeless neighbors.

There is no doubt that effective public-private collaboration at state and local levels, combined with strong community participation, is key to solving homelessness; as is breaking down the barriers to talking about it. I congratulate this Council on their work to do just that, and we appreciate your continued support of these efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Carroll", is written over a white background.

Mike Carroll
Interim Secretary

1317 Winewood Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700

Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

Executive Summary

Implementing what is now a national best practice, in 2001 Florida created an inter-agency Council on Homelessness; the purpose of which is to develop recommendations for state leadership on how to reduce homelessness throughout the state.

In accordance with section 420.622(9), Florida Statutes, the Council on Homelessness submits its annual report to the Governor and Florida Legislature summarizing recommended actions to reduce homelessness, plus data concerning those persons currently experiencing homelessness in Florida.

In 2013, the Council made the following recommendations: fund affordable housing, support local homeless continuums of care, provide flexible funding to help communities address homelessness and conduct a pilot to gather Florida-specific data.

The Governor, the legislature and state agencies acted upon these recommendations. For the first time in several years, a majority of the state's affordable housing trust fund dollars were allocated to the production of affordable housing. The Council recommends that this will continue in 2015, with an increased emphasis on the housing needs of Extremely Low-Income and Special Needs households.

The legislature also appropriated \$1,000,000 to support local homeless continuums of care; this is in addition to the recurring \$2,000,000 already funded. It is the Council's recommendation that the state will continue to support the local homeless continuums of care tasked with leading their community's efforts to end homelessness.

Additionally, the legislature appropriated \$4,000,000 to fund Challenge Grants, flexible grants designed to support local efforts to reduce homelessness. The Council recommends that the state will continue this much needed support.

And Florida Housing Finance Corporation initiated a pilot project to conduct a Florida-specific analysis of the benefits of providing permanent supportive housing to high utilizers of crisis services. The Council hopes the Governor and legislature will support this effort; essential to continued sound public policy development.

This year the Council also hopes the state will support efforts to conduct an awareness campaign to increase understanding of homelessness and how to reduce the number of persons experiencing it.

Florida is making progress in reducing the number of persons experiencing homelessness. This is partially due to improved economic conditions. It is also due to local efforts, supported by the state. However, there is still work to be done to make Florida a leading state in addressing the needs of our homeless population.

On one day and one night in January 2014, local communities counted 41,335 persons who were living on the street or in an emergency shelter. This data covers 25 counties and all 28 homeless continuum of care planning areas. Sixteen counties did not conduct a count of homeless people due to the lack of resources to do the count.

Nationally, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reports homelessness amongst families with children as the fastest growing homeless population. This is also true for Florida. For school year 2012-2013, Florida's public schools identified 70,215 students as homeless. This includes families that have lost their housing and are staying with family and friends.

The Council on Homelessness submits its recommendations for state action to reduce the number of Floridians who are without a home. These inter-related recommendations focus on:

- Meeting the housing needs of households with Extremely Low Incomes, especially those with a disability or other special need;
- Continuing support of community agencies which lead the homeless continuum of care planning process;
- Providing flexible funding to support local initiatives to help persons exit homelessness; supporting a state pilot conducting a cost benefit analysis of providing affordable housing linked with support services for high utilizers of crisis services; and
- Educating Floridians about how to reduce the number of homeless neighbors in their communities.

SECTION 1

Recommendations to Reduce Homelessness

The Council on Homelessness submits five recommendations of critical actions the state can undertake to enable communities across Florida to reduce the number of persons experiencing homelessness.

RECOMMENDATION ONE

Create and Preserve Housing for Extremely Low Incomes, especially Homeless Households and Persons with Special Needs

In the 2014 Florida Legislative Session, the legislature recognized the importance of utilizing Affordable Housing Trust Fund resources to fund affordable housing. \$67,600,000 was appropriated to the State Apartment Incentive Loan Program (SAIL), which funds affordable rental housing; 5-10% of the rental units produced must be targeted to persons with a disabling condition. \$10,000,000 of this allocation was restricted to projects serving persons with a developmental disability. An additional \$100,000,000 was appropriated to the State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP), which is distributed to local communities to fund affordable housing. Communities must use 20% of this allocation to assist persons with a Special Need, with a priority for home modifications for persons with a developmental disability. The remainder of the affordable housing trust fund dollars, \$106,151,367, were swept into general revenue for other purposes.

The Council recommends utilizing all Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust fund resources for affordable housing, with an increased focus on the housing needs of Extremely Low-Income, Homeless and Special Needs households.

Persons with Special Needs as defined in Section 420.0004(13), Florida Statutes, means an adult person requiring independent living services in order to maintain housing or develop independent living skills and who has a disabling condition; a young adult formerly in foster care who is eligible for services under s. 409.1451(5); a survivor of domestic violence as defined in s. 741.28; or a person receiving benefits under the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program or from veterans' disability benefits.

In state fiscal year 2013-14, Florida Housing Finance Corporation, through competitive application cycles, selected eleven Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) developments for funding. These eleven PSH developments account for a total of 367 rental units that will be developed to serve extremely low and low-income homeless individuals and/or families*. The unit breakdown is:

- 97 permanent supportive housing units in rental developments of 15 units or less to be financed with grant funding appropriated by the 2013 Legislature;
- 148 permanent supportive housing units to serve at risk and homeless veterans with disabling conditions with federal low-income housing tax credits and state funding;
- 122 permanent supportive housing units in Jacksonville, Miami-Dade and St. Petersburg to serve persons with disabling conditions that lack permanent and stable housing and have been identified by their communities as being high utilizers of emergency, shelter and institutional services. These 3 developments will be part of private/public

partnerships to study the costs and benefits of serving these vulnerable adults in permanent supportive housing tied to community-based services that are appropriate to meet the intended residents' needs. These developments will be financed with the assistance of state SAIL funding and ELI supplemental funding.

Another 646 rental units in existing affordable rental housing developments were awarded financing to update the property and units and to preserve units that have project-based federal rental assistance subsidies*. Most, if not all, of the units in the developments selected have long term rental assistance for extremely low-income households tied to them. If not preserved and updated, these developments are at risk of being sold or repurposed, resulting in the permanent loss of the federal rental assistance subsidies and displacement of the residents.

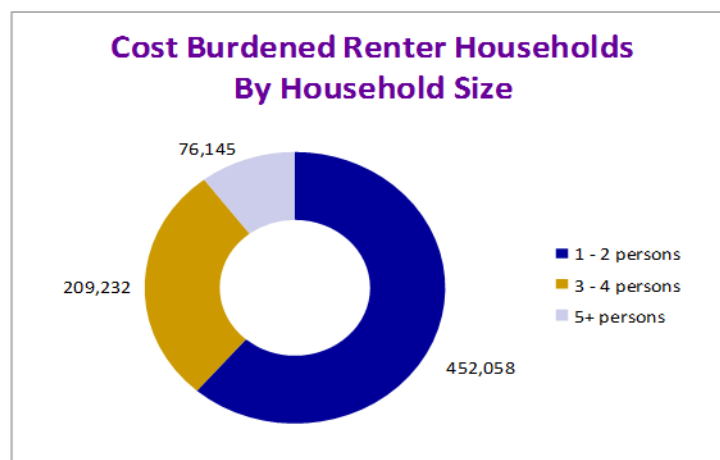
In addition to the permanent supportive housing and preservation units, a total of 562 units will be set aside for extremely low-income households that are integrated into mixed-income affordable housing developments that were selected for financing in state fiscal year 2013-14*. These mixed-income developments will serve families, elders, and/or persons with developmental disabilities through a variety of financing resources including federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, state housing funds, private loans and foundation grants.

**The number of units may change as the selected applicants, at the date of this report, are in the financing credit underwriting and closing phases of the development*

Rationale

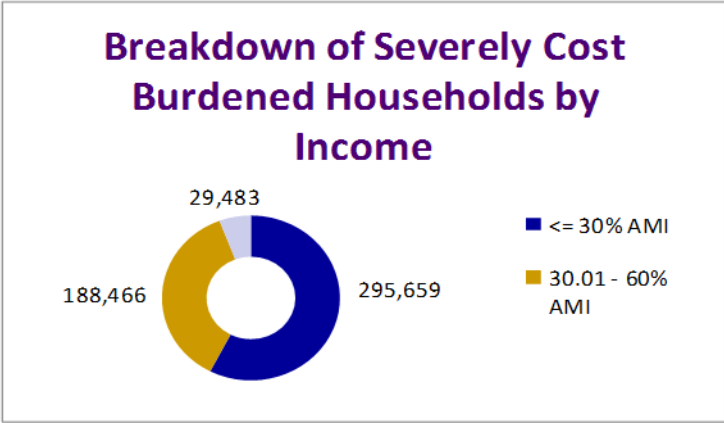
According to *2013 Rental Market Study: Affordable Housing Need* produced by the University of Florida's Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, between 2005 and 2011 the number of renter households in Florida grew by 10%, while the number of homeowners dropped 3%. This is happening at a time when rents are increasing and incomes are decreasing. Between 2000 and 2011, "In real terms... the statewide median rent increased from \$816 to \$950, while the median renter income fell from \$34,000 to \$30,343." (*2013 Rental Market Study*).

In Florida, 737,435 renter households are Cost Burdened, paying more than 40% of household income for housing; 61% are households with 1-2 persons (*2013 Rental Market Study*).



The need is greatest among Extremely Low Income households (“ELI”, earning 30% or less of the area median income); persons with special needs and persons experiencing homelessness. (2013 Rental Market Study)

513,608 renter households in Florida are Severely Cost Burdened, paying more than 60% of their income for housing; 58% are ELI.

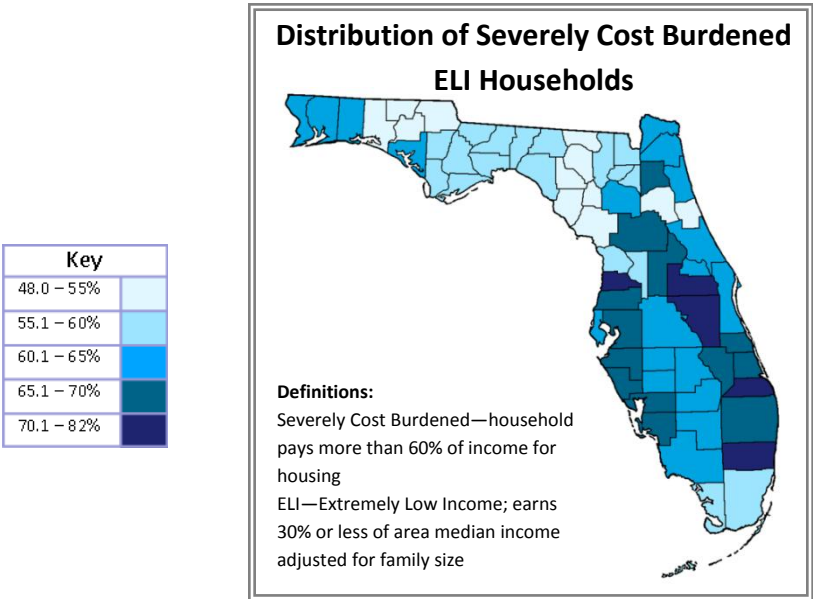


Of Florida’s 457,677 ELI renter households; 64.6% are Severely Cost Burdened, paying more than 60% of their income for housing. This leaves each household with limited resources to afford essentials such as food, medication, clothing and transportation.

Demonstration of Severe Cost Burden

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
ELI Monthly Income:	\$ 1,120	\$ 1,280	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,730	\$ 1,858
Housing Cost @ 60%:	\$ 672	\$ 768	\$ 864	\$ 960	\$ 1,038	\$ 1,115
Remaining Household Income:	\$ 448	\$ 512	\$ 576	\$ 640	\$ 692	\$ 743

The need for affordable rental housing for ELI households exists throughout the state.



In addition to cost burdened ELI renter households, whose financial situation puts them at grave risk of homelessness, there are households that are experiencing homelessness and persons with special needs households in need of affordable rental housing, including supportive housing.

The 2014 Point-In-Time survey reports from the local continuums of care indicate that 41,335 persons met the HUD definition of homeless in Florida on a given day in January 2014. The Florida Department of Education reports that 70,215 public school students were homeless in Florida in the 2012-2013 school year.

In addition to persons experiencing homelessness, Florida has a large number of special needs households in need of an affordable place to live.

- 93,438 low income (earning 60% or less of area median income) cost burdened renter households (paying more than 40% of income on housing) with at least one member of the household that is either i) aged 18-64, has a disability and is receiving Social Security; ii) is aged 18 or older, has a disability and is receiving Supplemental Security Income; or iii) is aged 18 or older with a Veterans Administration service-related disability rating of 10% or more.
- 8,419 survivors of domestic violence households, based upon total number of persons using domestic violence emergency shelters.
- 5,052 youth aging out of the foster care system, aged 18-22 and eligible for the Road to Independence stipend.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

Sustain Ongoing Funding for Local Homeless Continuums of Care

In the 2014 Legislative Session, the Legislature recognized the importance of ensuring adequate capacity among the local homeless continuums of care. \$1,000,000 in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided to the Florida Coalition for the Homeless for distribution to the local homeless continuums of care throughout the state; this is in addition to the existing \$2,000,000 in recurring funding provided to the continuums.

The Council recommends continued support for local homeless continuums of care sufficient to ensure continued abilities to secure essential federal resources targeted to reduce homelessness. Funding used to provide adequate staffing and office resources, including covering the expenses operating an office, along with providing proper resources to comply with HUD's request for the Point-in-Time surveys.

Rationale

Continued state financial assistance is essential to helping community partners carry out federally required planning, data collection, program coordination and grant writing necessary to successfully compete for significant grant funding to house persons experiencing homelessness.

Each year the federal government appropriates resources to community agencies to reduce homelessness. These community organizations have secured more than \$300 million in federal, local and private financing for community services and housing in Florida. In 2012, they brought nearly \$80 million in federal grants to Florida.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

Support State Funding for Community Efforts to Reduce Homelessness

In the 2014 Legislative Session, the Legislature recognized the importance of ensuring adequate capacity among the local homeless continuums of care. Nonrecurring funds of \$4,000,000 from the affordable housing trust fund were appropriated to fund Challenge Grants, flexible grants supporting local efforts to reduce homelessness.

Continue to provide flexible sources of state financial aid to local Continuums of Care through Challenge Grants. Funding used to help end or prevent homelessness through rental and utility assistance, increase number of beds for emergency shelters, provide drop in centers, along with providing the resources to quickly obtain legal identification to enable unemployed homeless to secure employment.

Rationale

Communities need resources to reduce and eliminate homelessness. Each community has differing needs and priorities. The communities should be provided flexible state support, which they can utilize to best meet their identified priorities.

Such funding can be an essential source of cash match for federal and private grants. The funding should be flexible so as to address a broad array of needs including housing, education, job training and placement, health services, childcare and other support services. Use of the aid should be consistent with the community's homeless service plan.

A flexible funding source can enable communities to pilot best practices, and new service delivery models that might otherwise not be possible. Future state funding can also fill gaps in local service budgets, should federal grant in aid dollars be cut in coming budget plans.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

Support the State Pilot to Study the Cost and Quality of Life Benefits of Supportive Housing for Persons with Significant Needs that Lack Permanent and Stable Housing

This recommendation is a follow-up to the Council's 2013 Recommendation to *Prioritize a State Pilot to Provide Florida-specific Data*. In March 2013, Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) initiated a state pilot to finance the development of three permanent supportive housing projects to serve chronically homeless persons with significant needs who are high utilizers of publicly funded emergency, crisis and institutional resources because they lack permanent housing that are linked to appropriate community-based services. A priority objective of this pilot is to study the benefits of permanent supportive housing in relation to cost-savings to the public across multiple provider systems, as well as quality of life benefits. In part, Florida Housing prioritized funding this pilot to support the Council's 2013 recommendation. The Council recommends that Florida's Governor, Legislature and State Agencies continue to support the pilot's intent and efforts as it is being implemented.

Rationale

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation, state agencies and this Council have been evaluating best practices in targeting and integrating affordable housing and community-based services to high needs/high cost adults with disabilities and frail elders who are chronically homeless on the street or in homeless shelters. As a result, these persons often cycle in and out of residential care or institutional settings because of their lack of stability in the community and are often high utilizers of crisis services, such as emergency rooms and

jails. Permanent supportive housing, which integrates affordable housing with access to community-based services, has been demonstrated nationally to be a cost effective way to provide supports for these individuals, as well as to improve the quality of lives and stability of persons with histories of being chronically homeless. Comprehensive cost-benefits studies have been conducted in other states, but Florida lacks state-specific data to assist in policymaking regarding the benefits of permanent supportive housing to Florida's communities and citizens. At the state level, the Corporation and our partner state agencies concurred that Florida should pursue a pilot to develop Permanent Supportive Housing, targeting High Needs/High Cost populations that incorporate a state-specific analysis to evaluate whether cost savings at the local, state and federal level are also possible in Florida.

Florida Housing was appropriated \$10 million by the 2012 Legislature to finance the development of affordable, sustainable and permanent housing for special needs and extremely low income households, as defined in Section 420.0004, Florida Statutes. This funding became available for distribution in July, 2013. Florida Housing determined the funding would be used to provide forgivable loans to non-profit organization for the development of up to three permanent supportive housing projects across Florida for the purpose of studying the cost and quality of life benefits of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless persons with significant needs. This determination meets Florida Housing strategic plan and was made following input from relevant State agencies, the Council, as well as homeless, disability, local government, and supportive housing stakeholders.

In March 2014, Florida Housing selected three permanent supportive housing developments to fund through a competitive application. The forgivable loans are to finance the construction and operations of each development. The permanent supportive housing developments will be located in Jacksonville, St. Petersburg and Miami-Dade. The non-profit awardees are required to incorporate a multi-year study evaluating the ability of Permanent Supportive Housing linked with coordinated local and state public-private partnerships to reduce public expenditures and improve personal outcomes for High Needs/High Cost Chronically Homeless persons. Florida Housing and relevant state agencies, including the Agency for Health Care Administration, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Elder Affairs and the Department of Veterans Affairs plan to conduct interagency meetings for the purposes of providing guidance and technical assistance to support the effective implementation of the pilot's objectives.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE

Support Funding for an Awareness Campaign to End Homelessness in Florida

Support an awareness campaign to increase Floridians' understanding of the causes and impacts of homeless, includes effective ways to prevent and end homelessness. Identify a funding source (federal, state and/or private foundation) to develop and implement the campaign.

Rationale

Homelessness is more than a word to describe a social issue. It is a state which degrades individuals and harms society. It affects real people, including families, children, veterans, foster youth, adults with disabilities, and the elderly. Many families with extremely low incomes live on the verge of homelessness every day. One missed paycheck, or a costly medical bill, can mean the difference between sleeping under a roof, or in a car.

Homelessness also affects local economies. It creates a higher demand for public services, including health care, law enforcement, substance abuse and mental health programs, and social services. Rather than focusing on jobs and education, homeless individuals must focus their time finding a place to sleep.

Increasing the public's awareness to the issues surrounding homelessness, and successful strategies to end and prevent it, will serve to engage more people and organizations in being part of the solution to end homelessness in Florida.

Arthur's Story

People experiencing homelessness are all over the news, and it's easy to feel hopeless and discouraged about the overwhelming amount of need in every corner of the nation. And then a bright ray of meaningful progress shines from the gloomy prospect. That point of light is named Arthur.

"If I could tell people something about the homeless I would say that we're not all alcoholics and we're not all drug addicts. A lot of people living on the streets are there because they just got sick. We slipped through the cracks of the system," Arthur has said. Spend five minutes with Art and you will never forget him. Art brings a gregarious enthusiasm to everything he does.

"I worked, got sick, and then lost my place," Arthur told the outreach worker at the first meeting, "I worked for fifteen years in Hillsborough County driving a school bus and another ten at Lowe's." About 4 years ago, Arthur needed bypass surgery and was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and repeated blood clots. As his health declined, Arthur found himself unable to work, unable to walk, and unable to remain housed. Arthur was helpless and alone, and eventually found himself living on the streets; sick, sad, and confined to a wheelchair. But on a cold, December night, Arthur met an outreach worker that did care and the rest, as they say, is history. The worker took Arthur to a disabled-accessible hotel and then the real work began.

Working together can often work miracles and Arthur is a living example of that concept. The Volusia/Flagler County Coalition for the Homeless took the lead and began the process of getting Arthur housed in a safe and stable place that this wonderful man could call his own.



A three-pronged coordinated approach was put into action:

1. Getting Arthur medically sound
2. Streamlining the process for SSI/SSDI
3. Finding permanent supportive housing

Arthur's case was managed through a coalition of the best and the brightest the local area had to offer. Medical records through Halifax Hospital were obtained, medical transport was arranged when available and the outreach person's own vehicle when needed. The Coalition's Executive Director, Lisa Hamilton, worked vigorously with Flagler Counties Human Services angel, Janet Nickels, to get Arthur the help he so desperately needed. Arthur wanted to live in Flagler County where prevention funds and a primary care doctor where offered gladly. As Arthur began to climb out of the darkness of the streets, his spirits began to rise exponentially.

"Most of the people on the street don't have anyone. We end up with no one when we become homeless and you think that no one cares no one worries about you and no one's willing to listen to what goes on in your life... what problems you have. "

Arthur's eyes begin to tear up as his gratitude begins to pour out. "Then I meet people like Lisa and Janet and the outreach folks that are willing to give up their time to help a nobody like me," Arthur said choking back his words ... "They made me feel like a somebody again."

Most importantly, Arthur finally found his miracle... a place to call home.

SECTION 2

Homeless Conditions in Florida

Point-in-Time Counts – 2014

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that the homeless continuums of care conduct an annual count of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe havens on a single night during the last ten days of January. Further, HUD requires that the continuums of care also must conduct a count of the unsheltered homeless population every other year, required on odd numbered years. For 2014, the state's 28 homeless continuums of care carried out both the sheltered and unsheltered counts as required.

The goal is to produce an unduplicated count, or statistically reliable estimate of the homeless in the community.

Who is counted as Homeless?

The intent is to identify those men, women and children who meet HUD's definition of a homeless person. This is limited to:

- (1) Those living in a publicly or privately operated shelter providing temporary living arrangements;
- (2) Those persons whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not intended to be used as an accommodation for human beings, such as: a car, park, abandoned building or campground;
- (3) A person who is exiting from an institution, where he or she lived for 90 days or less, and who was otherwise homeless immediately prior to entering that institution;
- (4) A person who is fleeing from a domestic violence situation;
- (5) A person who will lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days, where no subsequent dwelling has been found and the individual lacks the resources to obtain permanent housing.

Who is not counted as homeless?

- Persons residing in permanent supportive housing programs, such as rental assistance vouchers;
- Persons living in emergency shelters and temporary housing that is not dedicated to serving the homeless, such as alcohol detox centers;
- Individuals and families temporarily staying with family or friends due to the loss of their own housing or economic reasons (doubled up or sofa surfing).
- Persons living in permanent housing with assistance from a government program.

The count is undertaken on a single day and night. The federally approved methods include a report of all homeless persons counted, or a statistically valid sampling to arrive at the

unduplicated estimate of the homeless. The unsheltered count methods typically are street counts, street counts with interviews, or screening and interviewing persons at supportive service agencies, such as soup kitchens where the homeless seek help.

Conducting the point-in-time counts is challenging, and requires many volunteers. The continuums of care continue to make remarkable success in compiling the one-day counts. Even so, the results can be influenced by many factors, some of which are outside the control of the local continuum. As a result, year-to-year comparisons at the community level can be misleading, especially if the observed trends are due to differing strategies used to undertake the count.

2014 One Day and Night Count Results

For the 28 continuum of care planning areas reporting, the total number of homeless persons in 2014 was 41,335 compared to 43,455 persons in 2013. The 2014 count reflects a decrease of 2,120 homeless persons, a drop of 4.87% statewide.

The number of homeless persons by county reflects differing trends. In 25 of the counties, the homeless population decreased from 2013. Sixteen rural county areas did not have point in time count conducted in 2014.

In reporting their count results, the lead agencies identified a number of factors that impacted the totals, both up and down.

Factors Cited as Contributing to a Decreased Number of Homeless

- Successful programs implemented in the county over past two years;
- Stricter enforcement of trespass ordinances made the street homeless less visible, and harder to find and count;
- Changes in the method used for the count contributed to a lower count, and more reliable count numbers;
- Adjusting count results to ensure that only those who are literally homeless are reported, resulting in decreases particularly by eliminating school age children and other homeless who are in jail.
- Fewer emergency shelters that serve and target the homeless were identified in 2014 than prior years;
- The lack of service providers in rural counties made it harder to identify the homeless, and where to find them during the count;
- Change in federal instructions that limited shelter counts to only those facilities identified in the planning area's homeless housing inventory;
- Large emergency shelter provider in area did not report their homeless service data for night of the count;
- The continuum of care had fewer dollars, and volunteers available to carry out their street count;

- More permanent supportive housing beds available in 2014 to serve the homeless, whereby those housed are no longer counted as homeless;
- Good, warm and dry weather on day of count in some areas of Florida kept the street homeless out of cold night shelters, and made them harder to find.
- Better planning for the street count to identify encampments.
- Recruitment of more volunteers;
- Large increase in homeless families found;
- More transient homeless were found during the count as result of having homeless persons help do the street count;
- Shelter count up due to more beds available that serve homeless veterans;
- Better count system used in 2014, including more homeless persons involved in the street count effort.

Efforts to improve data quality, including developing consistent and better methodologies for conducting the point in time counts of the homeless, are needed, and are being called for by national homeless advocacy groups. Until those changes are made, the early caution is repeated – year-to-year comparisons at the community level can be misleading. Too many variables can cause widely different results.

TABLE 1
HOMELESS PEOPLE BY COUNTY

Source: 2014 Point-in-Time Count, Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness

County	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Alachua	1,381	1,596	879	1,034	1,034	1,745	1,516
Baker	0	N/C	12	2	N/C	N/C	No count
Bay	312	352	317	378	287	284	253
Bradford	67	78	5	39	36	50	No count
Brevard	1,899	1,207	1,221	1,889	1,907	1,567	1,567
Broward	5,218	4,154	4,154	3,801	3,801	2,820	2,738
Calhoun	N/C	N/C	N/C	1	1	1	No count
Charlotte	730	541	598	716	828	573	511
Citrus	293	297	405	502	507	243	188
Clay	25	N/C	7	113	244	35	102
Collier	321	329	401	390	390	375	361
Columbia	362	554	554	462	458	491	473
DeSoto	639	319	761	15	176	330	340
Dixie	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Duval	2,681	3,244	3,910	4,284	2,533	2,594	1,801
Escambia	791	713	713	549	572	830	862
Flagler	38	39	79	98	128	154	188
Franklin	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Gadsden	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Gilchrist	N/C	N/C	1	6	32	0	No count
Glades	172	220	220	N/C	N/C	N/C	96
Gulf	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	2
Hamilton	81	123	343	103	103	107	102
Hardee	835	1,410	1,410	104	17	61	124
Hendry	422	727	727	16	N/C	N/C	138
Hernando	196	185	136	148	209	147	77
Highlands	912	1,782	1,782	105	55	215	495
Hillsborough	9,532	7,473	7,473	7,336	7,336	*	2,291
Holmes	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	2	No count
Indian River	462	662	648	606	774	837	1,048
Jackson	3	N/C	11	34	34	14	13
Jefferson	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Lafayette	44	69	69	57	58	63	60
Lake	518	491	796	1,008	1,019	282	187
Lee	899	931	1,041	1,054	969	848	871

County	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Leon	430	437	437	683	783	1,072	805
Levy	99	115	15	0	98	13	No count
Liberty	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Madison	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Manatee	472	558	528	528	612	820	494
Marion	458	678	356	941	1,032	530	918
Martin	507	211	517	306	314	486	567
Miami-Dade	4,574	4,333	3,832	3,777	3,817	3,734	4,156
Monroe	1,121	1,040	1,040	926	904	658	678
Nassau	111	N/C	61	165	84	138	93
Okaloosa	1,752	2,361	1,842	2,145	1,962	1,108	904
Okeechobee	112	383	383	32	190	78	158
Orange	1,962	1,279	1,494	2,872	2,281	2,937	1,701
Osceola	573	374	443	833	722	599	278
Palm Beach	1,766	2,147	2,147	2,148	2,148	1,543	1,543
Pasco	4,074	4,527	4,527	4,442	4,502	3,305	3,305
Pinellas	4,680	4,163	3,948	3,890	3,971	3,913	3,391
Polk	973	820	820	1,095	1,100	404	536
Putnam	789	911	288	141	164	89	49
St. Johns	1,238	1,237	1,237	1,386	1,391	1,437	1,401
St. Lucie	964	788	995	771	636	915	976
Santa Rosa	237	317	317	72	70	151	N/C
Sarasota	662	787	787	787	890	1,234	891
Seminole	561	368	397	810	658	842	275
Sumter	97	52	48	57	77	37	59
Suwannee	220	343	123	280	284	318	308
Taylor	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	14	6	No count
Union	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Volusia	1,763	1,874	2,076	2,215	2,276	1,967	1,445
Wakulla	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Walton	N/C	85	420	619	484	453	Okaloosa- Walton combined
Washington	6	3	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	No count
Totals	59,034	57,687	57,751	56,771	54,972	43,455	41,335

"Homeless people" means those living on the street, or staying in emergency housing.

The count covers those identified during one 24-hour period of time. The number of homeless people may be higher, but 16 counties do not have the resources to participate in the count.

Section 3

Homeless Population Characteristics

The 28 local continuum of care planning agencies have reported the following information on the make-up of the homeless population in Florida. They captured this information from direct interviews or from agency data on homeless persons served as entered into the Homeless Management Information System [HMIS]. The 2014 data is compared to 2013 data.

Gender

Men made up the majority of the homeless persons. Of 30,552 persons surveyed in 2014, 19,988 were men (65%). The data for 2014 remains consistent with last year's results.

Gender		
Year	Men	Women
2013	67%	33%
2014	65%	35%

Age

The age ranges of the 2014 homeless population were reported as follows:

Age			
Age Ranges	Number of Persons	2014 %	2013 %
Under 18	5,794	18.6%	17.8%
18 – 24	2,736	8.8%	7.7%
24 – 60	20,128	64.8%	65.3%
Over 60	2,418	7.9%	7.2%
Total	31,076		

These results are consistent with the focus of the count – those persons living in shelters or staying on the streets. Families with children are more likely to be sharing the housing of others, and are not allowed to be included in the federal counts, due to this living arrangement.

Ethnicity

In 2014, 3,384 homeless persons out of 32,181 responding to the survey, indicated that they were either Hispanic or Latino. At 10.5% of the homeless population, this is down from the 2013 level of 12.1%.

Race

The reported race of the homeless population reflects more White and Black/African Americans than other races.

Population Category	2014 Number	2014 Percentage	2013 Percentage
American Indian/Alaskan	339	1.0%	1.5%
Asian	116	0.3%	0.4%
Black/African American	10,957	34.0%	36.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	95	0.3%	0.4%
White	17,611	54.3%	61.2%
Total	32,407		

Household Type

The great majority, 20,633, of the unsheltered and sheltered homeless population are single adults or households without children. For 2014, the breakdown of the homeless by household type was reported as follows:

Household Type	Number responding	% of Total
One adult and one child	3,243	13.1
No children in household	20,633	83.4%
Only children in household	874	0.4%
Total	24,750	

Military Veterans

Of the homeless persons responding to the question on active duty in the U.S. military, 14.1% indicated that they were veterans. This is down from the 2013 level of 16.1%, possibly due to the Veterans Affairs increased focus on resources like the HUD/VASH rent vouchers targeted to homeless veterans.

Military Veterans				
Served/Active Duty	2014 numbers	2014 Percentage	2013 Numbers	2013 Percentage
Yes	3,974	14.0%	4,915	16.1%
No	24,139	86.0%	25,616	83.9%
Total	28,113		30,531	

Disabling Conditions

The breakdown by type of disability indicates once again that the greatest issues are substance abuse and mental illness. In the survey, respondents may report more than one disabling condition.

Disabling Condition			
Condition	2014 Number	2014 Percentage	2013 Percentage
Physical	3,677	26.1%	28.0%
Substance Abuse	5,063	37.1%	49.2%
Mental Illness	4,055	29.8%	40.2%
HIV/AIDS	454	3.3%	5.0%
Developmental	378	2.3%	4.0%
Total	13,627		

Foster Care History

In asking whether the homeless individual had been in foster care, 1,398 persons out of the 19,823 responding to the question indicated that they had been in foster care. This figure represents 7.1% of the respondents.

Causes and Length of Time Homeless

The data collected upon entry to shelters seeks to identify the major causes contributing to a person becoming homeless, how long they have been homeless as of the day of the count, whether the person has had previous episodes of homelessness, and how long the person has lived in the community before becoming homeless. The 2014 survey results follow.

Causes of Homelessness			
Cause	2014 Number	2014 %	2013%
Employment/Financial	9,105	48.0%	49.0%
Medical/Disability	3,267	17.2%	14.9%
Family Problems	3,268	17.2%	11.7%
Forced to relocate	3,054	16.1%	14.1%
Recent Immigration	95	0.5%	0.6%
Natural Disaster	222	1.2%	1.4%

Number of Times Homeless			
Times	2014 Number	2014 %	2013 %
No prior/First time	2,622	14.3%	27.3%
One prior episode	5,836	32.2%	25.3%
Two or three prior episodes	5,439	30.0%	22.8%
Four or more prior episodes	4,327	24.0%	19.9%
Total	18,224		

Length of Time in Community Before Becoming Homeless			
Length of Time	2014 Number	2014 Percentage	2013 Percentage
Less than one week	2,023	10.9%	4.52%
1 to 4 weeks	1,162	6.3%	4.73%
1 to 3 months	1,379	7.4%	10.23%
3 to 12 months	2,466	13.3%	15.73%
More than 1 year	11,559	62.2%	58.71%
Total	18,589		

[Source: Lead Agency Survey of 2014 Point-in-Time Count, May 2014, Department of Children and Families.]

Section 4

Homeless Students in Florida

Broader Definition of Homelessness

The school districts in our state capture and report to the Florida Department of Education, the number of students identified as homeless during the school year. By Federal law, the public schools use the expanded definition of homeless individuals to include those children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including those who are:

1. Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, and camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative housing;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care placement;
5. Living in a public or private place not designed for or used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings to live;
6. Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations; substandard housing or similar setting; and
7. Migratory children living in any of the above circumstances.

During the 2012-2013 school year, the Florida school districts identified 70,215 children and youth who were homeless. This is a 10% increase from 2011-2012. Of those identified, 6,658 (9%) were “unaccompanied youth.” An “unaccompanied youth” is defined as one who is not in physical custody of a parent or guardian. The majority, 52,673 (75%) were reported as homeless and temporarily sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of their housing or economic hardship; a one percent increase from the previous school year.

Homeless Students Reported in Florida Public Schools

School Year	Homeless Students	Change
2008 - 2009	41,286	+20%
2009 - 2010	49,112	+19%
2010 - 2011	56,680	+15%
2011 - 2012	63,685	+12%
2012 - 2013	70,215	+10%

Source: 2008-2013 Survey 5 Student Demographic Format and Federal State Indicator Format. Florida Department of Education, Automated Student Database System.

Table 2
Homeless Students Reported in Florida Public Schools by Florida County

DISTRICT NAME	2008-2009 HOMELESS	2009-2010 HOMELESS	2010-2011 HOMELESS	2011-2012 HOMELESS	2012-2013 HOMELESS
Alachua	707	446	594	632	551
Baker	153	191	249	304	262
Bay	700	641	1,175	1,477	1,626
Bradford	<11	122	154	215	143
Brevard	478	965	1,165	1,350	1,645
Broward	1,807	2953	2,101	2,158	2,185
Calhoun	12	47	58	84	57
Charlotte	376	441	495	488	493
Citrus	483	371	323	328	303
Clay	816	824	741	862	1,379
Collier	814	1360	1,407	1,281	1,123
Columbia	423	380	403	567	578
Dade	2,581	4268	4,406	5,773	6,475
Desoto	193	223	225	278	367
Dixie	12	60	48	31	29
Duval	2,144	947	1,169	1,422	1,896
Escambia	1,036	1237	1,091	1,423	1,621
Flagler	166	246	322	367	517
Franklin	140	126	160	205	230
Gadsden	689	713	533	556	586
Gilchrist	<11	27	20	17	<11
Glades	<11	18	34	26	17
Gulf	<11	<11	<11	<11	35
Hamilton	251	342	326	343	218
Hardee	49	146	188	183	128
Hendry	74	139	156	200	195
Hernando	207	242	497	645	521
Highlands	37	61	92	429	385
Hillsborough	2,054	3124	3,659	3,559	3,170
Holmes	<11	24	62	90	96
Indian River	349	347	311	273	278
Jackson	182	119	158	177	152
Jefferson	<11	<11	<11	<11	<11
Lafayette	105	141	196	195	217
Lake	778	2162	2,992	3,541	2,908
Lake Wales Charter	N/A	N/A	N/A	136	187
Lee	1,030	1143	1,282	1,392	1,446
Leon	329	523	762	650	470
Levy	114	263	182	128	217
Liberty	23	22	21	41	52
Madison	89	57	74	103	263

DISTRICT NAME	2008-2009 HOMELESS	2009-2010 HOMELESS	2010-2011 HOMELESS	2011-2012 HOMELESS	2012-2013 HOMELESS
Manatee	1,770	1684	1,788	1,641	1,791
Marion	1,675	1691	1,911	2,223	2,421
Martin	48	68	80	115	125
Monroe	317	298	328	343	343
Nassau	54	145	230	210	331
Okaloosa	335	482	404	573	538
Okeechobee	130	203	318	396	495
Orange	2,467	1324	3,887	4,844	7,234
Osceola	1,251	1364	1,923	2,825	3,156
Palm Beach	1,339	1960	1,443	1,636	3,107
Pasco	1,815	2093	2,230	1,997	1,904
Pinellas	1,870	2462	2,915	3,085	3,076
Polk	2,024	2219	2,446	2,304	2,547
Putnam	623	720	736	885	734
St. Johns	149	344	493	584	679
St. Lucie	72	222	348	324	466
Santa Rosa	943	1328	1,467	1,651	1,703
Sarasota	1,006	872	1,229	877	917
Seminole	1,008	1322	1,697	1,865	2,235
Sumter	105	124	48	155	156
Suwannee	387	322	315	346	344
Taylor	101	73	89	96	88
Union	51	121	148	157	124
Volusia	1,973	1889	2,016	2,228	2,195
Wakulla	283	108	56	99	56
Walton	36	40	114	175	230
Washington	22	165	168	79	121
School for Deaf and Blind	0	0	0	<11	14
FL Virtual School	0	0	0	<11	38
FAU – Lab School	0	0	<11	<11	<11
FSU – Lab School	0	0	<11	<11	<11
FAMU – Lab School	0	0	0	11	<11
TOTALS	41,255	49,104	56,658	63,685	70,215

Note: <11 means that fewer than eleven students were identified; counts of one to ten students are identified as <11.

N/A means not applicable.

Source: 2008-2013 Survey 5 Student Demographic Format and Federal State Indicator Format, Florida Department of Education, Automated Student Database System.

Section 5

Continuum of Care Planning and Funding

What is a homeless continuum of care plan?

The local homeless assistance continuum of care plan is intended to be a framework for a comprehensive and seamless array of emergency, transitional, and permanent housing and services to address the various needs of homeless persons, as well as those at risk of becoming homeless. [Section 420.624, Florida Statutes]

This locally driven plan reflects the community's vision for solutions to its specific homeless needs. This planning is required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be eligible to apply for and compete for federal grants to develop and operate housing for the homeless.

The continuum of care plan outlines the strategies and actions planned at the community level to accomplish the federal goal for reducing and ending homelessness. Each continuum of care plan serves a specific geographical area, and the local planning effort shall identify an agency to lead this planning. These lead agencies are local homeless continuums of care, units of local government or other private nonprofit entities.

Florida's Planning Effort

In 2014, there are 28 local continuum of care planning areas covering 64 of the 67 counties. The present planning areas are depicted on the map on page 26, which also identifies the agency leading the homeless plan. The three counties that have elected not to be part of planning are Baker, Union and Dixie.

Return on the Planning Investment

The state's continuum of care areas have become very successful in competing for and receiving housing grants from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, to create transitional and permanent housing for the homeless. In the most recent grant cycle, (FY2013), the 28 continuums of care have received grant awards totaling \$72,724,924. This helps to fund over 327 local projects in Florida. The growth in grant funding being secured to help serve Florida's homeless is reflected in the following table of awards.

Year	Continuum of Care Awards
2001	\$48,692,766
2002	\$41,239,338
2003	\$51,396,280
2004	\$59,060,266
2005	\$58,053,746
2006	\$56,269,722
2007	\$62,693,380
2008	\$67,181,336
2009	\$73,836,367
2010	\$77,739,489
2011	\$78,767,112
2012	\$78,554,056
2013	\$82,932,029

The total awards for 2013 cover both grant renewals and new projects. A breakdown of the grants by each of the planning areas for 2012 and 2013 follows:

**HUD Continuum of Care Awards
By Florida Planning Areas
2012 and 2013**

Continuum of Care	2012 Award	2013 Award
Suncoast	\$722,807	\$800,833
Hillsborough	5,188,111	5,782,271
Pinellas	3,555,027	3,792,806
Polk	388,551	704,421
Lakeland	1,266,347	989,191
Volusia/Flagler	1,341,868	1,406,249
Okaloosa/Walton	61,853	621,146
Big Bend	1,204,042	1,309,174
Central FL	5,885,637	6,004,072
North Central	637,364	646,153
Treasure Coast	1,279,080	1,340,469
Jacksonville	4,588,269	4,586,646
EscaRosa	987,587	964,894
St. Johns	208,264	152,400
Brevard	871,759	828,171
Miami-Dade	31,389,776	32,519,448
Broward	9,318,247	10,246,854
Lee	2,164,377	2,030,730
Monroe	521,973	499,054
Palm Beach	5,098,759	5,496,169
Collier	315,368	298,064
Marion	243,341	242,225
Pasco	287,860	776,756
Northwest	44,470	42,247
Mid-Florida	390,205	371,706
Suwannee Valley	160,334	278,346
Highlands	201,534	201,534
TOTAL	\$78,554,056	\$82,932,029

The result of grant funding has been the growth in housing options to enable the homeless to get off the street, and to get back into permanent housing. This growth is reflected in the chart below comparing the number of beds available in 2001 to the supply in 2012.

Beds Available for Homeless People				
Year	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Permanent Housing	Total Beds
2001	7,967	10,589	3,683	22,239
2012	10,168	13,968	14,558	38,694

The major growth in the permanent housing bed supply reflects the shift in best practices away from sheltering, to rapid re-housing of the homeless into permanent housing. This model is called “Housing First,” and has demonstrated cost effective outcomes in ending a person’s episode of homelessness.

Homelessness Prevention Grant

The 2013 Florida Legislature enacted the Homelessness Prevention Grant program to provide emergency financial assistance to families with minor children who face the loss of housing due to a financial or other crisis. The Office on Homelessness is authorized to provide these grants annually to lead agencies for the 28 local homeless assistance continuum of care planning areas in the state. Only those agencies can apply for the grant. The program provides case management and financial assistance for overdue rent or mortgage payments and overdue utility bills to enable the family to remain stably housed after receiving the assistance. In April 2014, the Office on Homelessness awarded a total of \$876,124 to 16 Homeless Continuum of Care lead agencies that applied for the funding.

Staffing Grant

The Staffing Grant provides up to \$25,000 per local homeless continuum of care to assist in covering a staff position, subject to appropriation. There are currently 28 recognized local continuums that meet the requirements for the grant.

Section 6

Glossary

Catchment area – The geographical area of the state for which each Homeless Continuum of Care lead agency provides services.

Coalition – A group of service providers, interested citizens, local government officials and others who work together on affordable housing and homelessness issues in their communities. Generally, a coalition is not to be confused with a Continuum of Care lead agencies which is a formal HUD-designation.

Continuum of Care – The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) designed the Homeless Continuums of Care to promote communitywide commitment and planning to the goal of ending homelessness. In Florida there are 28 Continuum of Care lead agencies serving 64 of 67 counties.

Council on Homelessness – The Council on Homelessness was created in 2001 to develop policies and recommendations to reduce homelessness in Florida. The Council's mission is to develop and coordinate policy to reduce the prevalence and duration of homelessness, and work toward ending homelessness in Florida.

Department of Children & Families (DCF) – An agency of Florida state government charged with protecting vulnerable children and adults, helping families return to self-sufficiency, and advancing personal and family recovery and resiliency.

Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) – An agency of Florida state government that promotes economic opportunities for all Floridians; formulating and implementing successful workforce, community, and economic development policies and strategies.

Emergency Shelter – A living facility open to individuals and families who are homeless. The set-up of an emergency shelter may be in dormitory style, or with individual rooms for shelter residents. Many shelters offer case management to help residents with housing, jobs, and social services.

Extremely Low-Income (ELI) – Household income that is 30% of the annual federal poverty guidelines published by the Department of Health and Human Services. For example, in 2014 a Florida family of 4 would have a yearly income of \$16,850 or less.

Florida Housing Finance Corporation – Florida Housing was created by the Florida Legislature more than 25 years ago to help Floridians obtain safe, decent, affordable housing that might otherwise be unavailable to them. The corporation provides funds for the development of housing.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client information and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each Continuum of Care is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD's data collection, management, and reporting standards.

Housing First – Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible – and then providing services as needed. This approach has the benefit of being consistent with what most people experiencing homelessness want and seek help to achieve.

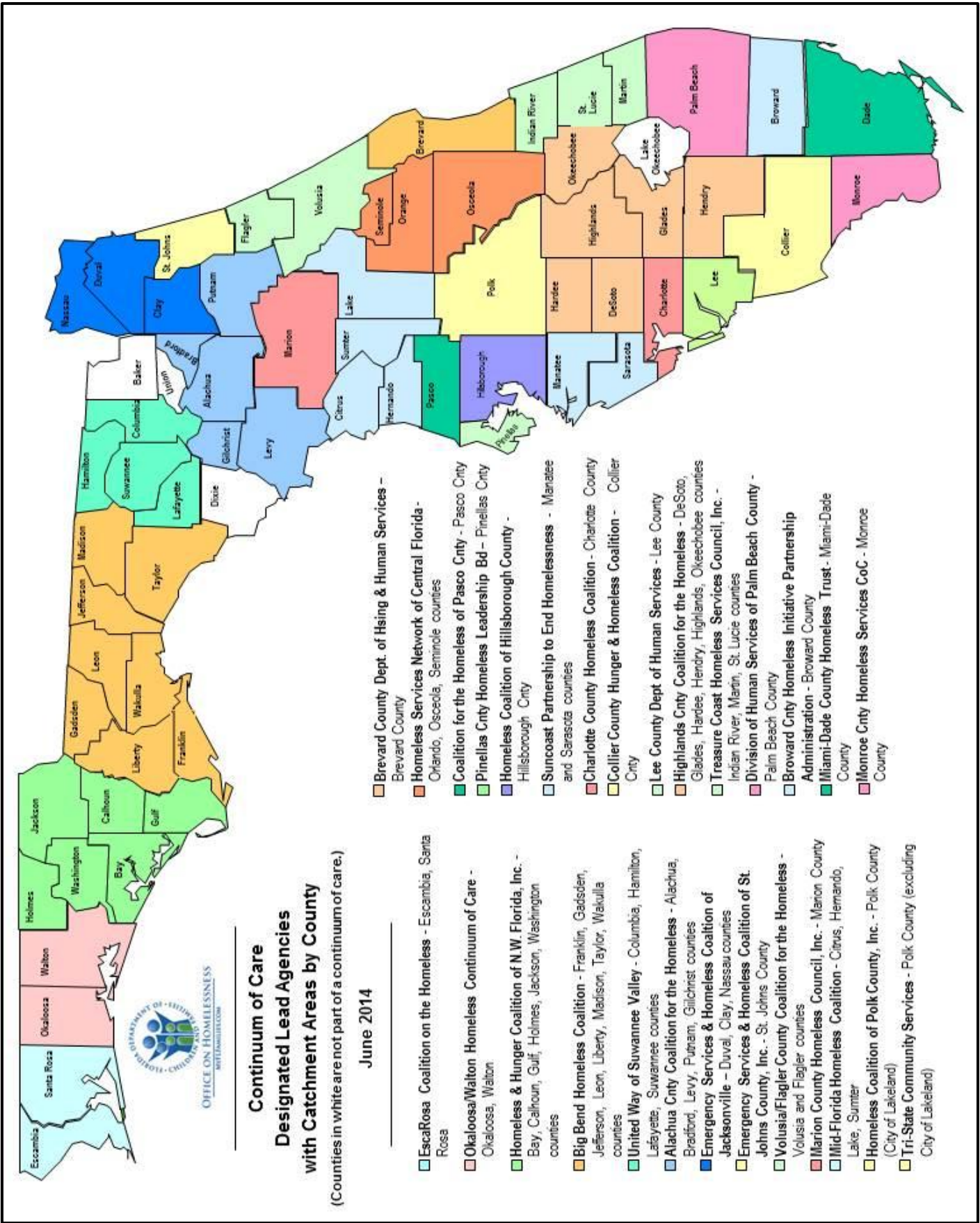
Office on Homelessness – Created in 2001, the Office on Homelessness was established as a central point of contact within state government on homelessness. The Office coordinates the services of the various state agencies and programs to serve individuals or families who are homeless, or are facing homelessness. Office staff work with the 17-member Council on Homelessness to develop state policy. The Office also manages targeted state grants to support the implementation of local homeless service continuum of care plans. The Office is responsible for coordinating resources and programs across all levels of government, and with private providers that serve the homeless. It also manages targeted state grants to support the implementation of local homeless service continuum of care plans.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count – HUD requires Continuums of Care (CoCs) to count the number of people experiencing homelessness in the geographic area that they serve through the Point-in-Time count (PIT). Conducted by most CoCs during the last ten days in January, the PIT count includes people served in shelter programs every year, with every other year also including people who are unsheltered. Data collected during the PIT counts is critical to effective planning and performance management toward the goal of ending homelessness for each community and for the nation as a whole.

Housing Trust Funds – Housing trust funds are established in state and local governments as a way of funding affordable housing. Many trust funds like Florida’s Sadowski Act Trust Fund receive funding from dedicated revenue from real estate doc stamps. They may also be funded by general revenue and government bonds.

Supportive Housing – A combination of housing and services intended as a cost-effective way to help people live more stable, productive lives. Supportive housing is widely believed to work well for those who face the most complex challenges—individuals and families confronted with homelessness and who also have very low incomes and/or serious, persistent issues that may include substance abuse, addiction, mental illness, HIV/AIDS, or other serious challenges to a successful life. Supportive housing can be coupled with such social services as job training, life skills training, alcohol and drug abuse programs, community support services (e.g., child care, educational programs), and case management to populations in need of assistance.

Transitional Housing – Temporary housing, generally a room, a house or an apartment, that serves individuals and families who are going from homelessness to permanent housing and self-sufficiency. Transitional housing programs offer residents help in finding work, food, permanent affordable housing, etc.



Section 8

**Council Members
2013-2014**

<u>Agencies</u>	<u>Represented by</u>
Department of Children and Families	Kriss Vallese
Department of Economic Opportunity	Sean Lewis
Department of Health	Mary T. Green
Department of Corrections	Chris Southerland Lauren Walker
Department of Veterans' Affairs	Alene Tarter
CareerSource Florida, Inc.	Carmen Mims
Florida Department of Education	Lorraine Husum Allen
Agency for Health Care Administration	Molly McKinstry
Florida Housing Finance Corporation	Bill Aldinger
Florida Coalition for the Homeless	Angela Hogan
Florida Supportive Housing Coalition	Shannon Nazworth
Florida League of Cities	Rick Butler
Florida Association of Counties	Claudia Tuck
Governor's Appointees	Steve Smith Ardian Zika Cherron "CC" Newby
Ex Officio	Lindsey Berling-Cannon Nikki Barfield Tom Bilodeau Col. Washington Sanchez, Jr.