



Housing Matters Conference 2026

Housing Action Illinois

I Hotel and Conference Center, Champaign
September 30, 2026

Today's Discussion

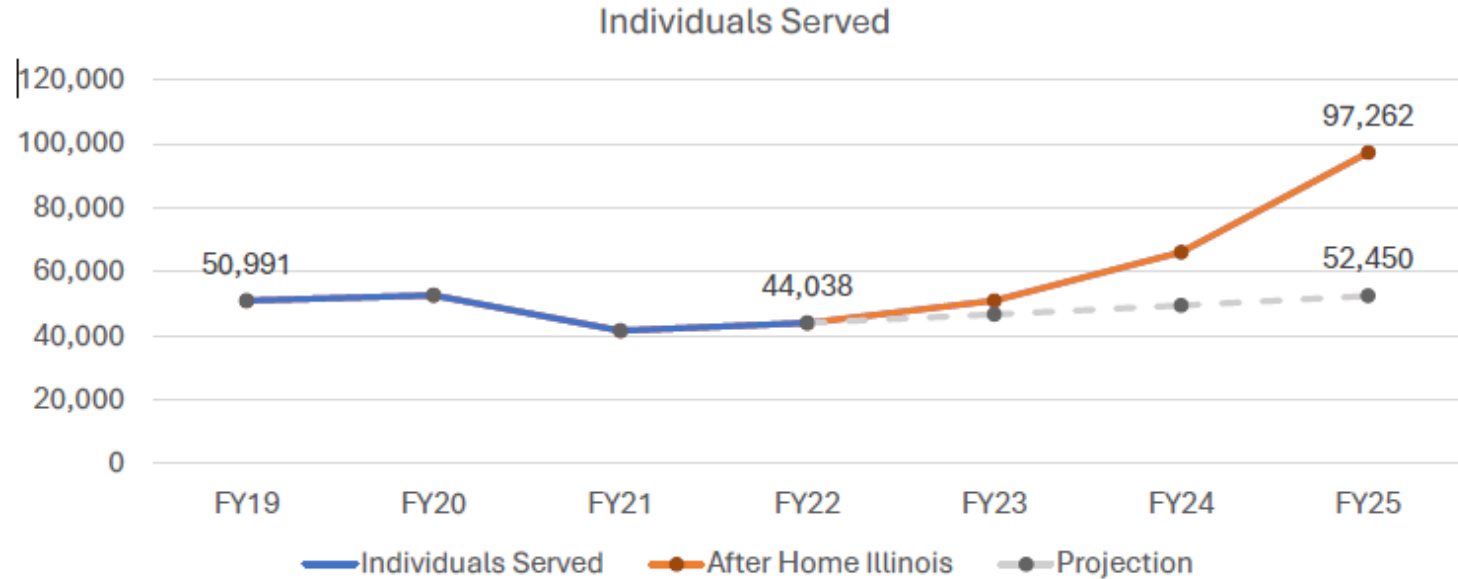
- Top 10 Accomplishments of Home Illinois
- Launching the Next Home Illinois Plan

		
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Top 10 Accomplishments of Home Illinois



#10: Serving More People in Key Programs



#9: Preventing Harm To Children By Stopping Evictions



- A key component of Illinois' homeless response system is the Court-Based Rental Assistance Program, operated by the Illinois Housing Development Authority.
- Over 13,300 households have been approved for CBRAP assistance, with more than \$105 million disbursed to prevent evictions and maintain stable housing.
- By providing timely financial relief at moments of highest risk, CBRAP helps families avoid displacement while ensuring landlords receive owed rent.

#8: Building Capacity Through Technical Assistance & Training



Illinois Homelessness
Response
Collaborative (IHRC):
Data dashboard

IHRC: Systems
Improvement

IHRC: Veterans
Barrier Busters

IHRC: Training for
Persons with Lived
Expertise and their
Supervisors

CORS Learning
Collaborative for SUD
focused street
outreach workers

CACH:
Homelessness
Workforce

CACH: Benefits
Access

CACH: Annual
Report

Cairo Housing
Stability Plan

Statewide Shelter
Facility Support

Medicaid Capacity
Building for PSH
Providers

Low Barrier Shelter
Project

ESG/CoC Technical
Support

IDHS SHP Training
and Support

SOAR TA Center

100-Day Challenge:
IDOC Discharge

100-Day Challenge:
Prevention

Prevention
Community of
Practice

DCEO-JTED
Learning Community

Leap4Ward Capacity
Building

Peer Leadership
Academy

Re-Entry PSH
Program Design
Support

Mainstream Benefits
Access Training

Home Illinois Summit

#7: Activating Crisis Response Systems



- OPEH has been coordinating response to federal threats, including:
 - CoC NOFO changes
 - Criminalization of homelessness through camping bans
 - Coordinating response to the transfer of New Arrivals to Chicagoland from southern border

#6: Leading The Nation In Creating Medical Respite Programs

- System-level investments in medical respite
- The Illinois Medical Respite Capacity Building Initiative **created more than 18 new medical respite programs in Illinois**
 - The National Institute for Medical Respite Care says that Illinois is leading the nation in system-level expansion of medical respite
- Department of Healthcare and Family Services is rolling out medical respite as a billable service under IL Medicaid 1115 waiver



#5: Changing The Narrative On Root Causes Of Homelessness



- Federal government is seeking to shift the narrative about root causes of homelessness away from housing affordability and toward drug use and mental illness.
- OPEH launched narrative change communications campaign with billboards, radio, social media, and new website with tagline “A full-time job should mean a full-time home.”



#5: Changing The Narrative On Root Causes Of Homelessness (cont'd)



At launch of Black Homelessness Report, Gov. Pritzker said: “Our approach understands that homelessness is **not an issue of personal failing but of historical discrimination and structural barriers** that have driven inequality for Black families across the nation and, of course, right here in Illinois. Confronting these legacies of inequality will require us to collaborate across issue areas, from public health to commerce to criminal justice.”

#4: Using Data To Advance Strategy



- OPEH is working with academic institutions to create actionable data for state agencies and community partners.
- OPEH has partnerships with the University of Illinois-Chicago School of Public Health on a data match with the HMIS, IDOC, IDHS, IDJJ and DCFS data
- OPEH is commissioning reports that look at critical aspects of homelessness to better understand how to end it
 - More on this in a moment!

#3: Transforming A Crisis: The One System Initiative



- In 2024 and 2025, the One System Initiative unified the New Arrivals/Newcomers shelter system with the existing homeless response system.
- The City of Chicago, Cook County, the State of Illinois, persons experiencing homelessness, advocates, housing and shelter providers, immigrant service providers, and elected officials came together and successfully unified the shelter systems.
- Outcomes included:
 - Creation of a round-the-clock access point for shelter requests
 - Preservation of hundreds of shelter beds
- OPEH led the One System Initiative and funded the technical support needed to achieve these goals.

#2: Creating New Programs and Invested in Existing Ones



- Through Governor Pritzker's Home Illinois Program, the state's general revenue investment in homelessness has more than doubled.
- Before Home Illinois, the state funded the Emergency and Transitional Housing Program at \$10M. Through new and existing shelter programs, we have increased funding for shelter to over \$100M.
- IDHS created a state-funded Rapid ReHousing program, Scattered Site PSH and shelter diversion program.
- ICCB and IBHE created the HOUSE Liaisons program.
- DCEO created a program to unite the traditional workforce systems and CoCs.
- IDOC and ICJIA created three new re-entry housing programs, one focused on women and their children, and others focused on those with high barriers to housing.
- IDVA revamped their housing program.

#1: Reducing Homelessness in 11 of 19 CoCs from 2024 to 2025

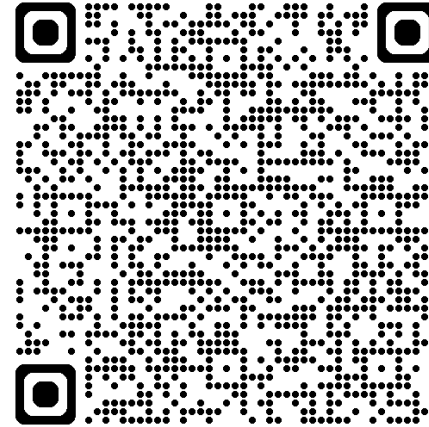


- Southern Illinois CoC
- Northern Illinois CoC
- Sangamon County CoC
- McHenry County CoC
- Will, Kendall & Grundy County CoC
- St Clair County CoC
- Central Illinois CoC
- Kane County CoC
- Lake County CoC
- South Central CoC
- Chicago CoC

Home Illinois Plan FY27-29



Home IL Plan: FY27-29



Scan to view the Home
Illinois FY27-29 Plan

Or go to
endhomelessness.illinois.gov

Plan Goals

GOALS

1



Solve for the money in the wrong place

\$3.2 billion is spent annually on health care—investing in housing would ensure people are housed, improve health outcomes, and reduce health care costs.

2



Ensure everyone has access to eligible benefits

Closing the public benefits gap will help ensure people have the supports they qualify for and need to remain housed.

3



End unsheltered homelessness

Unsheltered homelessness is at a crisis point. Every strategy and resource must be deployed to provide safe and stable housing to end it now.

4



Build out the prevention system

A comprehensive and coordinated prevention system across the State is the best way to end homelessness.

The Home Illinois Plan Goals together represent the broad aims of the plan over the next three years.

Plan Strategies

GROW: Scale up housing and services options to address unmet needs

EXPAND: Improve meaningful access by lowering barriers to housing and services

INCREASE: Increase life expectancy and reduce healthcare costs

CONNECT: Connect people to income and jobs that provide a housing wage



Grow: Scale up housing and services options to address unmet needs



Activity	State Agency
Work with OPEH to facilitate engagement with Illinois' network of Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) that provide employment and training services to 22 regions across Illinois, including trainings on working with jobseekers experiencing housing instability or homelessness.	Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Develop and expand permanent supportive housing pathways for people at high risk of homelessness and correctional-system recidivism; evaluate and scale Treatment Alternatives for Stronger Communities' (TASC) Bridge2Home model.	Illinois Department of Corrections, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, Illinois Housing Development Authority, Illinois Department of Human Services

Expand: Improve meaningful access by lowering barriers



Activity	State Agency
Establish recovery homes for adult men in historically underserved communities that have been disproportionately impacted by drug overdoses, over-policing, poverty, and systemic racism; focus on a home-like environment and the provision of recovery supports, including employment supports.	Department of Human Services- Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery
Strengthen IHDA's practices to support PSH project implementation consistent with application incentives, including referrals, service plans, coordination with homeless systems, and tenant screening.	Illinois Housing Development Authority

Increase: Increase life expectancy and reduce healthcare



Activity	State Agency
Advance a strategy to ensure eligible unhoused people in Illinois maintain their Medicaid benefits.	Healthcare and Family Services, Department of Human Services
Work with IDHS-Divisions of Behavioral Health & Recovery and Family & Community Services to support coordination and implementation of homelessness outreach, engagement, and housing for unsheltered persons identified on the Northern Illinois Transit Authority.	Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

Connect: Connect people to income and jobs that provide a housing wage

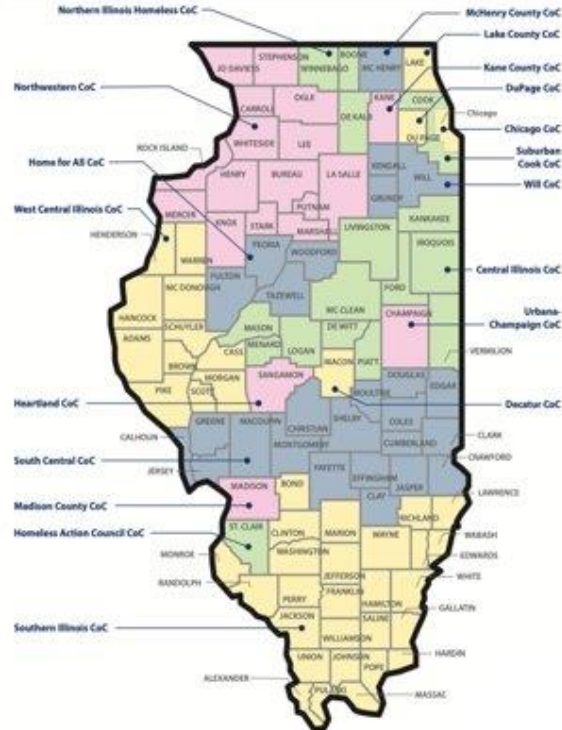


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Implement and expand use of IDOC's web-based job match tool, onBoard, in pre-release planning, to connect people leaving custody to employment opportunities; coordinate with Illinois Department of Employment Security and local workforce agencies to expand employer participation in the pre-release process.	Department of Corrections



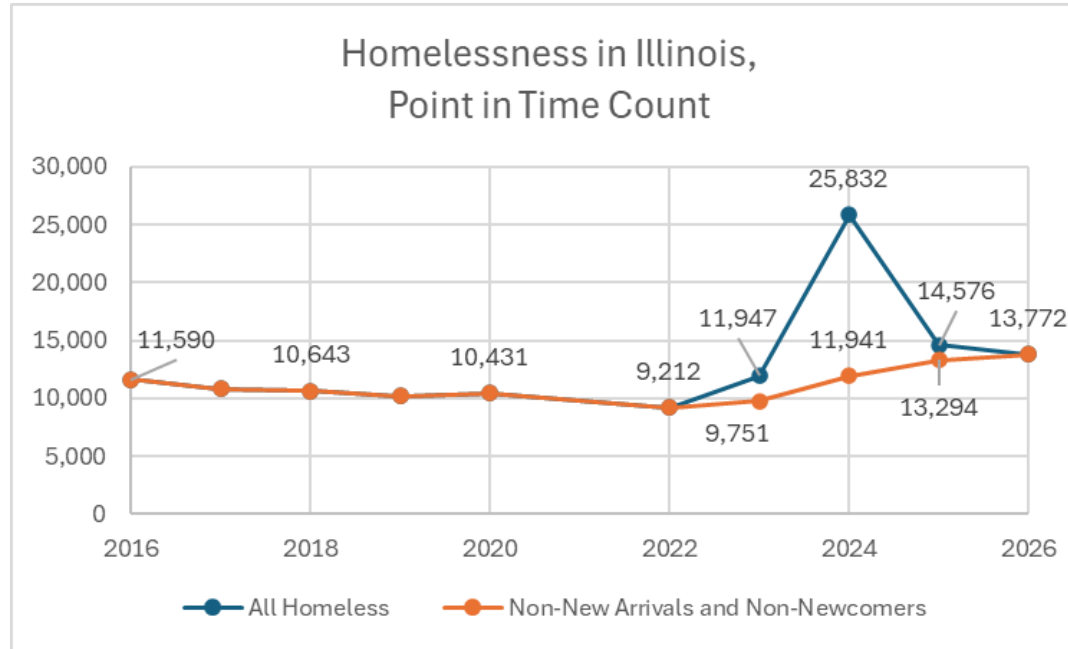
Homelessness Measured by the Point-in-Time Count

ILLINOIS CONTINUUM OF CARE MAP



- 19 community areas in Illinois conduct a once-a-year count of people living in shelters and people living unsheltered (such as sleeping outside or in their cars).
- 13,772 people experienced homelessness in IL, as of the 2026 PIT.
- The counts range from 6,527 in Chicago to 127 in McHenry County.
- Homelessness is a state-wide issue, approximately half is outside of Chicago.

Homelessness Trends in Illinois

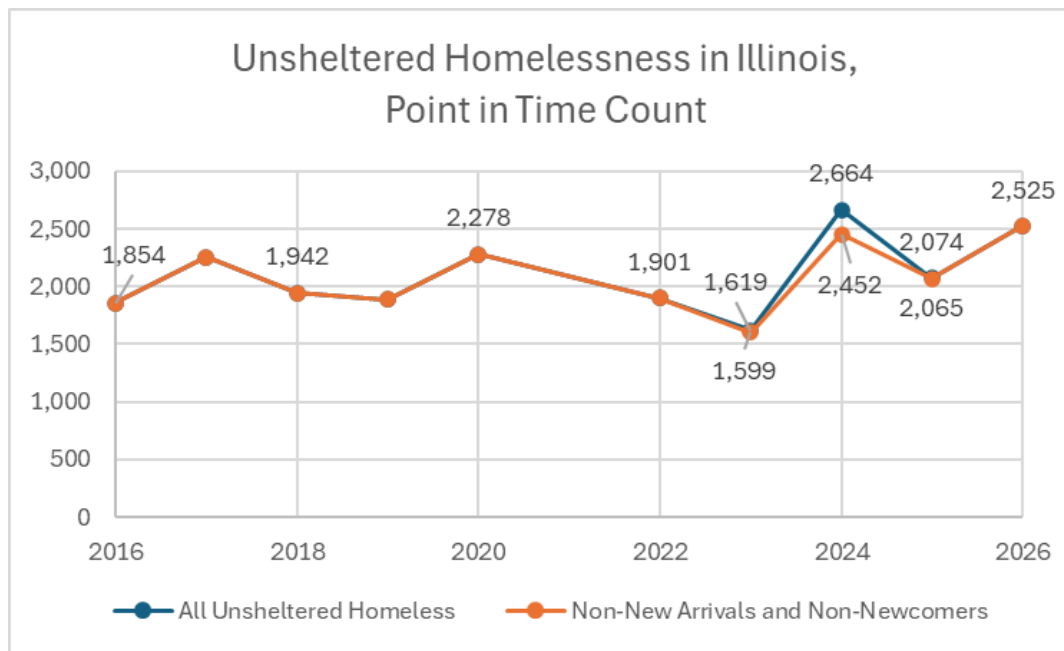


- From 2025 to 2026, overall homelessness in Illinois **decreased by 6%**.

Unsheltered Homelessness Trends in Illinois



The Point-in-Time Count in 2021 is disregarded for data quality reasons.

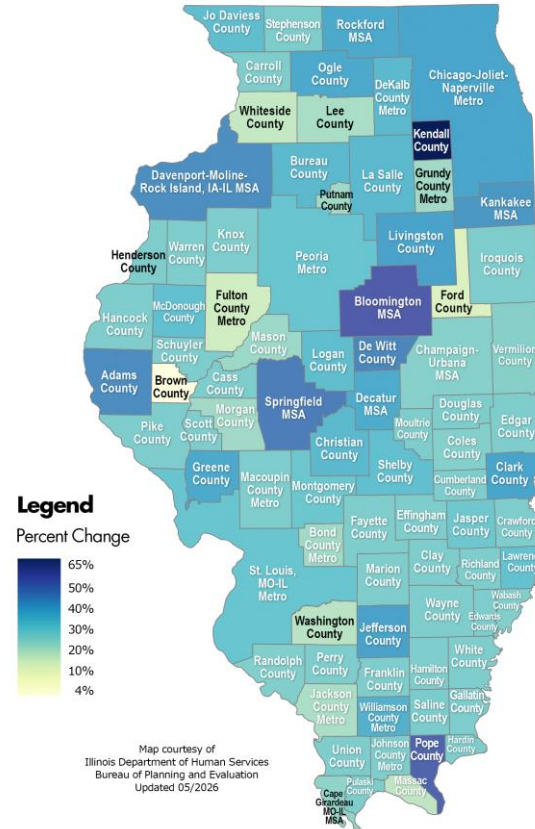


- However, **unsheltered** homelessness rose by 22% between 2025 and 2026.

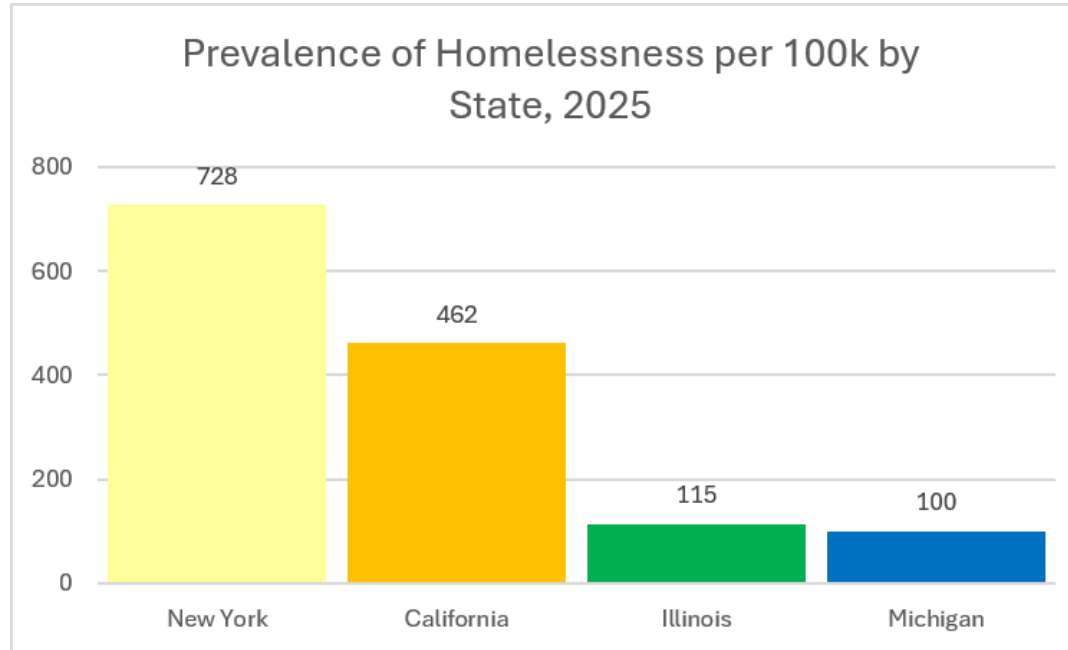
Fair Market Rent Rising Faster Than Inflation



- Between 2020 and 2026, the national **inflation rate was 26%**, while **fair-market rent in Illinois increased 34%** over the same period.
- The cost of housing rose faster than the rate of inflation in **90% of Illinois counties** between 2020 and 2026.
- Significant increases in housing costs occurred in **geographically diverse** areas across the state, from Kendall County in the Chicagoland area to Bloomington in Central Illinois to Pope County in Southern Illinois.
- In Illinois, in 2025, average FMR was \$1,550. Nationally, in 2025, average FMR was \$1,749.

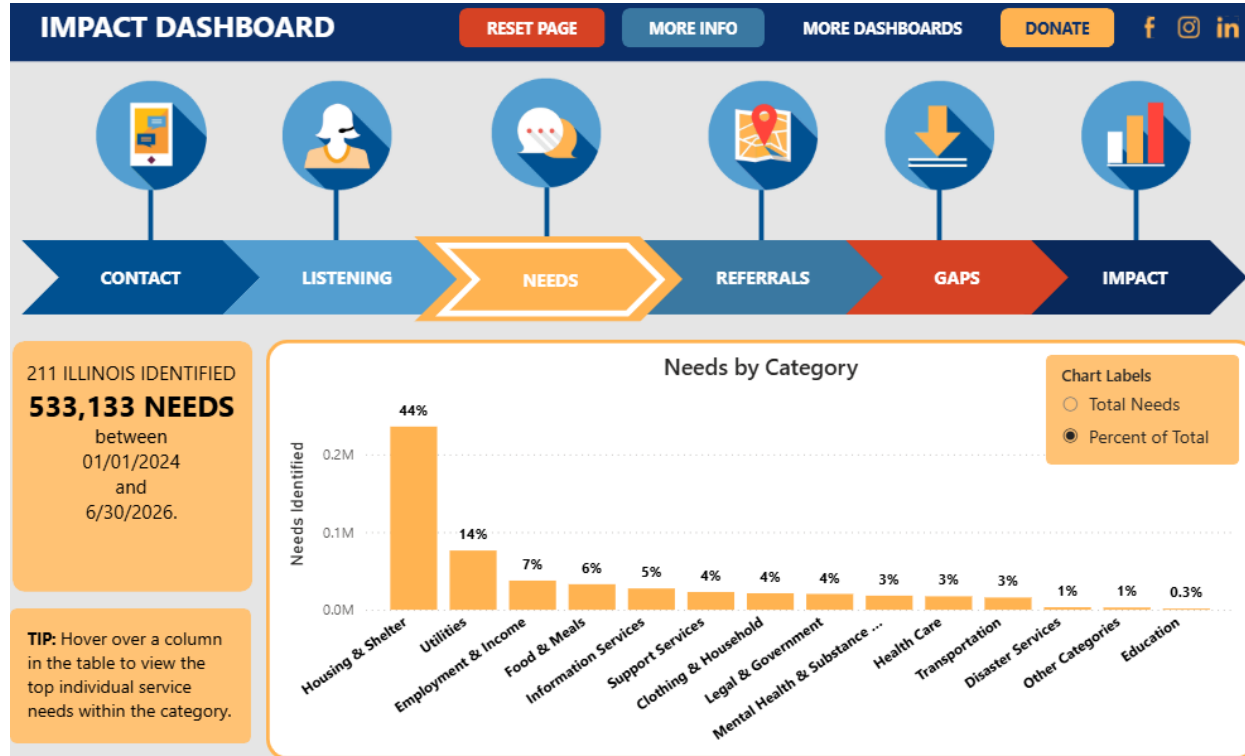


Homeless Prevalence Compared to Other States



- The prevalence of homelessness in Illinois is similar to Michigan and far lower than states like New York or California.
- Research shows that housing costs and a lack of affordable housing drives the prevalence of homelessness.

Statewide 211 Data

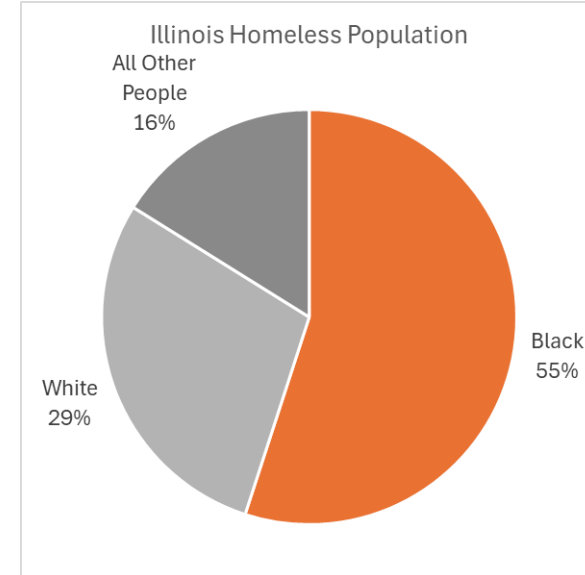
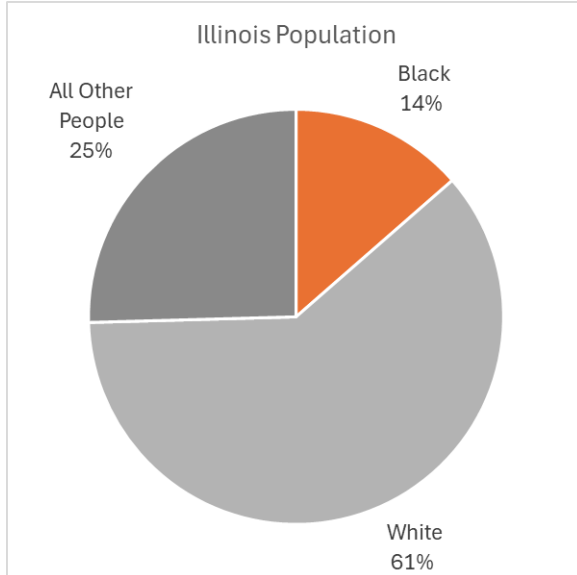


- Help with housing and shelter is the most common need for which people in Illinois call 211.

Black Homelessness in Illinois



- Black homelessness in Illinois compared to white and all other race & ethnicity homelessness.
- People who are Black consistently comprise over half of people who are homeless in Illinois, as well as 29% of those in poverty, despite comprising 14% of people in Illinois.



Report on Latine Homelessness



- On an average night over the past decade, more than 1,000 Latine Illinoisans resided in homeless shelters statewide, with an additional 200 experiencing unsheltered homelessness.
- In Illinois, Latine residents are five times more likely to experience doubled-up homelessness than white residents.
- As Gov. Pritzker stated at the event to release the new report:
 - “As we work to implement the Home Illinois plan to achieve functional zero homelessness in Illinois, we need to better understand how it impacts specific populations to best meet people where they are. This research, and the testimony of people with lived experience, helps us pave the path toward a state where no one faces long-term homelessness.”



Scan to read
the full report

On The Horizon



HUD CoC
NOFO

SNAP &
Medicaid Work
Requirements

Increase in
Unsheltered
Homelessness

ReEntry 2030

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[Endhomelessness.Illinois.gov](https://endhomelessness.illinois.gov)



homeless.office@illinois.gov



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