

— TOP TAKEAWAYS —

America's Failure to Address Homelessness

THE U.S.'S HOMELESS POLICY IS A COMPLETE FAILURE

- [Housing First](#) is a public policy approach to homelessness that connects the homeless to permanently-subsidized housing without the requirement of sobriety, mental health treatment, or employment, ever.
- In 2008, the federal government adopted this approach nationwide for the chronically homeless population—approximately [10-20% of the nation's homeless](#)—the majority of whom struggle with physical disabilities, mental illness, and addiction.
- Five years later, in 2013, with limited evidence of its effectiveness, and without evidence it would effectively address the remaining [80-90% of the homeless population](#), the federal government rolled out permanently-subsidized, “unconditional” housing to all Americans struggling with homelessness and promised to “[end homelessness in 10 years](#).”
- Ten years later, in 2023, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that [653,000 Americans were struggling with homelessness](#)—the highest point ever recorded in our nation's history and a 12% increase over 2022. The unsheltered population increased by 147% during this period.

HOMELESS POLICY EXCLUDES MANY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- The HUD modified the federal government's homeless definition under its one-size-fits-all roll-out of Housing First that excluded most homeless families from HUD's annual Point-In-Time count and from the largest source of public funding for the homeless—HUD-funded resources.
- Not only is the nation's homeless crisis much more severe than HUD is reporting, the implications of this exclusion have severe consequences in the short- and long-term.

ANY POLICY APPROACH MUST BE HUMAN-CENTERED, NOT HOUSING-CENTERED

- Human beings are, by their very nature, complex. Any policy solution must be human-centered, versus housing-centered, and its foundation must be built on a human being's inherent needs. This means we should return to a policy of putting humans first, not Housing First.
- Homeless policy must focus on the needs of those struggling with homelessness in parallel with the needs of the communities surrounding them. Many Americans have been ludicrously forced to abandon our sidewalks, parks, and our expectations of public order and safety.
- Homeless policy must insist on guardrails of responsibility at every level of the system, from governments at the federal, state, and local levels, to the individuals struggling with homelessness and the non-profits serving them.

Click [HERE](#) to read the policy focus and learn more about America's failure to address homelessness.