



Overview of the Homeless Housing System and Funding

In every county in Washington State, a statewide network of not-for-profit organizations houses more than 98,000 people facing homelessness each year. This paper will provide you information about our homeless system and the funding streams involved in this important work.

Authorizing Authority

In 2006, the Washington State legislature passed the Homeless Housing and Assistance Act ([RCW 43.185c](#)) directing Commerce to grant document recording fees to local governments to help meet the need of homeless families and individuals. Following the trend established by other legislative actions, local governments were placed in the lead role to administer the funding. About half of the county governments are “lead grantees” that sub contract funds to local non-profits. If a county “opt outs” of the lead role, Commerce contracts directly with a non-profit to be the “lead grantee.”

Lead grantees are responsible for the homeless system in their county. This includes writing a local plan to address homelessness, responsibility for administering the annual Point-in-Time Count, reporting client data in the Homeless Management Information System, conducting outreach to landlords, ensuring Coordinated Entry¹ and more. Lead grantees are also responsible for ensuring their homeless crisis response system prioritizes people most in need and that services meet performance benchmarks.

What housing assistance can homeless service providers offer?

- **Rapid Rehousing** quickly moves homeless people into permanent housing by providing temporary rent subsidies and housing-focused case management. The household does not have to leave when services end.
- **Emergency shelter** provides temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness.
- **Transitional housing** provides housing for no longer than 24 months and is designed to move people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing.
- **Homeless prevention** resolves imminent homelessness with housing-focused case management and temporary rent subsidies. The services are time-limited and the household does not have to leave when services end.
- **Permanent supportive housing** is subsidized, non-time-limited housing with support services for homeless households that include a household member with a permanent disability.

What we know about the availability of these housing interventions, costs and outcomes:

	<i>Rapid Rehousing</i>	<i>Emergency Shelter</i>	<i>Transitional Housing</i>	<i>Homeless Prevention</i>
<i>Beds/slots</i>	12,359	7,179	7,008	4,631
<i>Cost per day</i>	\$26	\$29	\$45	\$14
<i>Cost per successful exit</i>	\$4,010	\$1,452	\$15,252	\$2,053

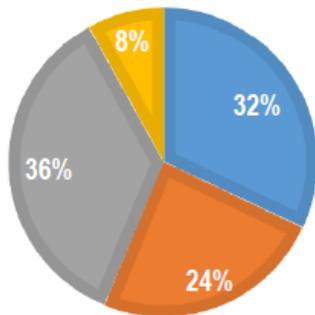
¹ [Coordinated Entry](#) creates a single/known point of entry that helps homeless people move through the system faster by reducing the amount of time people spend trying to access services.

What pays for these homeless housing services and activities?

The homeless housing systems are funded by an estimated \$196 million annually in private, federal, state, and local government funding. Document recording fees, collected by county auditors, are the largest single funding source of this effort. Sixty-six percent of the fees are retained by local governments for homeless housing, and 34 percent are remitted to the State Home Security Fund (administered by Commerce) for homeless service grant programs.

TOTAL REPORTED PROGRAM SPENDING IN
CALENDAR YEAR 2014 \$196 MILLION

- LOCAL FUNDS
- STATE FUNDS
- FEDERAL FUNDS
- PRIVATE DONATIONS



More information on data and expenditures can be found in the *Homelessness in Washington State: 2016 Annual Report on the Homeless Grant Programs* located on the Commerce website.