



About the CoC: Our Role in Preventing Homelessness January 2024

It is important for our community to understand how services for unhoused folx are provided, and more broadly, how they are distributed across Douglas, Sarpy, and Pottawattamie counties. Our goal this year is to shed some light on how the Continuum of Care (CoC) model works, and how we, at MACCH, fit into the larger system of homelessness prevention.

The CoC Program was started to support people and families experiencing homelessness and provide necessary services to help folx move into housing, with the goal of achieving long-term housing stability. Our purpose is to work within our community with direct providers and local government to minimize the trauma and dislocation often experienced with homelessness while promoting access to programs that help people with self-sufficiency. This model has been implemented in many metropolitan areas to connect the missions of local organizations in the fight against homelessness.

Overseen by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the CoC Program is also designed to:

- Promote community-wide planning and strategic use of resources to address homelessness;
- Improve data collection and performance measurement;
- Allow each CoC to tailor its programs to the strengths and challenges in assisting homeless individuals and families within that community.

HUD identified MACCH to lead the local CoC in 1996. We collect data and distribute HUD funding to local CoC Program resources that can be utilized for projects under five specific areas:

- Permanent housing
- Transitional housing
- Supportive services
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Homelessness prevention

Permanent Housing

HUD defines permanent housing as community-based housing without a designated length of stay. This allows folx to live as independently as possible while receiving support.

Within our CoC there are two types of permanent housing models that receive HUD funding:

- **Rapid Rehousing (RRH)**
 - Individuals are housed within the community and receive supportive services and rental subsidies for up to 24 months, with the goal to retain the permanent housing unit upon program completion.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**
 - Individuals who are experiencing chronic, long-term homelessness are housed in either single-site or community-based housing units where supportive services and rental subsidies do not expire.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is exactly what it sounds like—funds specifically designated to provide unhoused folx with day-to-day stability to successfully transition to and maintain permanent housing.

Supportive Services

HUD requires each CoC to establish and maintain a coordinated entry process to increase the efficiency of the local response to homelessness and make resources more accessible. Supportive services funding can be utilized for a range of services that are related to coordinated entry such as conducting outreach, connecting folx with housing, and other resources.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

HMIS allows CoC's to track data trends and changes within our region's unhoused population over time. We conduct at least one Point in Time (PIT) count annually to account for all our unhoused neighbors and gauge the level of need. To know, within a certain degree, how many folx our network of providers must serve is incredibly important to us. HUD also requires CoCs to produce additional annual reports related to system performance measures, service utilization, and coordinated entry.

Homelessness Prevention

Services under this component are meant to prevent folx from experiencing homelessness and can include housing relocation and stabilization services as well as rental assistance. This allows CoC organizations to help those at-risk of homelessness to stay in their current housing or transition to new permanent housing.

MACCH works in each of these areas to connect unhoused folx to the support that they need the most and supports each of the CoC organizations providing these services. We also work with our cities, counties, and states to strategically address housing inventories and affordability, promote policies that eliminate barriers to accessible housing, and elevate initiatives that are centered on lived experiences.

If you or a neighbor are facing housing instability, please connect with MACCH through our Access Points and CoC organizations in our community. Our CoC's network of resources helps prevent individuals and families from facing housing insecurity and gain access to safe, quality housing.

Please add us on [Facebook @MACCHOMAHA](#) and [X @MACCH_OMA](#) to stay connected and engage in our community's collective response to housing insecurity in Douglas, Sarpy, and Pottawattamie Counties.

Sources:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/2033/hearth-coc-program-interim-rule/>

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-program-eligibility-requirements/>

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc/faqs