



---

**MAYOR'S INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS  
HOMELESSNESS**

**Year One Status Report**

**Thursday May 28, 2009**

---

**MAYOR'S INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS**  
**Year One Status Report**  
**May 28, 2009**

---

On May 28, 2008, Mayor Nutter announced a comprehensive plan to reduce homelessness in Philadelphia. Through a new partnership with Carl Greene and the Philadelphia Housing Authority and private providers of behavioral health and homeless services, the plan aimed to create homes and services for 325 individuals and 300 families, and entry-level housing/treatment slots for 75 individuals.

Over the past year, despite the economic downturn, the Nutter Administration has remained committed to addressing homelessness by preserving existing resources and continuing to build the kinds of partnerships necessary to provide a full range of tools to move individuals and families off the streets, out of shelters and into permanent housing.

**Summary of Key Accomplishments**

Homelessness is down; permanent housing is up:

- Since May 2008, Philadelphia's overall homeless population has decreased by 4.4% (2958 vs. 3095). The singles population is down by 5% (1673 vs. 1762). The number of families in shelter is down 4% (1285 vs. 1333).
- The City's permanent housing capacity has been increased by 51% for families and 26% for singles

More transitional and permanent housing means more people move off the streets and out of shelters toward self-sufficiency:

- 193 individuals have been issued PHA vouchers
- 145 families have moved from transitional housing into permanent housing through PHA
- 240 street homeless individuals with behavioral health challenges moved to safe havens
- 120 families moved from shelter to transitional housing
- 73 street homeless individuals with drug and alcohol problems moved to addiction treatment and recovery housing
- 63 street homeless individuals with mental illness have moved to permanent supportive housing via Pathways to Housing

**Background**

The 700 housing opportunities provide the kind of supportive services that individuals and families need. Specifically, the Mayor's plan provides:

- 200 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) through the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) for individuals ready to graduate from the City's behavioral health and homeless services residential and treatment programs;
- 300 conventional housing opportunities through PHA for families ready to take the next step from transitional housing programs. Department of Human Services (DHS) families who are in shelter and families in Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) residential treatment programs who are ready to graduate are also eligible for participation;
- 125 "Housing First" opportunities for chronically homeless individuals with severe mental illness and long street homeless histories;

- 75 entry-level or low demand opportunities: 29 additional safe haven beds and 26 additional chronic homeless treatment beds for individuals with acute drug/alcohol addictions already established, the remainder will come on-line July 1.
- The Mayor also announced the expansion of two overnight cafes which provide a safe respite and opportunity for engagement for the hardest to reach street homeless population.

### Resource Comparison

The chart below reflects the dedicated supportive housing resources available for homeless individuals/families prior to the launch of the Mayor's plan and the number of those opportunities available today as a result of the Mayor's initiative.

Resource	Capacity May 2008	Capacity May 2009
PHA Family Units	0	300
PHA Vouchers	0	200
Housing First Units	190	315
Safe Haven Beds	175	204
Chronic Homeless Treatment Beds	34	60
Cafes	177 (winter only)	177 (100 available year round)

**National Landscape:** The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that without effective intervention (such as Recovery-funded homeless prevention and re-housing services), 1.5 million additional Americans are likely to experience homelessness over the next two years as a direct result of the current recession. Communities across the nation are reporting significant increases in their local homeless populations. For example;

- Massachusetts reports a record number of homeless families in need of emergency shelter. In mid-April, there were 2763 families in shelter including 655 in motels because the shelters were full. This represents an increase of 36% since July;
- In Santa Barbara, CA 84 men and women sleep in their cars in 17 parking lots around the city as part of the RV Safe Parking Program wherein the city allows the use of municipal lots at night. 40 people are on the waiting list;
- Pinellas County, FL reports 7500 homeless people including 1300 children in homeless families. Last year's number of homeless was 5,500.

**Description of Components of the Plan:** The following is a brief synopsis of the permanent supportive housing components of the plan.

#### Permanent Housing 200 PHA Housing Choice Vouchers

- Purpose: To increase permanent supportive housing for individuals with behavioral health needs;
- Referrals from: Safe havens, chronic homeless D&A programs, and other behavioral health and homeless residential/treatment programs;

- Case Management: Required to support a successful transition for one-year post move-in; provided by DBH-funded case managers.

**Permanent Housing 125 Housing First Opportunities for Singles/Pathways**

- Funded in part by \$500,000 from the Housing Trust Fund;
- Immediate housing opportunities and supports to make housing a success;
- Targeted to hard to engage mentally ill homeless with long street histories;
- Individuals are engaged on the street and move directly to housing;
- Pathways to Housing is a nationally recognized, evidence-based harm reduction model of supportive housing.

**Permanent Housing PHA Conventional Housing Units for Families**

- Purpose: To increase permanent supportive housing opportunities for homeless families;
- Referrals from: 16 transitional housing programs, DHS, and DBH;
- Case management: Required to support successful transition for one year post move-in; provided by transitional housing provider, DBH case manager, DHS social worker.

**Status of the Mayor’s Homeless Initiative: As of May 26, 2009\***

<b>Pathways</b>	<b>125 Allocated</b>	<b>112 Engaged</b>	<b>77 Approved</b>	<b>63 Housed</b>
<b>PHA Vouchers</b>	<b>200 allocated</b>	<b>249 Applications Submitted</b>	<b>193 Vouchers Issued</b>	<b>105 Leased</b>
<b>PHA Conventional Units</b>	<b>300 Allocated</b>	<b>296 Applications Submitted</b>	<b>240 Screened and Approved</b>	<b>145 Housed</b>

*\*The partnership with Pathways began in November 2008.*