

# Blueprint to End Homelessness

[ A Collaborative Effort to Address Homelessness ]



## CONTEXT & VISION

### ANNISTON-CALHOUN COUNTY COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

The vision of the Anniston-Calhoun County Collaborative Partners, currently made up of United Way of East Central Alabama, Interfaith Ministries of Calhoun County, and The Right Place, is to simply work together to end homelessness in our communities.

The purpose of this collaborative effort is to assist in the coordination and development of services and housing for homeless and low-income persons with housing needs through planning, education, prevention, and advocacy.

All individuals and families facing homelessness in the Anniston area, surrounding municipalities, and rural Calhoun County should have access to safe, decent, affordable housing along with the resources and supports needed to sustain it. Currently, our residents are facing a number of challenges that either makes them homeless or puts them at risk of being homeless:

- There are over 23,000 residents in Calhoun County living in poverty. Over 8,000 of those residents are children.
- In fact, the poverty threshold for a family of 4 is just \$24,600 annually, while the annual household income needed to afford a two bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent is \$33,540.
- This means a family living at poverty level would require an extra \$745 a month income just to cover the cost of the average HUD Fair Market Rent.
- These issues are compounded by barriers such as low job skills, adult illiteracy, lack of transportation, mental illness, and substance abuse.

These drivers help create a situation in which an estimated 299 local residents are homeless on any given night, including children and senior citizens.

In order to respond to local needs, this effort creates a strategic collaborative of trusted, reputable organizations whose sole agenda is to build a coordinated response system to combat and end the issue of homelessness in our community.

The need for this blueprint comes from multiple drivers:

- Community dialogue and raised awareness of local area homelessness
- A demand for action to improve the condition of chronically homeless residents by creating pathways to stability
- A lack of shelter beds in the Anniston-Calhoun County area
- A lack of affordable housing units available to residents
- A need for a process focused on screening people into shelter and housing versus screening people out
- A drive to improve experiences for people in need in our community



United Way  
of East Central Alabama

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## OUR VALUES

AS WE REALIZE OUR VISION TOGETHER, THERE ARE IMPORTANT COMMON VALUES THAT ARE ESSENTIAL IN DRIVING OUR COLLECTIVE WORK:

### OUR PLAN IS NOT TO BE:

- Inefficient and time consuming
- Bureaucratic and inflexible
- Confusing and difficult to use
- Unfriendly and frustrating
- Exhausting and overwhelming

### OUR PLAN IS TO BE:

- Responsive and efficient
- Supportive and welcoming to all
- Transparent and navigable
- Sufficient relative to client need
- Respectful and accountable

## WE BELIEVE IN:

**CLIENT CHOICE:** We must treat all individuals and families experiencing homelessness with dignity and respect, allowing for self-determination in making decisions about their lives.

**COLLECTIVE-IMPACT APPROACH:** The best solutions come when we work together to find solutions rather than individually as separate entities.

**LOW-BARRIER SHELTER & HOUSING:** We believe an approach with many barriers becomes useless to both the individuals in need and the community. Our goal is to begin stabilizing homeless residents after they are sheltered, not before.

**HOUSING FIRST:** Whenever possible, we must quickly connect families to permanent housing with few preconditions or barriers, ensuring ongoing opportunities for engagement in services to support long-term stability.

**QUALITY:** We must provide quality housing and services, measuring all programs against common metrics of success.

**INDIVIDUALIZED AND CLIENT-DRIVEN SERVICES:** All people experiencing homelessness are unique. We must provide a variety of supportive services that respond to individual needs and provides a flexible length of time for engagement.

## OUR GOALS

Homelessness is  
**RARE**

Homelessness is  
**BRIEF**

Homelessness is  
**NON-RECURRING**

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## OUR PLAN

### GOAL 1: Emergency Shelter

Establishes:

- Low-barrier overnight emergency shelter provided at no cost to clients
- Flexibility to house individuals and families in a safe and secure environment
- Shower facilities, laundry facilities, meals, and on-site security personnel
- On-site Case Management offering program commitment for long-term client success
- Referrals for wrap-around services
- Ability to serve as a mass-care shelter in disaster or inclement/extreme cold weather

### GOAL 2: On-site Comprehensive Services

Establishes:

- Day Center at the shelter with intensive Case Management
- On-site supportive services including:
  - GED Tutoring & Job Skills
  - Adult Literacy Skills
  - Financial Literacy Skills
  - Life Skills Development
  - Medical & Mental Health Care

### GOAL 3: Affordable & Supportive Housing

Expands:

- Affordable Housing for residents who have worked to achieve stability and independence
- Transitional Housing for residents nearing completion of shelter programs but awaiting a permanent housing plan
- Permanent Supportive Housing providing quality housing coupled with on-going support for residents dealing with chronic homelessness