

**Scarborough Housing Alliance
Committee Meeting
Thursday, June 27, 2024 - Hybrid Meeting
[Scarborough Town Hall – 6:00pm]**

Zoom Link: <https://scarboroughmaine.zoom.us/j/89826710321>

AGENDA

- **Approval of Minutes:** April 24, 2024
- **Discussion:**
Homelessness Report by Karen Martin and Lauren Dembski-Martin
- **Discussion:**
3i HoMe Project Update
- **Discussion:**
Grand Openings: Village Commons (Avesta)
Jocelyn Place (SoPo Housing)
- **Public Comment.**
- **Adjournment.**

WHY SHA EXISTS:

The purpose of the Council in establishing the Alliance is to create a broadly-based community group to:

- Work together to develop and recommend a local housing agenda to the Town Council.
- Implement a local housing program under the guidance of the Town Council.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Town Council from time to time.

Homelessness and Housing

- No one does well without housing.
- Everyone does well with housing.

Homelessness and Housing

When someone is unhoused, they experience one of the most stressful situations known to mankind.

Stress exacerbates everything including:

- Serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI)
- Substance use disorder (SUD)
- Poverty and homelessness
- Negative or low self-esteem

Chronic stress leads to premature death. People experiencing chronic homelessness die in their fifties of symptoms more typical of people in their eighties.

Housing is healthcare and a pathway to wellness for people with very challenging situations.

This is especially true for unsheltered populations.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – House or Safely Shelter

- Everyone deserves the opportunity to be inside and safe.
- Living outside is not good, and neither are encampment sweeps without providing a true alternative.
- Housing people is best, and if that is not readily available, sheltering people is vital.
- In cold/hot/dangerous climates, shelter is paramount. Creating shelter in more hospitable climates may not be feasible because the infrastructure was never there. Where shelter is feasible, work to create capacity by diversion and housing the people there.

Create safe indoor shelter space to meet needs whenever possible.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Structure is key

Homelessness generally offers no structure or accountability. Structural support and accountability framework are keys to success; it is nearly impossible to provide any such framework without shelter or housing.

According to Maine drug overdose data, people who were homeless in 2023 were 32 times more likely to die of a fatal overdose than people in the general population.

(2023 data: 607 fatal ODs within overall population of 1.396M, 73 (12%) were within 6000 people homeless)

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Encampments = Carnival

- When people are clustered together in an unstructured and unsupervised setting, bad things commonly happen.
- People are drawn to encampments because it feels like a carnival.
- People become targets for others to prey on.
- Encampments lead to increases in homelessness, both in numbers of people drawn in, and in complexity for populations participating because substance use, human trafficking, sexual and physical traumas occur.
- Encampments are mostly a miserable existence and further or deepen negative self-esteem for participants.
- Some people will say they prefer to be outside. This is likely an effort by people who don't feel good about themselves attempting to push people away or tell them what they think they want to hear. It is a cry from people who are suffering and don't feel worthwhile.
- It is on us to read between the lines and insist that everyone deserves to be safely inside.
- We also must factor in the need for connections and ensure those carry through.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – The goal is housing

- Housing people directly from encampments presents challenges but is possible.
- Moving people in encampments inside, where basic needs can be better met and the stress of unsheltered homelessness is alleviated, creates an optimal pathway to housing.
- Creating shelter capacity (even if temporary) to get people indoors is critical.
- Targeted/collaborative initiatives are key for this population.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Start with thoughtful structure

- Three key steps to address encampments:
 - Find/create temporary, indoor shelter with low barriers and bring people inside.
 - Ensure a collaborative coordination of services for all people who are unhoused/unsheltered.
 - Find housing or indoor space/shelter for each individual so that closure of an encampment becomes feasible. Set the stage for indoor community support.
- Set a timeline to close encampments and complete bringing people inside, adjust it if needed to ensure people have access to housing or shelter before the closure.
- Do this thoughtfully, with respect to people who are unhoused, and with sufficient notice.
- Work with each person to move them into temporary shelter or another appropriate option, rather than allowing unsafe, unhealthy encampments to persist or reemerge.
- Be persistent, but also incorporate flexibility to meet each person where they are at for success.
- Criminalizing homelessness is not helpful. Insisting and persisting through relationships is effective in helping people make good choices.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Strategies for shelter

- What can you do if there is no access to shelter?
- Options:
 1. Create robust “street to housing” navigation. This is used in milder climates and is part of the Maine strategy, and although harder, is feasible.
 2. Be persistent about buying beds from formal shelters in surrounding communities. Persistence can pay off, particularly if the person will come with housing navigation for an efficient exit strategy. Shelters don’t want to be dumped on. If services accompany the person, you are only asking for safe space for a brief period of time.
 3. Modify General Assistance interpretation so that it will pay for emergency shelter.
 4. Be creative about indoor space. Can a portion of the police or other department become a safe, temporary location for someone to sleep while housing options are being aggressively explored?

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – From crisis to success

- Portland, Maine exploded from 60 tents to 282 tents between March and October 2023.
- The cause was a sudden inflow of asylum seekers who were successful in a first-come first-served shelter. People chronically homeless were less successful and landed outside beginning in March.
- The City made three important choices:
 1. Working with a partner it created a shelter to properly serve single adult asylum seekers. This opened on November 30, 2023. 120 people relocated there in the first hour.
 2. The City opened an additional 50 shelter beds using internal capacity. These came online around the same time meaning 170 beds were suddenly available.
 3. The City lowered barriers and prioritized people who were unsheltered.

Addressing Unsheltered Homelessness – Successful models involve capacity and lowered barriers

The result:

- Portland saw a 90% reduction in tents the next two months, 85% of that in the first 5 weeks.

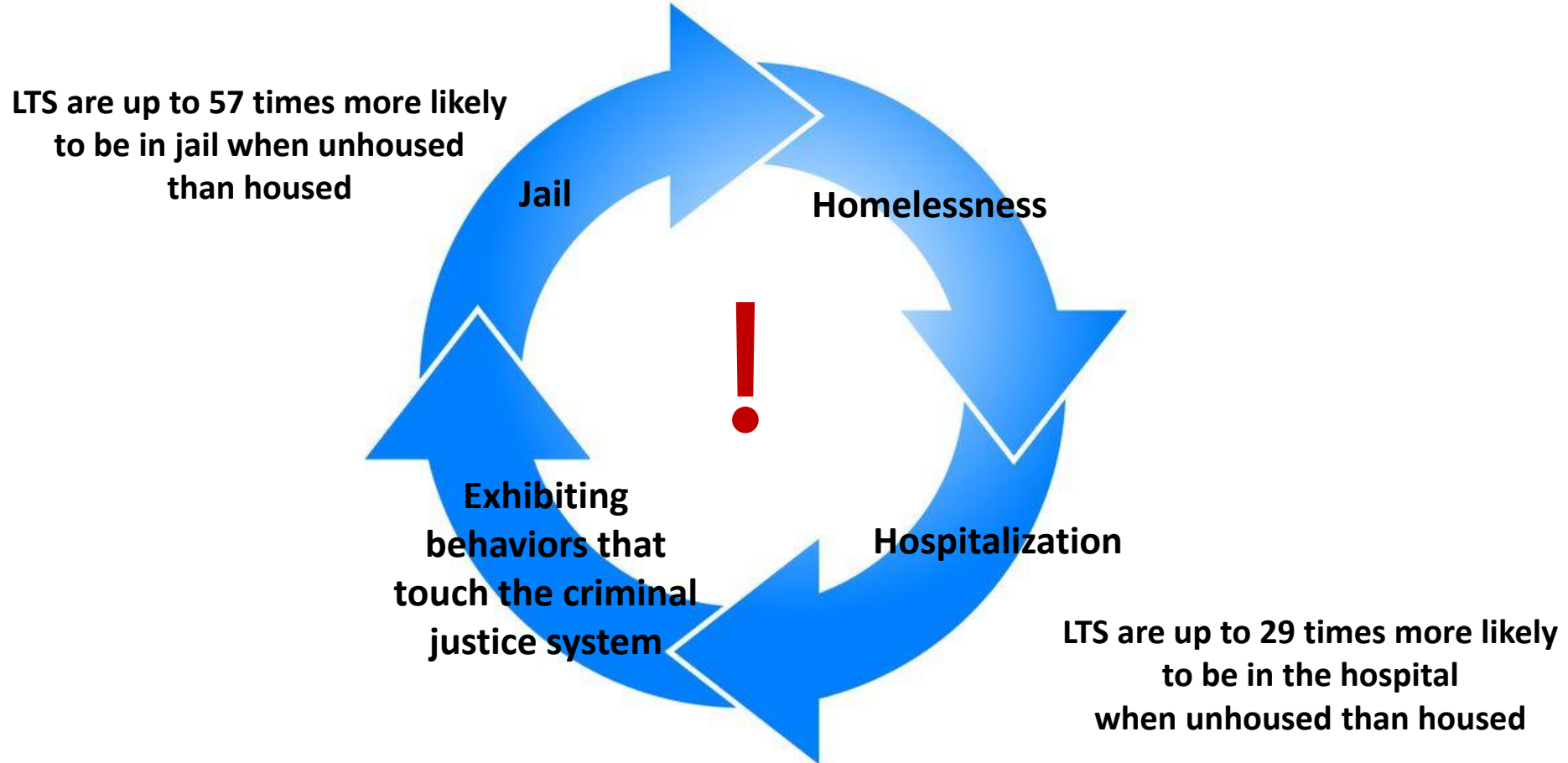
There were 30 tents outside in February, it has remained around that level since. The City has had maintained shelter capacity headroom above need since then, and just made permanent that internal space.

- Numbers of people unsheltered are lower this year than in any of the last 10 years.

There were three fatal overdoses in one encampment alone in May 2023. In contrast, the entire City had no fatal overdoses in the month of January 2024, precisely when most people moved inside.

THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

The cycle of emergencies when someone is UNHOUSED:
Chronically Homeless or Long-Term Stayer (LTS) populations ricochet
through our most expensive emergency systems.



HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

The cycle of emergencies is broken when someone is housed.
This population all but stops touching the emergency system once housed.



Once housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

Shelters are particularly skilled at providing housing navigation services.

This results in steady outflow from the shelter to housing.

Housing navigation for unsheltered populations as a pathway to housing is critical.

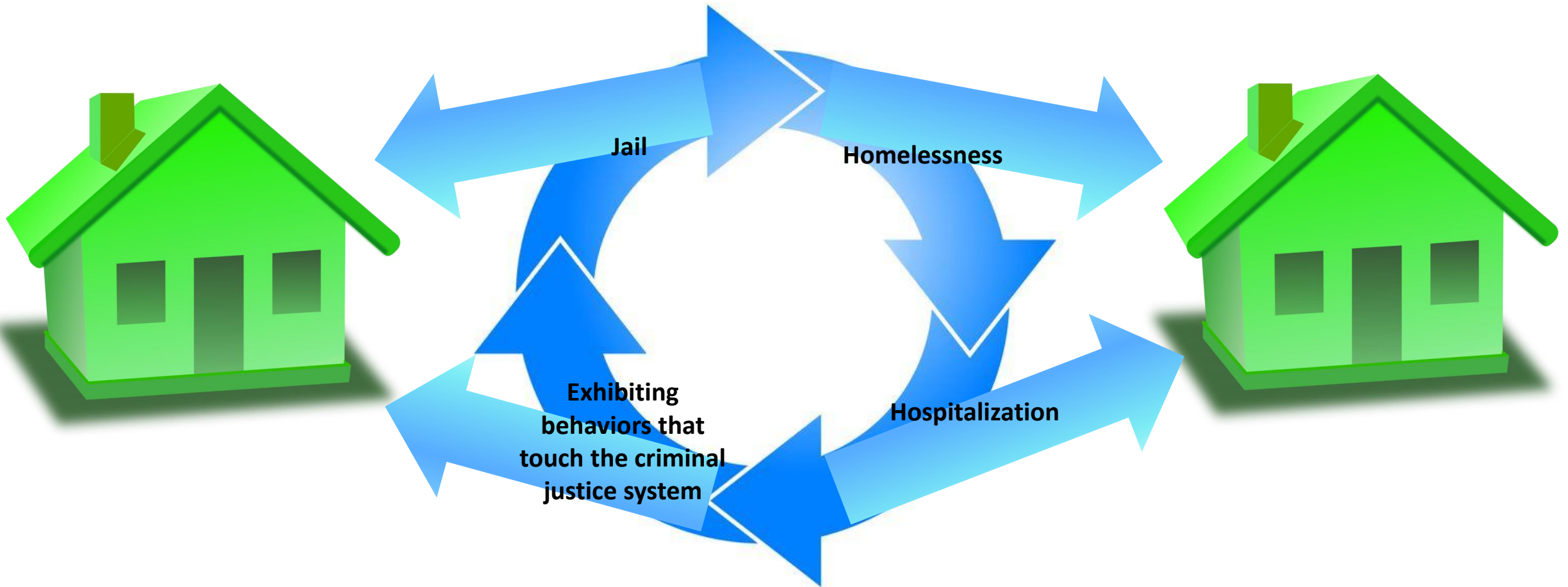


Navigation services should continue into housing

Once housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

HOW TO BREAK THE CYCLE: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING

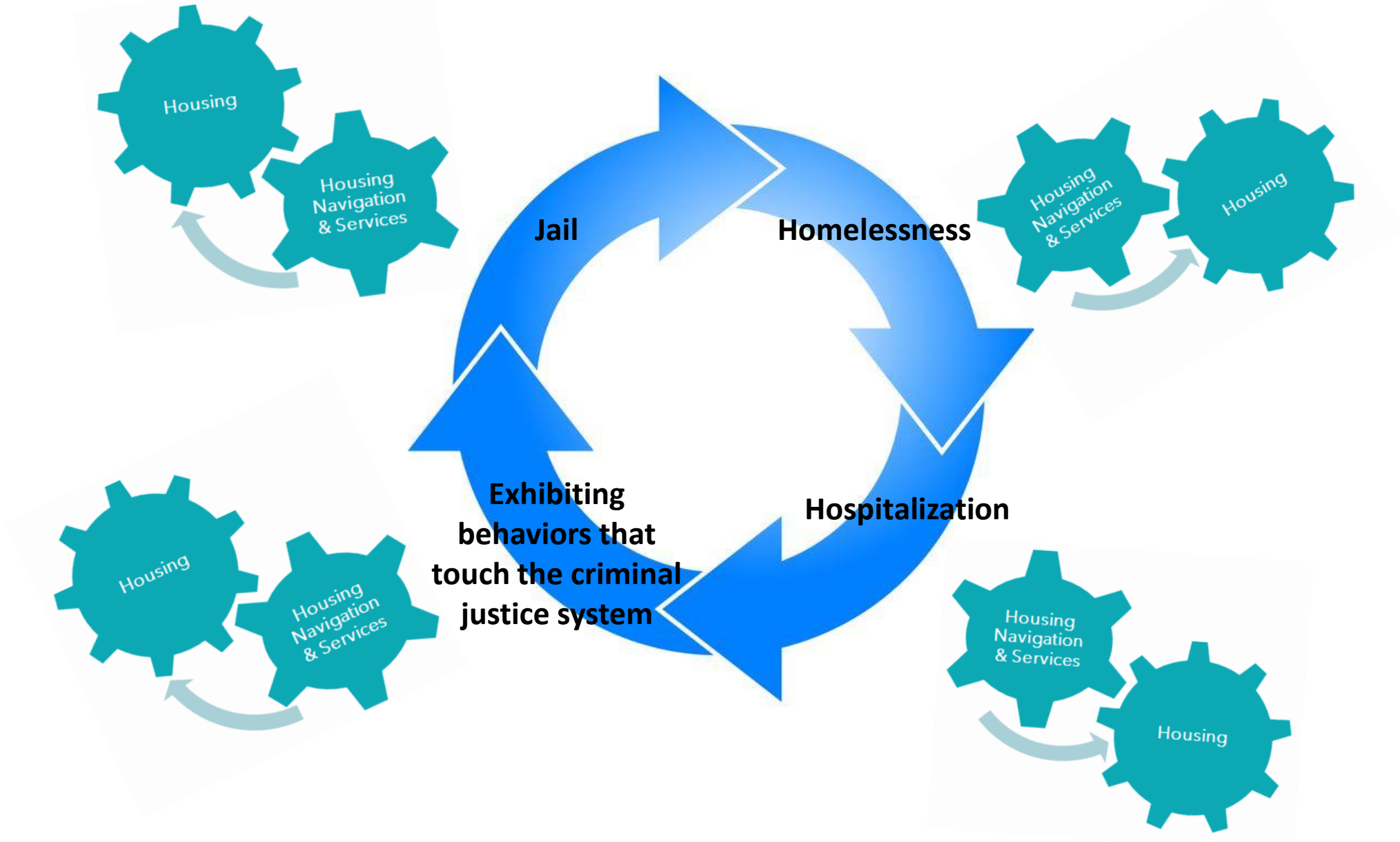
Housing can happen from anywhere in the cycle.



When housed, LTS typically have a 90% success rate remaining housed, and rarely touch hospitals or the criminal justice system.

ADDING SERVICES BREAKS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

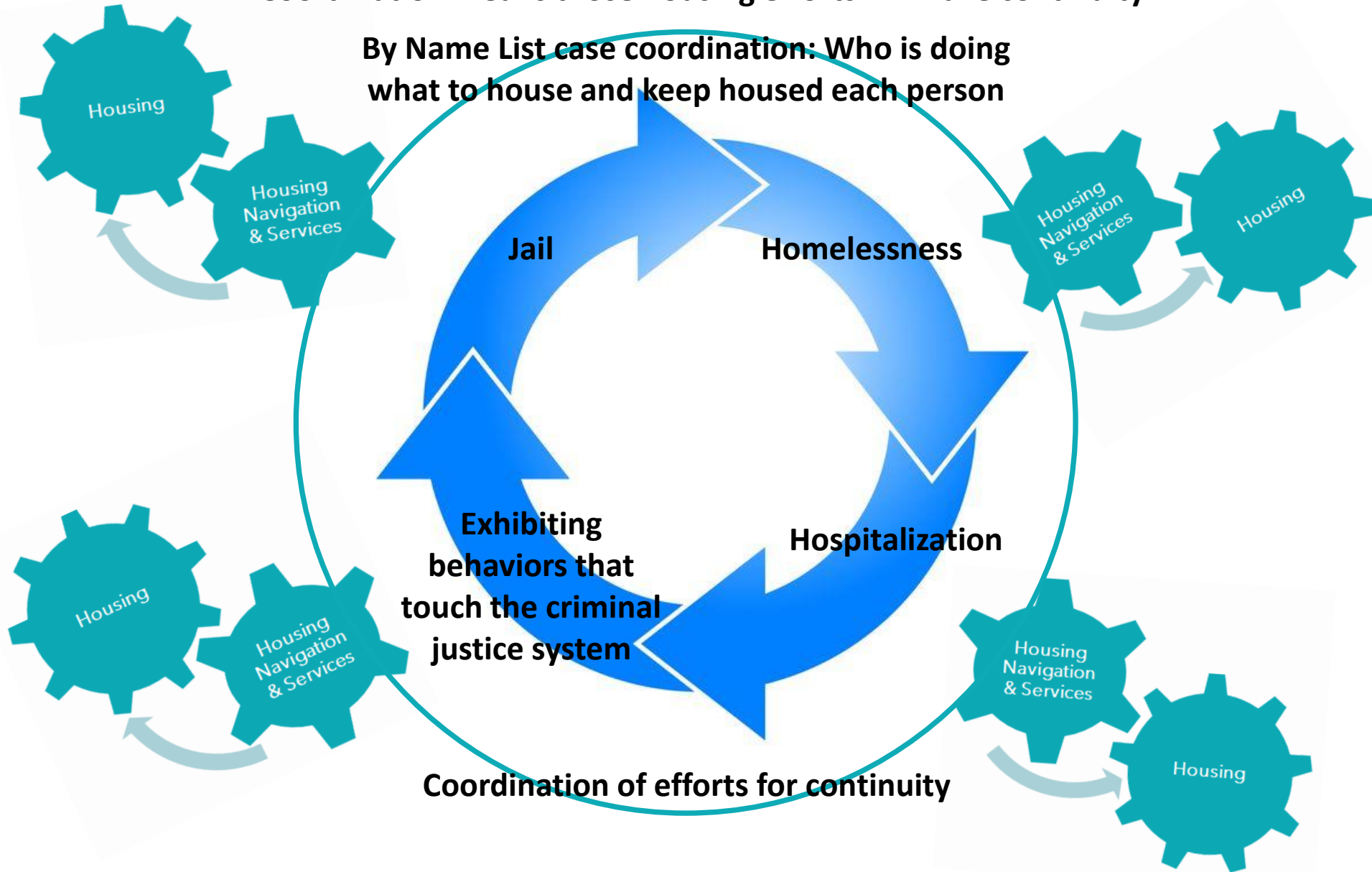
Injecting housing navigation is the key to getting people housed.



COORDINATING EFFORTS BREAKS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Coordination means those housing efforts will have continuity.

By Name List case coordination: Who is doing what to house and keep housed each person



HOUSING STOPS THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Housing is the foundation for stability.



Permanent Supportive Housing is the end goal for this population.

All types are equally successful.

A wide array is important.

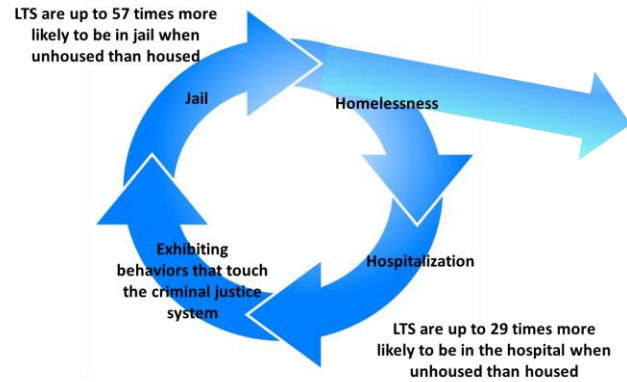
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Ultra Low-Barrier
Recovery
Residences

Recovery
Residences

Housing First
• Scattered Site
• Blended
• Site-Based

Ultra
Low-Barrier
Housing First



SERVICES PERMANENTLY END THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS

Housing is the foundation for stability.

Services make each housing placement a success.



Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Ultra Low-Barrier Recovery Residences

Recovery Residences

Housing First

- Scattered Site
- Blended
- Site-Based

Ultra Low-Barrier Housing First



Permanent services for ongoing success



Permanent services for ongoing success



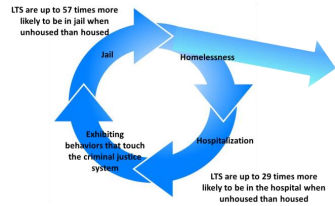
Permanent services for ongoing success



Permanent services for ongoing success

LTS are up to 57 times more likely to be in jail and up to 29 times more likely to be in the hospital when unhoused than when housed.

Housing this population and keeping them housed makes sense.



Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

39 month Average

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	28.98 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 29 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	11.01 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 11 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed.

12 Month Average (most recent)

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	31.95 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 32 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	11.78 x	LTS who were unhoused were almost 12 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed.

Peak

Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	57.22 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 57 times more likely to be in jail than LTS who were housed. (Peak: February 2023)
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	29.15 x	LTS who were unhoused were more than 29 times more likely to be hospitalized than LTS who were housed. (Peak: October 2022)

Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

2024 Data	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 204	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024
Same Population (LTS) N =	568	567	555	549	530							
Total on Active List	141	138	131	124	106							
Active List - Jail	14	16	15	16	20							
%	9.93%	11.59%	11.45%	12.90%	18.87%							
Active List - Hospital	4	4	5	4	3							
%	2.84%	2.90%	3.82%	3.23%	2.83%							
Total on Housed List	427	429	424	425	424							
Housed List - Jail	2	1	0	0	0							
%	0.47%	0.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%							
Housed List - Hospital	0	1	1	1	1							
%	0.00%	0.23%	0.24%	0.24%	24.00%							
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	21.13 X	50.39 X	** see note below	** see note below	** see note below							
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	** see note below	12.61 X	15.92 X	13.46 X	11.79 X							
2023 Data	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023
Same Population (LTS) N =	492	493	488	577	577	561	566	561	562	564	563	561
Total on Active List	121	123	121	195	179	162	159	158	154	144	139	140
Active List - Jail	15	19	15	17	17	14	16	14	10	15	13	13
%	12.40%	15.45%	12.40%	8.72%	9.50%	8.64%	10.06%	8.86%	6.49%	10.42%	9.35%	9.29%
Active List - Hospital	6	7	7	8	6	4	4	5	4	4	3	4
%	4.96%	5.69%	5.79%	4.10%	3.35%	2.47%	2.52%	3.16%	2.60%	2.78%	2.16%	2.86%
Total on Housed List	368	370	367	382	390	399	407	403	408	420	424	421
Housed List - Jail	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	0
%	0.54%	0.27%	0.27%	0.26%	0.26%	0.25%	0.24%	0.74%	0.49%	0.24%	0.24%	0.00%
Housed List - Hospital	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
%	0.54%	0.54%	0.54%	0.52%	0.51%	0.25%	0.24%	0.25%	0.25%	0.24%	0.24%	0.00%
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	22.96 X	57.22 X	45.93 X	33.54 X	36.54 X	34.56 X	41.92 X	11.97 X	13.24 X	43.42 X	38.96 X	** see note below
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	9.19 X	10.54 X	10.72 X	7.88 X	6.57 X	9.88 X	10.5 X	12.64 X	10.4 X	11.58 X	9 X	** see note below

Long Term Stayers Unhoused vs. Housed Rate of Jail & Hospitalization March 2021-May 2024:

2022 Data	Jan 2022	Feb 2022	Mar 2022	Apr 2022	May 2022	June 2022	July 2022	Aug 2022	Sept 2022	Oct 2022	Nov 2022	Dec 2022
Same Population (LTS) N =	475	475	474	472	474	477	512	496	502	497	497	492
Total on Active List	138	129	125	123	120	118	147	142	141	127	122	119
Active List - Jail	9	12	15	13	13	16	15	14	15	17	22	20
%	6.50%	9.30%	12%	10.57%	10.83%	13.56%	10.20%	9.86%	10.64%	13.39%	18.03%	16.81%
Active List - Hospital	7	6	4	4	3	4	3	5	8	10	6	5
%	5.07%	4.65%	3.20%	3.25%	2.50%	3.40%	2.04%	3.52%	5.67%	7.87%	4.92%	4.20%
Total on Housed List	337	346	349	349	354	359	365	363	361	370	370	373
Housed List - Jail	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	2	4	2	2
%	0%	0.29%	0.29%	0.29%	0%	0.56%	0.55%	0.55%	0.55%	1.08%	0.54%	0.54%
Housed List - Hospital	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
%	0.30%	0%	0%	0%	0.28%	0.28%	0.27%	0.28%	0.28%	0.27%	0.54%	0.54%
Likelihood to be in jail when unhoused vs housed	*see note below	32 x	41.4 X	36.5 X	** see note below	24.2 X	18.5 X	17.9 X	19.3 X	12.4 X	33.39 X	31.13 X
Likelihood to be in the hospital when unhoused vs housed	16.9 x	** see note below	** see note below	** see note below	8.9 x	12.14 X	7.6 X	12.57 X	20.25 X	29.15 X	9.11 X	7.78 X

Key Takeaways



Everyone deserves housing – and if it isn't immediately available everyone deserves to be indoors. Housing is healthcare and a path to wellness.



Chronically Homeless or Long-Term Stayer (LTS) populations ricochet through our most expensive emergency systems when unhoused – especially LTS who are unsheltered. This population all but stops touching any emergency systems once housed.



Collaborative coordination of services and housing navigation is key.



Once we house people even with modest support, they tend to stay housed and not return to homelessness. And they stop ricocheting. It takes relationship work to get to success.