

Goal 3. Utilize Housing as a Platform for Improving Quality of Life



Problem Statement

Hard-to-house families face many challenges, including weak employment histories, long stays in public housing, poor health, substance abuse, and criminal records. Special needs populations, including homeless people, people with HIV/AIDS, people returning from prisons, returning veterans, the elderly, and people with disabilities all experience significant barriers to both obtaining and maintaining housing. For some, financial assistance alone is sufficient to ensure access to housing, while others require housing with supportive services to assist with activities of daily living or long-term self-sufficiency.

- In 2007, the most recent time for which we have data, 1.21 million elderly households and 1.01 million disabled households had incomes of less than 50 percent of the area median income (AMI), did not receive housing assistance, and either paid more than one-half of their income for rent or lived in severely substandard housing, or both.¹³ The number of seniors (people age 65 or older) in the United States is expected to increase from 35 million in 2000 to 64 million by 2025.¹⁴
- A 2008 HUD service coordinator study found that the presence of staff who link residents to supportive services in the community increased residents' length of tenure by 6 months, enabling elderly and nonelderly people with disabilities to live independently in their own homes 10 percent longer than those without service coordination.¹⁵
- Adults receiving HUD housing assistance are less well than other adult renters; 60 percent more suffer from depression, 18 percent more are smokers, 263 percent more have diabetes, 78 percent more have asthma attacks, and 94 percent more have weight problems that cause difficulty with activity.¹⁶
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that more than one million people are living with HIV and AIDS in the United States, with an estimated annual increase of 56,300 new cases of HIV. Of this number, minorities are disproportionately affected, with 65 percent of new reported cases among racial and ethnic minorities.¹⁷
- In 2008, 1.59 million people experienced homelessness at some point.¹⁸
- Only 1 in 10 students from low-income communities graduates from college,¹⁹ and children living in low-income communities are already two to three grades behind their higher income peers by the time they reach fourth grade.²⁰

Housing as a Platform Goal

Stable housing, made possible with HUD support, provides an ideal platform for delivering a wide variety of health and social services to improve health, education, and economic outcomes. Through partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels, HUD will utilize its housing platform to deliver a wide variety of services to improve the quality of life of its residents and the surrounding community. The following subgoals provide a roadmap for accomplishing this goal:

Subgoal 3A: Utilize HUD assistance to improve educational outcomes and early learning and development.

Subgoal 3B: Utilize HUD assistance to improve health outcomes.

Subgoal 3C: Utilize HUD assistance to increase economic security and self-sufficiency.

Subgoal 3D: Utilize HUD assistance to improve housing stability through supportive services for vulnerable populations, including the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless people, and those individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless.

Subgoal 3E: Utilize HUD assistance to improve public safety.

We know that housing can be a platform for driving other outcomes—that housing is not just a typical market good, but a place to anchor services and where different policies central to opportunity can be overlaid.

—HUD Secretary
Shaun Donovan
October 26, 2009

Measures of Success

- Increase the number of HUD-assisted households with school-aged children who have access to schools scoring at or above the local average.
- Provide access to information and opportunities by increasing the proportion of units in HUD public and multifamily housing with an available broadband Internet connection.
- Improve the health of HUD-assisted residents.
- Increase the average income of HUD-assisted households.
- Improve the quality of housing and available community opportunities reported by HUD residents (*cross-cutting measure for Goals 2, 3, and 4*).
- Reduce homelessness (*cross-cutting measure for Goals 2 and 3*).



Subgoal 3A: Utilize HUD assistance to improve educational outcomes and early learning and development

Our nation's economic competitiveness depends on providing children and youth—particularly those growing up in poverty—with an education that will enable them to succeed in the global economy. HUD aims to improve educational outcomes for those living in HUD-assisted housing by optimizing our own location-based policies and partnering with nonprofit organizations, schools, and other federal agencies to ensure greater access to high-quality early learning programs and schools, effective adult education, broadband Internet, and other technology.

Strategies:

1. Increase access to high-performing schools through HUD policies and partnerships with federal, state, and local programs.
2. Increase access to high-quality early learning programs and services through incentives and coordination with federal, state, and local programs.
3. Provide incentives for using evidence-based strategies that encourage and improve family engagement in positive child development and learning.
4. Increase access to broadband Internet and other technology.

Subgoal 3B: Utilize HUD assistance to improve health outcomes

Stable, healthy housing is inextricably tied to individual health. Improving health outcomes starts by increasing knowledge of health and access to health services. HUD aims to accomplish this by building formal and informal relationships with public and private healthcare providers and with health education organizations to provide access to healthcare information and services for recipients of HUD assistance. HUD will also encourage management practices that enhance the health of housing residents, and, where possible, HUD will provide physical space to provide healthcare services.

Strategies:

1. Increase information about and access to health services, including veterans' health benefits, through partnerships with health organizations and healthcare delivery systems.
2. Increase coordination of HUD programs with healthcare resources administered by other federal, state, and local programs.
3. Provide physical space to colocate healthcare and wellness services with housing (for example, onsite health clinics).
4. Promote housing management practices that protect the health of residents (for example, smoking cessation, pest management, and green cleaning).

Subgoal 3C: Utilize HUD assistance to increase economic security and self-sufficiency

HUD housing serves at least two broad populations: people who are in a position to markedly increase their self-sufficiency and people who will need long-term support (for example, the frail elderly and people with severe disabilities). For those individuals who are able, increasing self-sufficiency requires access to life-skills training, wealth-creation and asset-building opportunities, job training, and career services. For those who need long-term support, HUD housing will provide access to income support and other benefits that can enhance an individual's quality of life. Assisting both populations can be accomplished by providing space in HUD-assisted housing to offer training programs and information sessions, partnering with the Department of Labor, collaborating with state and local organizations to coordinate job-skills training and job placement, and improving access to public benefit programs for eligible recipients.

Strategies:

1. Support wealth creation and asset building through programs that enable families to build assets and increase financial literacy.
2. Improve access to job opportunities through information sharing; coordination with federal, state, and local programs; and other means.
3. Increase access to job training and career services and work support through coordination with federal, state, and local programs.
4. Increase access to public benefits (such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF] and Supplemental Security Income [SSI]) through outreach and other means.
5. Increase access to broadband Internet and other technology.

Subgoal 3D: Utilize HUD assistance to improve housing stability through supportive services for vulnerable populations, including the elderly, people with disabilities, homeless people, and those individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless

For those people who are without housing or who are at risk of losing their homes, the provision of affordable housing in combination with an array of voluntary economic, health, and social services can help stabilize their situation and put them on a path toward their highest possible level of self-sufficiency. These services require that housing providers establish partnerships with a variety of public and private health, human service, and job training and placement organizations.

Strategies:

1. Provide and increase access to homelessness prevention services.
2. Increase enrollment in mental health services, substance abuse programs, veterans health and benefit programs, and medical services for the elderly, people with disabilities, and households experiencing homelessness or that are at risk of becoming homeless.

Subgoal 3E: Utilize HUD assistance to improve public safety

Safety and perceptions of safety are necessary factors for quality of life. Enhancing physical safety and reducing crime are essential to improving health, education, and economic outcomes. To improve actual safety and perceptions of safety, HUD will work with other housing providers to establish partnerships with law enforcement, improve the design of HUD-assisted residences, and promote safety awareness.

Strategies:

1. Encourage housing managers to use incentives to promote safety awareness and crime prevention programs.
2. Maintain or improve the physical environment and design of HUD-assisted residences, giving attention to physical safety and crime prevention.
3. Promote a high level of coordination with law enforcement agencies to prevent and reduce crime.



Examples of Themes for Goal 3

New Partners

In the age of high-speed Internet and constant connectivity, opening the doors of opportunity to every American depends on technology like never before. We have an opportunity to use HUD housing as a platform to drive other outcomes by increasing access to broadband Internet and other technology for residents who receive HUD assistance. HUD has worked with the **Federal Communications Commission** to develop best practices for engaging nonprofit and private partners to bring down the cost of computers and monthly service for HUD-assisted residents; provide training and applications that help them access educational, employment, and other opportunities available through broadband; and partner with other federal agencies that serve low-income people who lack these opportunities.

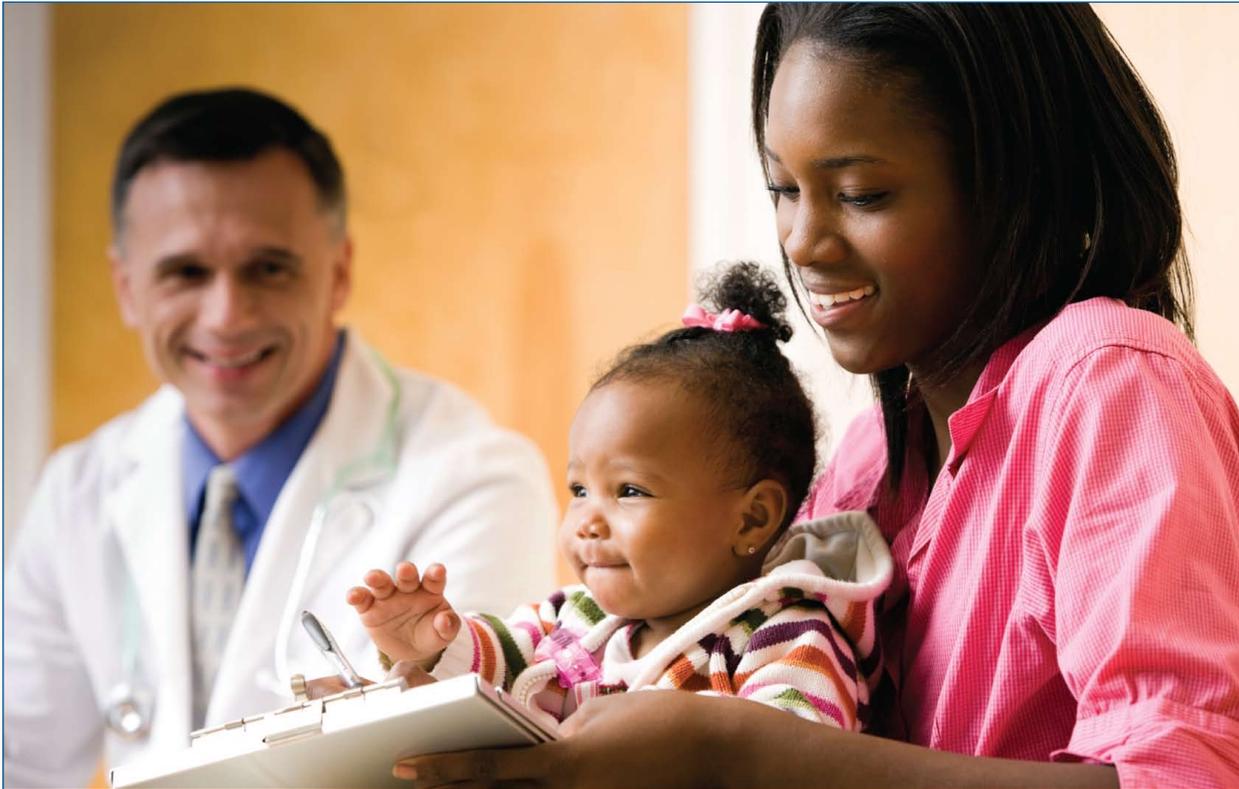
New Geography

Many people think of homelessness as strictly an urban phenomenon, but the same structural issues that cause homelessness in cities—lack of affordable housing and low incomes—are present in rural areas and suburbs as well. Often in these communities, the problem is exacerbated by other issues, such as limited access to health and social services or lack of public transportation. The **HEARTH (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing) Act**, which was signed into law in 2009, increases funding for homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing in rural areas and will provide up to 20 percent of grant funds to build the capacity of rural communities to respond to homelessness.

New Business Model

Increased accessibility to accurate data now enables HUD to determine whether homelessness is increasing or decreasing, what subpopulations are most affected, and what the real costs of homelessness are. As a result of this new business model, it has become clear that significant cost savings can be achieved for some populations by providing an individual stable, affordable housing with targeted health and human services. This evidence has led to new, more effective and efficient housing and service delivery models that save taxpayer dollars. Ultimately, the goal is to be able to **measure these efficiencies across federal programs and recycle the cost savings in a way that rewards the agencies that make these savings possible.**





Signature Initiative— Ending Homelessness by Preventing It

For more than two decades, HUD's targeted McKinney-Vento homelessness assistance programs have helped communities across the nation meet the needs of families and individuals who have become homeless. Although these resources remain critical, there is a growing recognition that the best and most cost-effective way to end homelessness is to prevent it before it begins. The initiative to End Homelessness by Preventing It will—

- Prevent homelessness before it begins by connecting those at risk with rental assistance and by forging new partnerships to provide robust, supportive services in addition to housing.
- Connect HUD core housing programs with mainstream supports from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Education.
- Partner with HHS starting in FY 2011 to link health and social services with housing vouchers in order to end homelessness for 10,000 households and help model future partnering opportunities to assist homeless families and individuals.

No one, especially veterans who have faithfully served our country, should become homeless. [The Interagency Council on Homelessness] work is critical to providing for those at risk and on the streets. This interagency partnership allows us to leverage our resources, programs, talent, and experience to create viable solutions that will eliminate homelessness.

—Eric K. Shinseki, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
June 18, 2009