

STATE OF COLORADO HOMELESS POLICY ACADEMY PRIORITIES

Priority #1: Expand and Maximize Service Resources

Looks at components of service continuum and figures out how to do things differently/creatively. Includes two strategies. The first strategy is focused on expanding substance abuse services and the second is focused on expanding mental health services.

Priority #2: Expand and Maximize Housing Resources

Includes four strategies. The first strategy focuses on supporting and promoting housing legislation. The second strategy focuses on determining new homeless programs or projects that the Department could administer. The third strategy focuses on expanding residential housing options for homeless persons with mental illness, substance abuse issues, and co-occurring disorders. The fourth strategy focuses on expanding housing development in the public and private sectors.

Priority #3: Improve Cross System Policies, Planning and Services

Includes three strategies. The first is to improve intake and assessment processes and procedures. The second is to prepare for federal changes to McKinney Act funding (federal homeless dollars). The third is to improve statewide planning and policy development on the delivery of housing and services to persons who are homeless.

Priority #4: Increase Access to Mainstream Resources

Includes seven strategies. The first is to expand and develop creative outreach procedures. The second is to improve processes and procedures for obtaining SSI, Medicaid, AND, VA, TANF, Workforce Investment Act, and CHP+ benefits. The third is to develop new processes in bringing people into the SSI system. The fourth is to improve discharge-planning procedures across institutions. The fifth is to develop effective pathways to accessing Medicaid benefits. The sixth is to develop integrated treatment programs for persons with co-occurring disorders. The seventh is to Address transportation issues for persons trying to access mental health and substance abuse treatment.

Priority #5: Develop an Outreach and Education Campaign to Reduce the Stigma of Homelessness

Includes two strategies. The first strategy is to educate elected officials, policy makers, mainstream providers, and local providers regarding the special needs of the homeless and system cross-over issues. The second strategy is to develop programs and projects that reduce stigmas attached to persons who are homeless, including those with special needs.