



DRAFT Local Plan Guidance

Background

Washington State law¹ requires that each local homeless housing task force develop and recommend to its local government² legislative authority, a five-year homeless housing plan for its jurisdictional area. The plan must include objectives prescribed by the Department of Commerce (Commerce).

A local government may amend the task force's proposal and ultimately must adopt a plan (or an update to their current plan) no later than December 1, 2019.

Performance in meeting the Commerce objectives of a local plan will be assessed annually by Commerce. Local plans can include other objectives and performance measures adopted by the local government, and may include recommendations for state legislation or resource changes needed to meet state or local plan goals. Plan goals should be tailored to local conditions and grounded in local data.

Eligible Activities Under Local Plans

Eligible activities³ under the local plans include:

1. Rental and furnishing of dwelling units for people who are homeless.
2. Costs of developing affordable housing for homeless persons, and services for formerly homeless individuals and families residing in transitional housing or permanent housing and still at risk of homelessness.
3. Operating subsidies for transitional housing or permanent housing serving formerly homeless families or individuals.
4. Services to prevent homelessness, such as emergency eviction prevention programs including temporary rental subsidies to prevent homelessness.
5. Temporary services to assist persons leaving state institutions and other state programs to prevent them from becoming or remaining homeless.
6. Outreach services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
7. Development and management of local homeless plans including homeless census data collection; identification of goals, performance measures, strategies, costs and evaluation of progress towards goals.
8. Rental vouchers payable to landlords for persons experiencing homelessness or below 30 percent of the area median income or in immediate danger of becoming homeless.

¹ [RCW 43.185c.040](#) and [43.185c.045](#)

² [RCW 43.185c.010](#)

³ [RCW 43.185c.050](#)



9. Other activities to reduce and prevent homelessness as identified for funding in the local plan.

Next Steps

Commerce is proposing to adopt elements of the *2018 Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*⁴ objectives. Commerce’s draft local plan guidance is based on requirements in the state’s Homeless Housing and Assistance Act⁵ and portions of the Federal Plan objectives and goals.

Commerce is requiring that local plans address the following objectives with strategies, due dates, responsible parties, and changes necessary in policies and resource levels necessary to fulfill the objectives. Local plans may include long- and short-term goals within each objective.

Plan Objectives:

1. Identify best practice strategies and associated costs		
Identify and implement best practices to meet the performance targets by 2021.		
Intervention Type	Performance Measure	Performance Target
Emergency Shelter	Increase Percent Exits to Permanent Housing	At Least 50%
	Reduce Length of Stay	20 Days or Less
	Reduce Percent Return to Homelessness in 2 Years	Less than 10%
Transitional Housing	Increase Percent Exits to Permanent Housing	At Least 80%
	Reduce Length of Stay	90 Days or Less
	Reduce Percent Return to Homelessness in 2 Years	Less than 5%
Rapid Re-Housing	Increase Percent Exits to Permanent Housing	At Least 80%
	Reduce Percent Return to Homelessness in 2 Years	Less than 5%
Targeted Prevention	Reduce Number of New Homeless	Reduce Number
	Increase Percent served coming from target population: institutional setting, temporarily staying with family or friends (doubled up), or past homelessness	At Least 80%
Permanent Supportive Housing	Increase Percent Exits to or Retention of Permanent Housing	At Least 95%
Determine average expenditure necessary per homeless housing intervention to achieve performance targets. Average expenditures should be based on actual costs of successful interventions for similar populations in similar communities.		

⁴ https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf

⁵ <http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=43.185C>



2. Identify and Engage All People Experiencing Homelessness as Quickly as Possible⁶
Coordinated entry systems must be compliant with all state coordinated entry requirements ⁷ by 2020.
3. Provide Immediate Access to Low-Barrier Emergency Shelter or Other Temporary Accommodations to All Who Need it⁸
Provide immediate access to low barrier ⁹ emergency shelter or other temporary accommodations to <u>all</u> people experiencing homeless people by 2021.
4. Ensure linkages to supportive services
Facilitate access to the Foundational Community Supports supportive housing and supportive employment to all people experiencing homelessness who want access to these services by 2020.
5. Improve access to emergency assistance, housing, and supports for historically underserved and overrepresented groups¹⁰
<p>Develop plan to continuously examine equity in service provision. This should include an examination of access to emergency assistance, housing, and supports for historically underserved and overrepresented groups, such as people who have been sexually exploited or labor-trafficked; people who identify as LGBTQ; people who are gender-non-conforming; people living with HIV/AIDS; youth that are pregnant or parenting; people with mental health needs; people who have experienced trauma, and racial and ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Provide training and information necessary to ensure the homeless crisis response system responds appropriately to all people experiencing homelessness, and delivers resources equitably. Commerce will work with communities to maintain up to date training requirements (modeled after the types of trainings listed in WAC 388-61A-1080), including training on trauma informed care, mental health first aid, fair housing, anti-oppression, and cultural competency theory and practice.</p>
6. Enhance capacity to use data to improve performance and strategic planning
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Achieve a county report card¹¹ data quality score of at least 95% by 2020.2) Using data and research driven assumptions, forecast expected point in time count of people experiencing homelessness after implementation of strategic plan, assuming available local resources

⁶ USICH Plan Objective 2.3, https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf

⁷ <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/hau-wa-ce-guidelines-1-2018.pdf><http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/hau-wa-ce-guidelines-1-2018.pdf>

⁸ USICH plan Objective 2.2, https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Home-Together-Federal-Strategic-Plan-to-Prevent-and-End-Homelessness.pdf

⁹ HUD definition of low barrier: "Access to shelter is not contingent on sobriety, minimum income requirements, lack of criminal record, or other unnecessary conditions"

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Vet_Criteria_Benchmarks_V3_February2017.pdf

¹⁰ Strategy under USICH Plan Objective 2.2

¹¹ <https://public.tableau.com/profile/comhau#!/vizhome/CountyReportCardWinter2018/ReportCard>



and existing state policies. Forecast should take into account expected changes in demand for homeless housing due to expected market conditions and any quantified initiatives to address drivers of homelessness including: rent prices, incomes, employment levels, population changes, family stability, etc.¹²

- 3) Identify specific policy changes (local and state) and quantify resources changes necessary to leave no person left living outside.¹³

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¹² Commerce will provide forecasts as requested, or counties can develop their own forecast, subject to review and approval by Commerce.

¹³ "No person left living outside" defined as meeting the HUD benchmarks for "Ending homelessness":

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Vet_Criteria_Benchmarks_V3_February2017.pdf

Commerce will provide forecasts as requested to assist with estimation of impact of changes in investments levels, and the impact of policy changes. Alternately, counties can develop their own forecast, subject to review and approval by Commerce.