

Women experiencing homelessness in Portland

How many homeless women are there?

- In FY 12-13, 6,800 homeless women were served in Multnomah Countyⁱ
- 4,700 were **individuals** (unaccompanied)
- 2,100 were in **couples** or **families**
- 3,300 (49%) had a disability (health, mental health, etc.)
- 1,100 (16%) were chronically homeless
- 200 (3%) were 65 or older
- 1,215 were **youth** ages 18-24
- Additionally, nearly 1,300 women received **domestic violence** servicesⁱⁱ
 - 430 were unaccompanied and 870 were in families with children

What is the community doing now for homeless women?

- Homelessness prevention
 - Housing retention services, eviction prevention, rent assistance, shelter diversion. Services are provided by dozens of organizations including DV providers, family and school-based providers, NAYA, JOIN, TPI, IRCO, NAFY, NW Pilot Project, SEI, CCC, CAP.
 - Example: TPI diverted 110 women from shelter in 12-13. When receiving calls from women in crisis, they're able to prevent their eviction or help them move quickly to housing, without ever entering shelter.
- Street outreach
 - Providers like JOIN, Catholic Charities, Janus Youth, Cascadia and Human Solutions identify individuals, couples and families who are sleeping outside and help move them as quickly as possible back into housing
- Housing placement services and rent assistance
 - Services are provided by dozens of organizations including DV providers, family and school-based providers, NAYA, JOIN, TPI, IRCO, NAFY, NW Pilot Project, CCC, CAP.
- Permanent supportive housing for disabled women and families
 - Services are provided in-home or at agencies and housing can be in private market rental apartments or in facility-based programs
- Emergency shelter and transitional housing: youth, women, families, DV
 - More than 200 public and privately funded shelter beds are available year-round and another 85 during the winter season. More than 500 units of transitional housing are provided in rental apartments or facility-based programs. Services are provided by dozens of organizations including DV providers, family providers, SAFES, TPI, Janus, SEI, NW Pilot Project, CCC, CAP.

Challenges:

Providers report increasing numbers of women with multiple barriers to housing, including mental illnesses, addictions, serious health conditions and/or women fleeing from domestic violence. Nearly 50% of women served in FY 12-13 had a disabling condition and 1,100 were chronically homeless (disabled and homeless for a year or more). This speaks to the need for the City and County to work together on solutions.

The following chart represents solutions the City can lead for women with fewer barriers.

	Homelessness prevention: street outreach, housing placement & rent assistance	Open the bottleneck: Make women’s shelters more efficient
What a \$1M investment would buy	Housing placement staff, rent assistance and retention services	Additional resources for two City-funded shelters (112 beds) for housing placement services and rent assistance, as well as retention services and shelter diversion.
Outcomes	300 households move from the streets into housing, including women in families, couples and individuals. [Outcomes based on \$1M investment in FY 10-11.]	100 are diverted from shelter (retaining their housing through eviction prevention services and rent assistance) and 200 move from shelters into housing over one year. Would reduce wait lists at SAFES and Jean’s Place (130-190 at each).
Steps to make it happen	Direct resources to existing high-performing partners or RFP.	Direct resources to existing high-performing partners or RFP and report outcomes on a quarterly basis. In FY 12-13, 785 women stayed at SAFES and Jean’s. 74 (9%) moved to permanent housing and 54% returned to homelessness. Current average length of stay is 20 days, with 73% staying less than a month. Many shelter residents have multiple barriers, causing challenges to housing.

ⁱ This is preliminary data for discussion. Prior to program implementation, we would do a more thorough review for data completeness and accuracy. Data entered by organizations who participate in our community’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Does not include data from non-HMIS agencies.
ⁱⁱ DV data is maintained in a separate, highly secure system and cannot be unduplicated from community-wide numbers.