



National Alliance to  
**END HOMELESSNESS**

**TARGETING ASSISTANCE TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS**  
**CWDA Conference**  
**October 15, 2021**

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RESEARCH AND EDUCATION • INFLUENCING FEDERAL POLICY • BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY

# Introductions

- Sharon McDonald, National Alliance to End Homeless
- Robert Santillano, Research Director, California Policy Lab at UCLA
- Tomiquia Moss, Founder and CEO, All Home



# The Framework for an Equitable COVID-19 Homelessness Response

#HousingEquity



# Housing Program Characteristics

	Emergency Rental Assistance	ESG-CV	Emergency Vouchers	HOME Homelessness Assistance
<b>Funding</b>	\$46.6 billion	\$4 billion	\$5 billion	\$5 billion
<b>Expenditure Dates</b>	ERA 1: 9/30/2022 ERA 2: 9/30/2027	9/30/2022	9/30/2030 (cannot be reissued after 9/2023)	Obligation by 2025 (4 years) Expenditure by 2030.
<b>Eligible Households</b>	At or below 80% AMI; Hardship due to COVID; Risk of homelessness or housing instability	Experiencing or at high risk of homelessness	Currently or recently experiencing or at risk of homelessness; survivors of domestic violence	Experiencing or at risk of homelessness; survivors of domestic violence, veterans; other populations with greatest risk of housing instability
<b>Additional Notes</b>	No requirement for past tenancy	Distributed in two allocations	70,000 vouchers. Distribution based on relative need and local capacity	Distributed via the HOME Formula



# Funding Prevention & Rehousing

Funding Source	Rental & Utility Assistance	Services	Other financial assistance
Emergency Rental Assistance (1 + 2)	Yes	Limited	No
Coronavirus Relief Funds	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency Solutions Grants-CV (CARES Act)	Yes	Yes	Yes
CDGB-CV (CARES Act)	Yes	Yes	Yes
ARP– Emergency Housing Vouchers	Yes	Very Limited	Limited
ARP – HOME	Yes	Yes	No
ARP – TANF EA	Yes	Yes	Yes
ARP state/local government aid	Yes	Yes	Yes



# Guiding Principles & Considerations

- **Race Equity Lens -**

- COVID19, Employment Impacts, Hardship Impacts (e.g. hunger), Evictions, and Homelessness all have a disproportionate impact on people of color
  - Families headed by a Black woman make up half of all families that experience a shelter stay.
  - Matthew Desmond's Eviction Lab Data indicate evictions disproportionately impact single Black women with children.
- Are they receiving an equitable share of the resources? Do we even analyze to find out? What about other groups?

# Guiding Principles & Considerations

- **Partner with Homeless Services Community**
  - National Research – Who is at greatest risk?
  - Local Data – Who is coming in locally and from where? What are their characteristics?
  - Lived Experience – People with greatest insight as to how their homelessness could have been prevented are right there!
  - Connection to Highly Vulnerable Populations – Best predictor of future homelessness is former homelessness
  - Service Models – Constantly innovating to be more effective in preventing & ending homelessness

# Guiding Principles & Considerations

- **Regularly Assess & Revise Eligibility and Service Approach**
  - Are those at greatest risk for homelessness even eligible for your programs? Can funds assist doubled up households, families residing in motels? Individuals exiting institutional care?
  - Are resources reaching people at risk equitably?
  - Based on what you learn about homeless people's local trajectory into homelessness in your community, where are the possible touchpoints to reach people earlier? Could application process be outsourced there? (Rethink documentation/application process)



# Guiding Principles & Considerations

- **Outreach**

- Some of those at greatest risk of homelessness aren't calling you seeking assistance!!!! What can you do to find them??
- Possible data sources: eviction records/data, PHAs, water/utility arrearages

- **Broad Screening of Your Caseload!!!**

- Assess for housing instability frequently among high-risk populations (TANF, child welfare, SNAP, Medicaid, CSE)

- **Partners/Points of Intervention**

- Homeless School Liaisons, Faith Communities, Emergency Rooms, Prenatal programs such as WIC, Domestic Violence Hotlines

# Guiding Principles & Considerations

- **Rethink Program Functions**

- Develop capacity to respond to crisis housing needs and storage needs.
- Provide Re-housing Assistance
- Consider supporting or leveraging case management
- Support Homelessness Diversion: Assistance at front door of homeless service system to help people problem-solve alternatives to entering shelter or unsheltered homelessness, often with flexible financial assistance

# Policy Advocacy

- **Build Back Better Act**

- \$90B to expand rental assistance to assist an additional 1 million households annually
- \$80B to repair, preserve and expand public housing for an additional 2.5M residents
- \$37B national Housing Trust Fund to build and preserve 330,000 homes for people with the lowest incomes

# Interventions

## Homelessness Diversion

**Eligible Population:**  
Presenting for homelessness assistance

**Targeting Criteria:**  
HHs with a previous episode of homelessness  
highly impacted communities & neighborhoods

## Homelessness Prevention

**Eligible Population:** Imminent Risk of Homelessness  
Doubled up or Leaseholders  
0-30% AMI

**Targeting Criteria:**  
HHs with a previous episode of homelessness  
highly impacted communities & neighborhoods

## Eviction Prevention

**Eligible Population:**  
Future Risk of Homelessness  
Leaseholders  
0-50% AMI

**Targeting Criteria:**  
HHs with a previous episode of homelessness  
highly impacted communities & neighborhoods

*higher*

**Risk for housing loss & literal homelessness**

*lower*



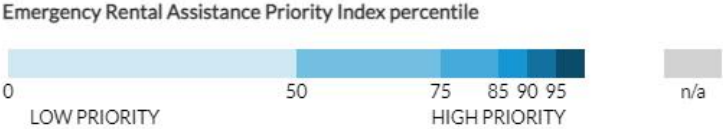
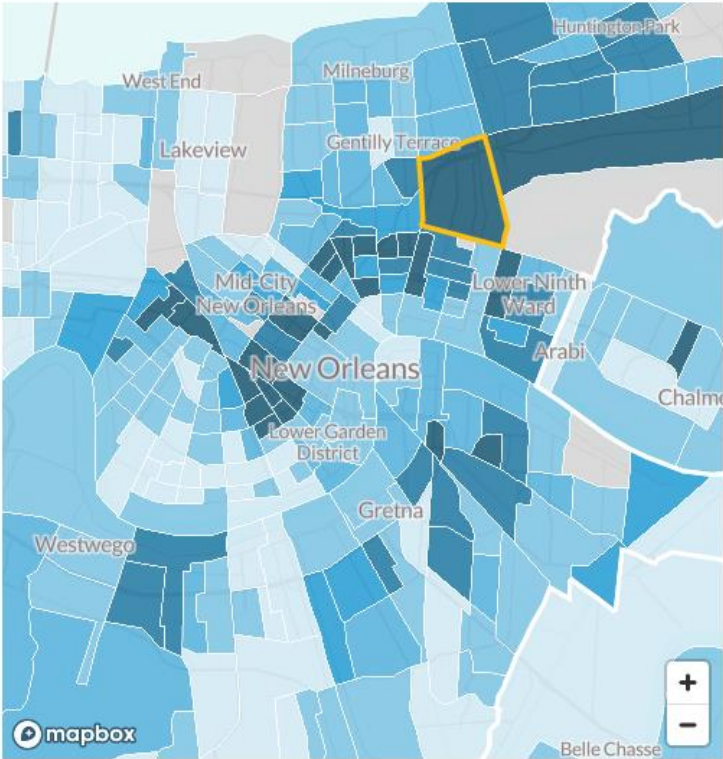
# Reach Communities Facing Greatest Risk

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- Ensure that **outreach efforts and resources are effectively reaching neighborhoods** and communities, including BIPOC communities
- Use the web-based tool, **Where to Prioritize Emergency Rental Assistance to Keep Renters in Their Homes**, created by the Urban Institute, to identify neighborhoods.
- **Partner with people experiencing homelessness, with residents and organizations from impacted neighborhoods** to strategize and design and implement programs
- **Target or dedicate shares of emergency rental assistance and other funding** to neighborhoods experiencing the greatest impacts and risks.



# Available Tools



New Orleans/Jefferson Parish CoC (LA-503) X

CENSUS TRACT 013700 410  
in Orleans Parish, LA ELI renters

**Emergency Rental Assistance Priority Index: 98th percentile (among Louisiana tracts)**

**Housing Instability Risk Subindex: 99th percentile**  
Shares of: people living in poverty, renter-occupied housing units, severely cost-burdened low-income renters, severely overcrowded households, and unemployed people

**COVID-19 Impact Subindex: 96th percentile**  
Shares of: adults without health insurance and low-income jobs lost to COVID-19

**Equity Subindex: 93rd percentile**  
Shares of: people of color, extremely low-income renter households, households receiving public assistance, and people born outside the US

ELI renters = extremely low-income renters, or renters with incomes at or below 30 percent of the area median income

To allow local decisionmakers to compare the needs of neighborhoods in their area, our map displays each census tract based on the percentile that its index value falls into compared with all other tracts in the state. For this reason, the Emergency Rental Assistance Priority Index percentiles in this tool and the values in the data download should not be used to compare housing instability risk in census tracts in different states.

<https://www.urban.org/features/where-prioritize-emergency-rental-assistance-keep-renters-their-homes>



# Reach Households Facing Greatest Risk

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- Ensure that the resources will reach and prioritize the specific **households who face the greatest risks of homelessness – recognizing those risks are racially inequitable**
- Ensure **reaching and effectively serving:**
  - ✓ Households with **current or prior histories of homelessness**
  - ✓ Households at the **lowest income levels**
  - ✓ Households staying in more **informal living arrangements**
  - ✓ **Immigrant households** and people who **communicate in different languages**
  - ✓ People who are **survivors of domestic, intimate partner, or sexual violence**

# Follow Up

Framework for an Equitable COVID19 Homelessness  
Response

<https://housingequityframework.org/>

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# Family homelessness Prevention: some things we know...some things we don't

October 15, 2021



## Level-setting

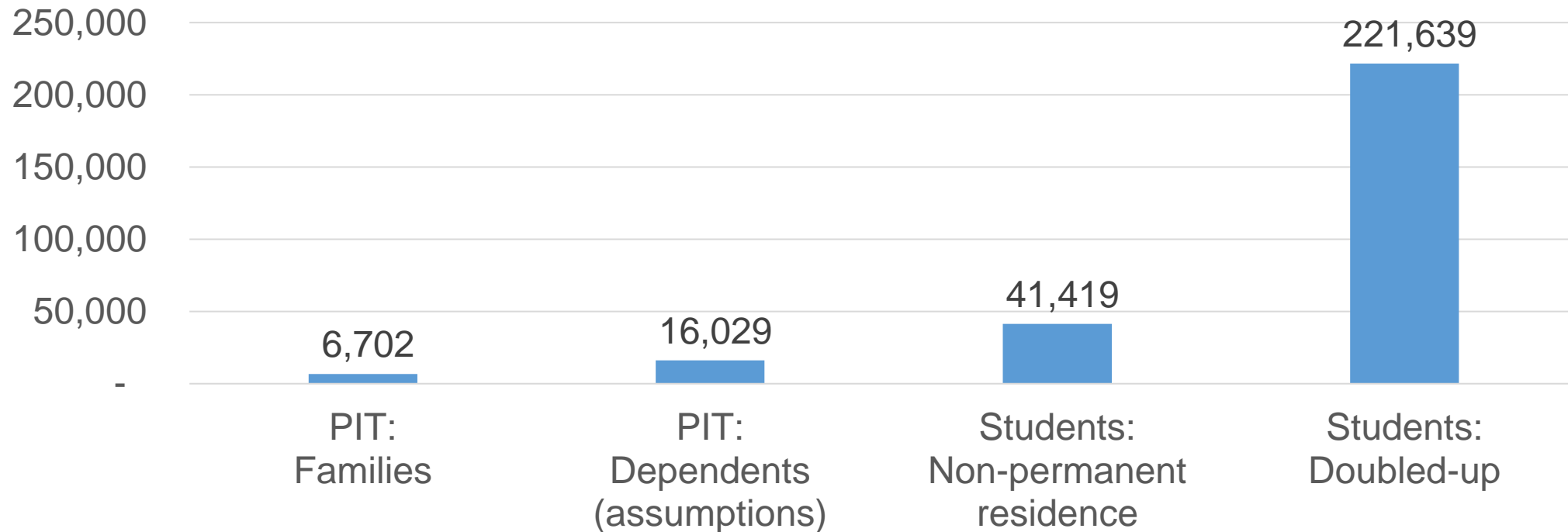


**Question:** Who is experiencing homelessness?

**Answer:** Depends on who you ask.

# Level-setting: US Interagency Council on Homelessness

## CA Counts from 2018

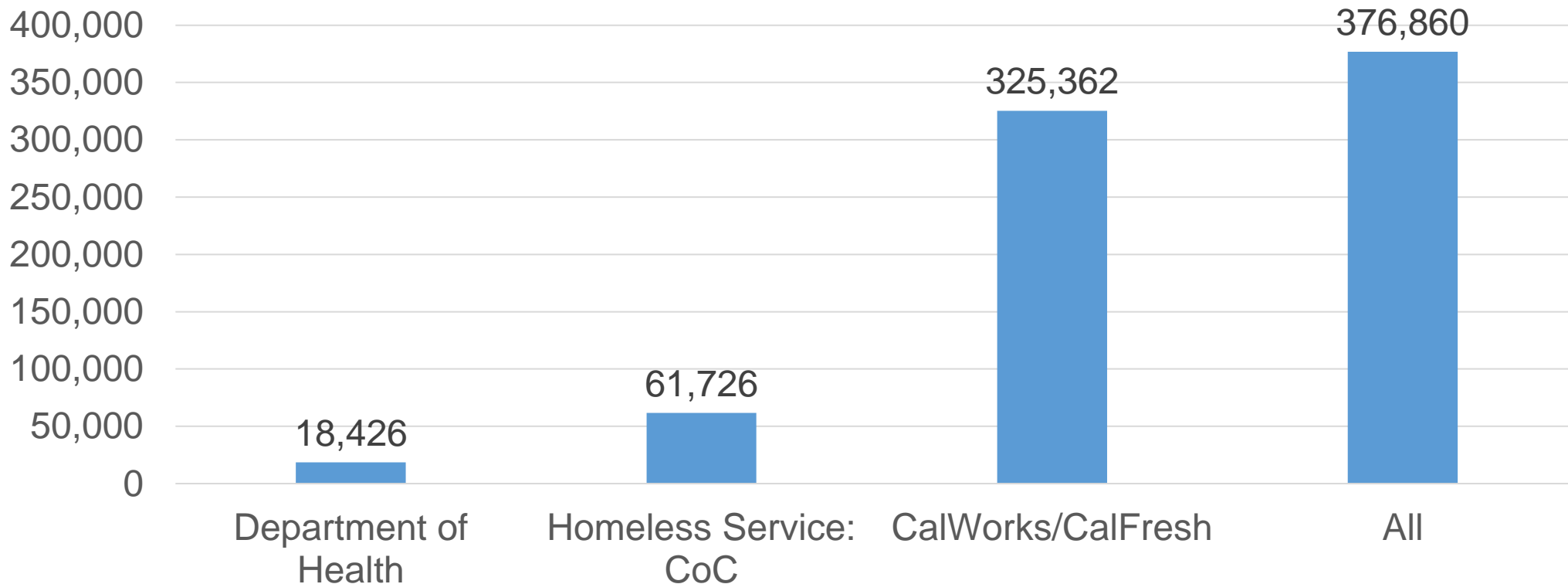


Source: <https://www.usich.gov/homelessness-statistics/ca/>

Assume 2.3 kids per family

## Linked admin data: Who experiences homelessness in LA

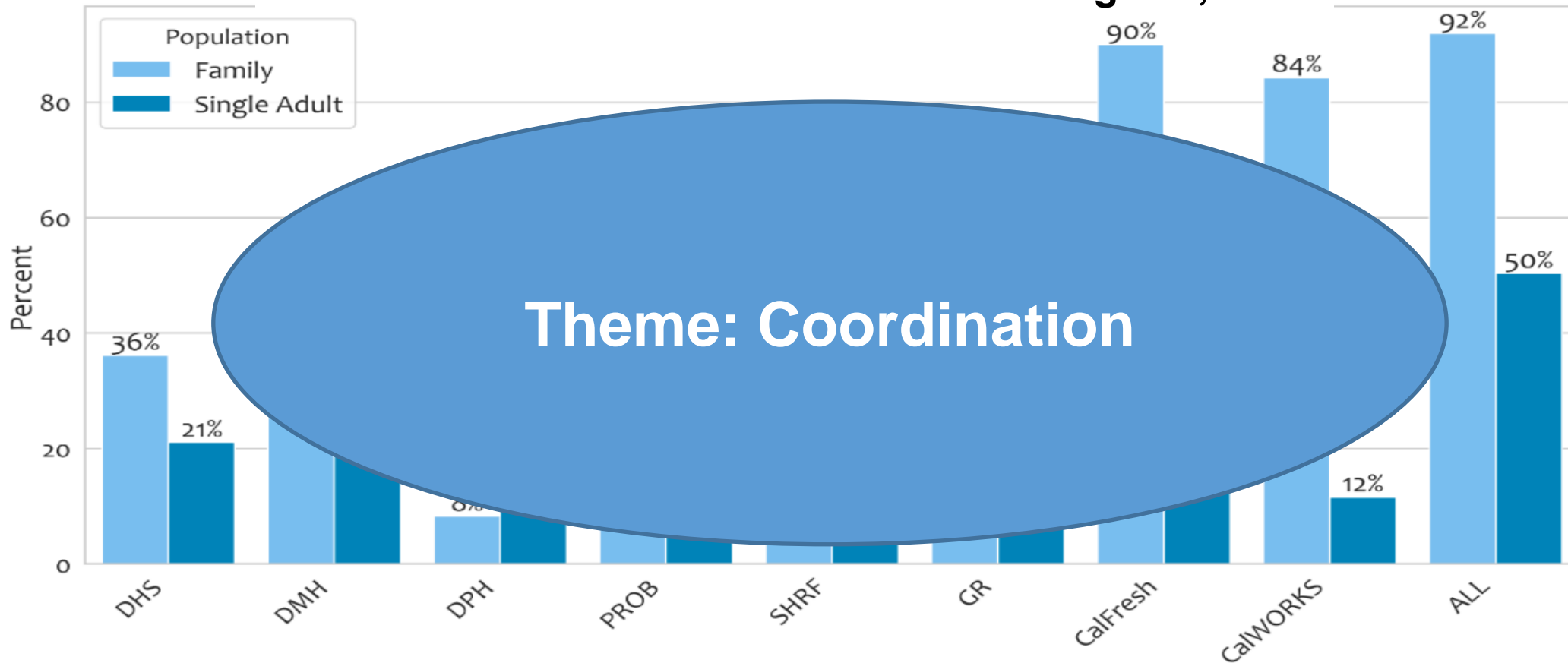
### Individuals with a "Homeless Flag" on



Source: 7 government agencies, including Health, Mental health, Social Services, Homeless Services

# Linked- admin data: What other agencies are touched?

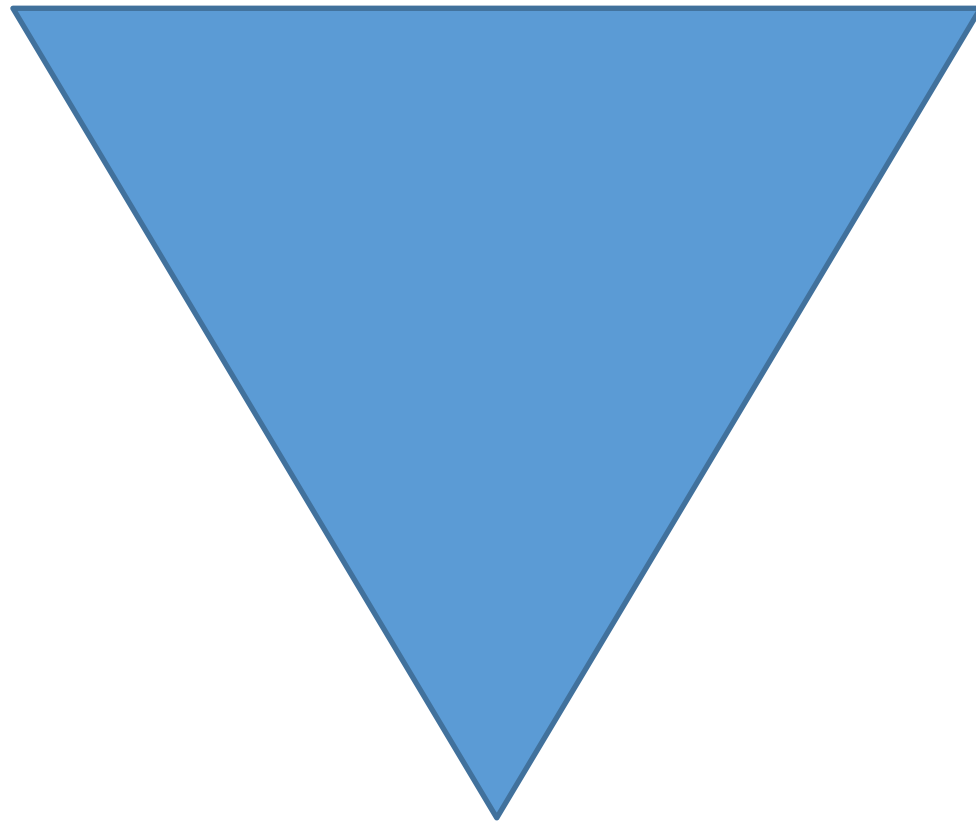
**First-time CoC homeless service in Los Angeles, 2018**



Source: 7 government agencies, including Health, Mental health, Social Services, Homeless Services

## Level-setting: Why does this matter?

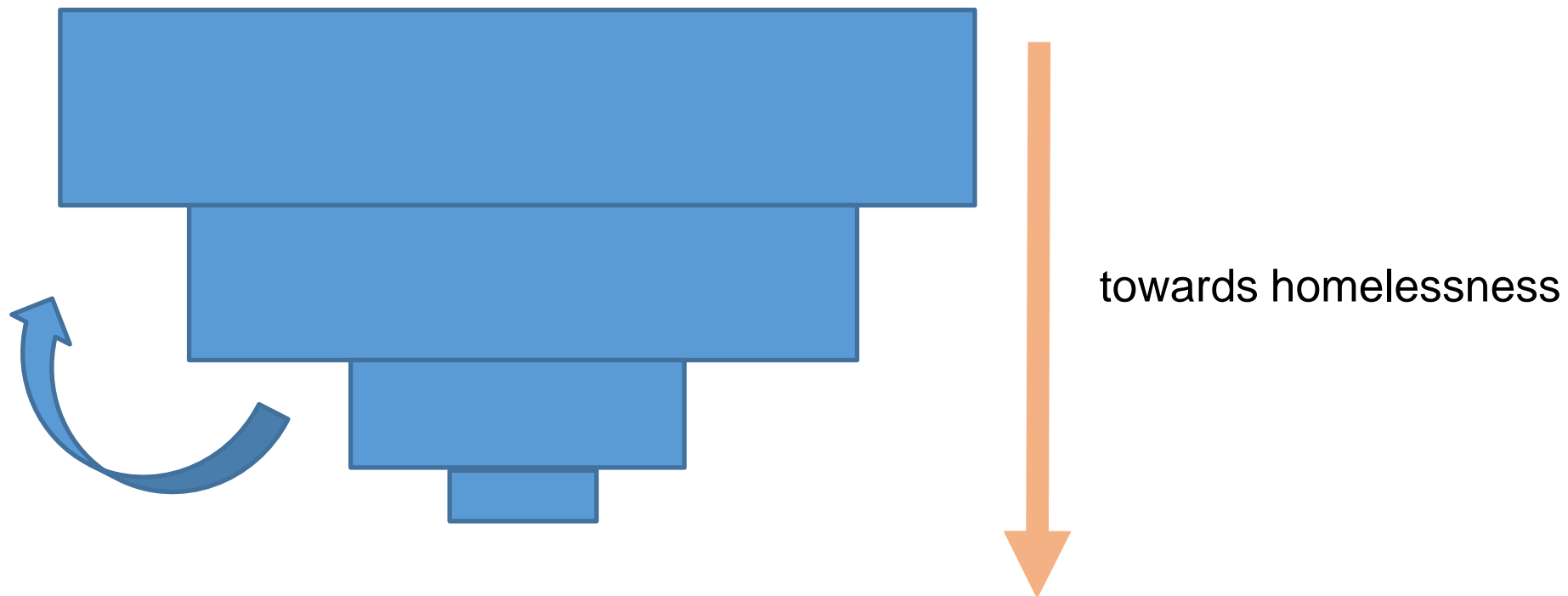
Safety net stops downstream flows



towards homelessness

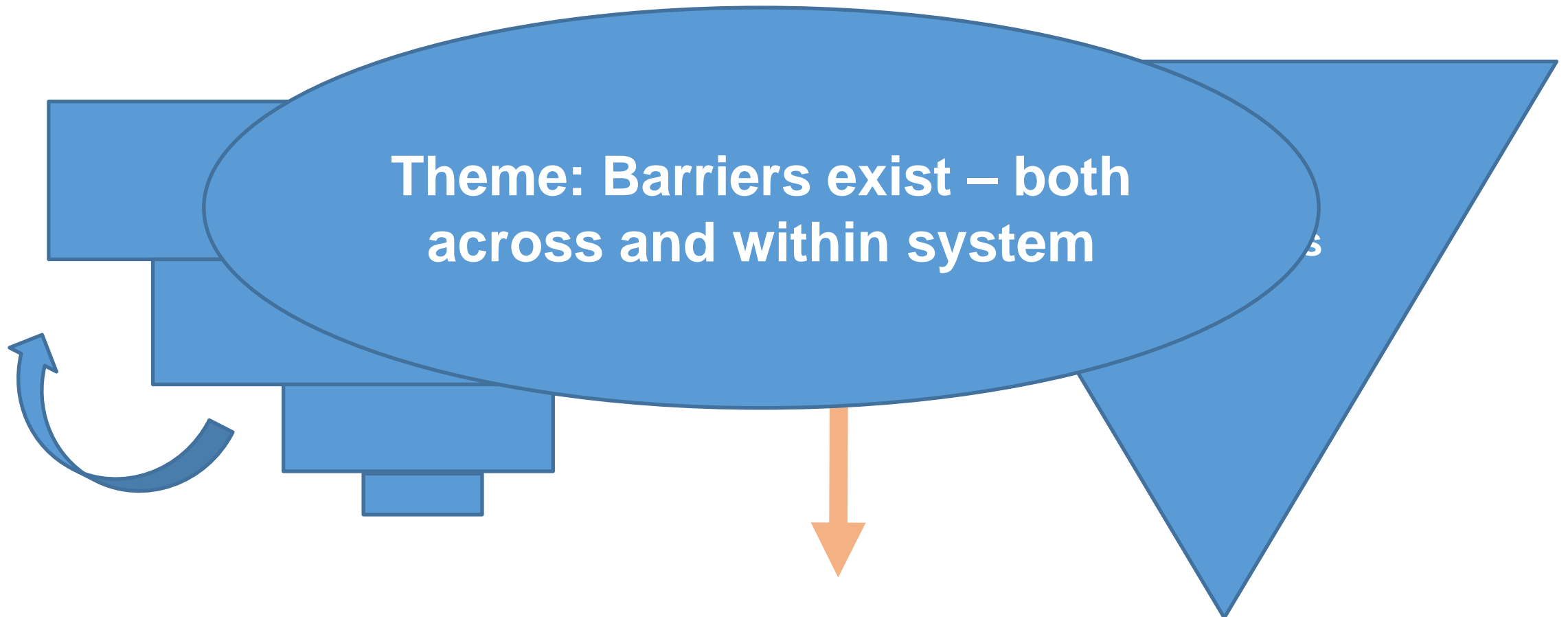
## Level-setting: Why does this matter?

Safety “trampoline” reverses downstream flows



## Level-setting: Why does this matter?

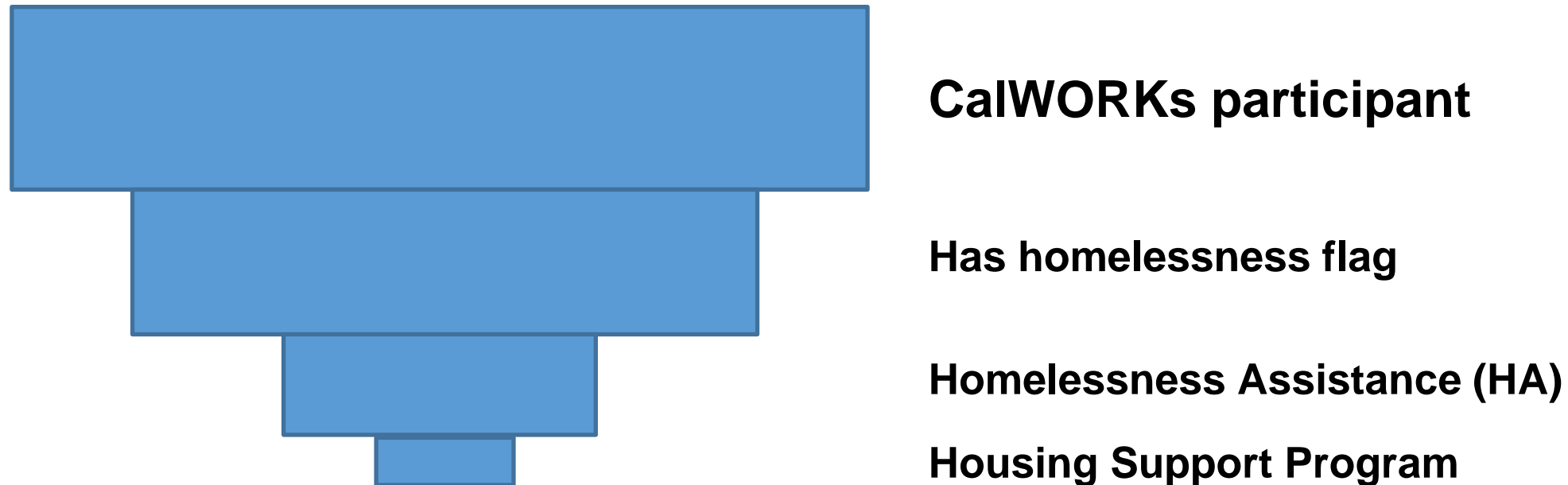
Not everyone has access: Example – welfare reform/other





## For CalWORKs families, where does prevention fit in?

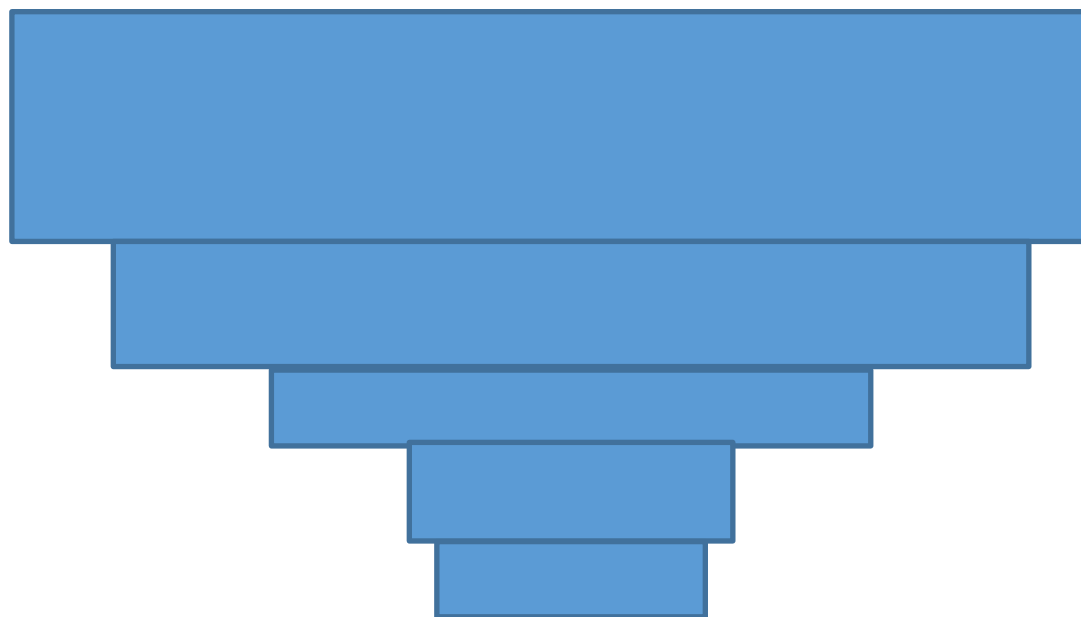
Services vary in intensity (and eligibility)



## For CalWORKs families, where does prevention fit in?

Services vary in intensity (and eligibility)

Example: Prevention expands trampoline near bottom



**CalWORKs participant**

**Has homelessness flag**

**Homelessness Assistance (HA)**

**Housing Support Program: Prevention**  
**Housing Support Program: HL services**

## What does prevention look like? Different models...

### **One-time/repeat cash assistance (\$1,000 - \$6,000)**

- rental assistance (arrears), utility (arrears)

### **Legal assistance**

### **Coaching/problem solving/mediation**

### **Wraparound services/referrals**

### **Duration: one-time up to 6 months**

How does it differ from homelessness services?

**Can stay in home**

**Differences in eligibility**

- Don't need to be HUD-defined homeless
- Typically, < 50% of Area Median Income

**Most common HL service: Rapid Rehousing**

- Los Angeles: 67% of families that received services
- 4-6 months rental/other assistance

## Does prevention work?

Evidence is pointing to “yes,” but still many unknowns

### **Homebase (NYC; Greer et al., 2016)**

- Triage tool for self-identifying families

### **One-time payment (Chicago; Evans et al., 2016)**

- Individuals self-identify through phone call
- Only 2% of those not getting assistance became HL

### **Evidence that even “highest-risk” families benefit**

- Shinn and Kadduri (2020)

## So what are the challenges with prevention?

### **Limited resources: how to target**

- **Efficient:** allocate to people most likely to benefit
- **Effective:** help maintain/find stable housing

### **Implementation/Coordination**

- Every county's system looks different
- Caseworker discretion over cash: “don't want to throw good money after bad” (Measure H evaluation)

### **Barriers to participation**

- Verifications/documentation

## Identifying individuals for prevention is not so simple

### **Triage tools are common**

- Self-identification for services (barrier)
- Prevention Targeting Tool (different names)

### **Report at [capolicylab.org](https://capolicylab.org): [Preventing Homelessness: Evidence-Based Methods to Screen Adults and Families at Risk of Homelessness in Los Angeles](#)**

- Discussion of triage tools used nationally
- Continuous Quality Improvement research needed

Short of using a tool, is there something easier now?

## **Simplify selection**

- Example: < 30% of AMI
- Streamline verification/documentation



Are there other options for targeting? Yes!

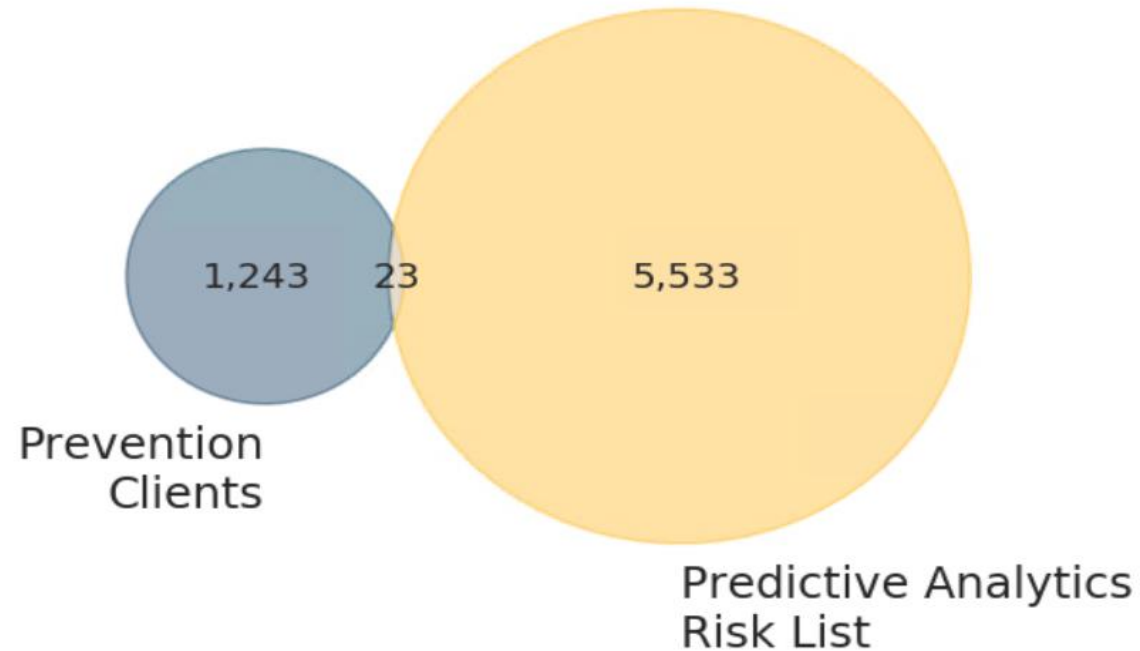
**Reactive/responsive strategies:** triage tools/assessment

- Those who self-identify might not be most in need

**Proactive/data-driven:** predictive analytics and outreach

- Past service experience signals future needs:
- Example: CalWORKs in LA = 4.3% receive CoC service
- Top 100 predicted = 33% receive CoC service
- **Improves random guessing by 8x**

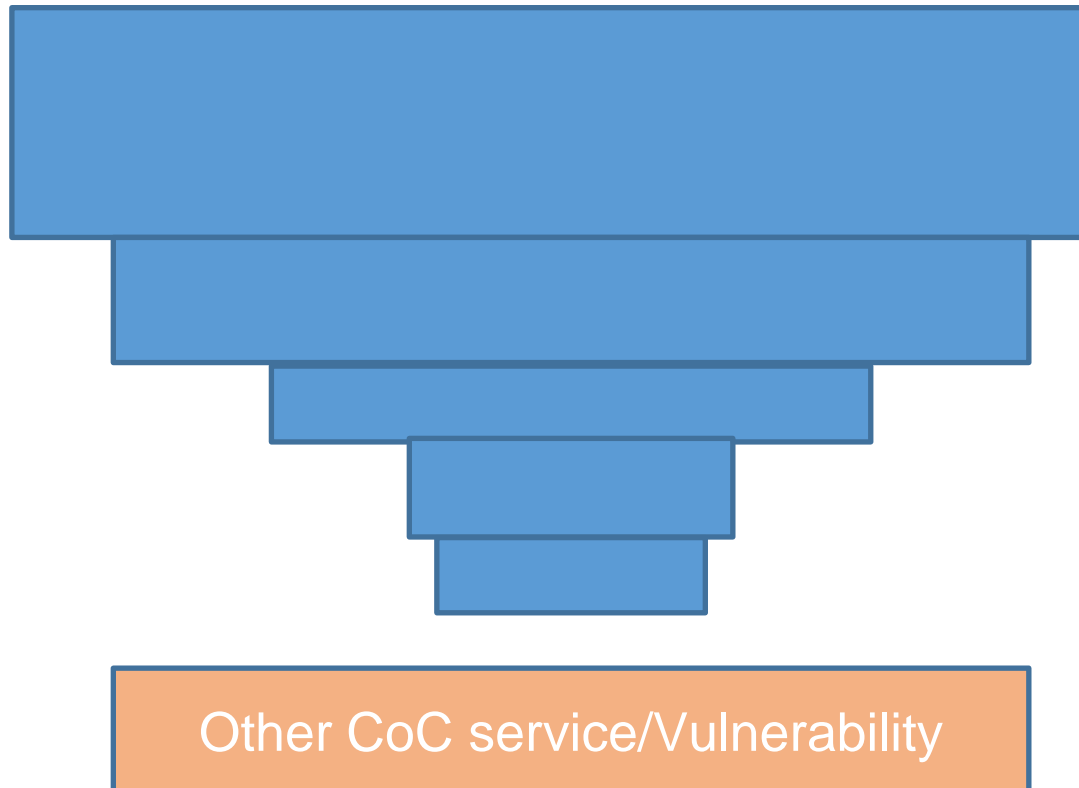
# Single Adults example: Overlap of predicted risk lists and self-identifying prevention clients (two distinct groups)



**Self-identification is insufficient!**

# Why is prevention for families not so straightforward?

Can think about “prevention” at each level



**CalWORKs participant**

**Has homelessness flag**

**Homelessness Assistance (HA)**

**Housing Support Program: Prevention**  
**Housing Support Program: HL services**

# Implementing the Proactive Approach (Housing Stabilization Unit, “HSU”)



**Predictive models tell us who is at risk but not necessarily why.**

## **Proactive outreach strategy**

- New challenges: contact

## **On the horizon: predicting homelessness for CalWORKs**

- Models using a single department may be similar in precision to running on 7 department's data

## What do we still have to learn about prevention? A lot!

### **Increasing effectiveness:**

- Design of program
- Implementation/Outreach
- Coordination strategies

### **Increasing efficiency:**

- Improve triage tools
- Improve proactive strategies
- Where to implement proactive strategies

## What can you do?

### **Collect clear data**

- If prevention within HMIS system, clearly identify prevention services from funding streams (e.g. HSP)

### **Clear definition of prevention strategy**

- What are the service components

### **Consider enrollment strategy**

- Implement a tool or simplified strategy (e.g. < 30% AMI)
- Collect eligibility data



[capolicylab.org](http://capolicylab.org) (sign up for our newsletter)  
[rsantillano@ucla.edu](mailto:rsantillano@ucla.edu)



# Regional Homelessness Prevention Overview

October 2021



# All Home - who we are

All Home is a Bay Area organization advancing regional solutions that disrupt the cycle of poverty and homelessness, redress the disparities in outcomes as a result of race, and create more economic mobility opportunities for extremely low-income (ELI) individuals and families within the Bay Area.

We are working across regions, sectors, and silos to advance coordinated, innovative service delivery and build coalition-supported momentum to challenge the long-standing systems that perpetuate homelessness.

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## Homelessness Prevention Landscape: Pilot, Innovate, Accelerate

In March-April 2021: All Home began demonstration projects partnering with the cities of Fremont, Oakland and San Francisco as the cities implemented new rental assistance programs with federal funds.

- Homelessness Prevention is critical to the 75% reduction in unsheltered homelessness All Home's Regional Action Plan goal and the 1-2-4 framework.
- We must reduce the homelessness inflow to permanent housing exit ratio.
- Region lacks a common definition of homelessness prevention and metrics to evaluate outcomes, agreement on a service model and consistent level of services provided, and most programs are not well-targeted to households most likely to become homeless.
- New sources of federal funding created an opportunity and challenges to making progress toward a regional homelessness prevention network.

# Prevention: Differentiating Interventions on the Prevention Continuum

*Reducing new episodes of homelessness requires a range of prevention intervention strategies deployed such that each household gets what they need at the time they need it*

## Eviction Prevention

### Eligible Population:

- ***Future risk of homelessness***
- *Leaseholders*
- *0-50% AMI*

### Targeting criteria:

- *HHs with severe rent burden*
- *Active eviction, landlord harassment or habitability issues*
- *Highly impacted communities and neighborhoods*

## Homelessness Prevention

### Eligible Population:

- ***Imminent risk of homelessness***
- *Doubled up or leaseholders*
- *0-30% AMI*

### Targeting criteria:

- *HHs with a previous episode of homelessness*
- *Highly impacted communities and neighborhoods*

## Homelessness Rapid Resolution

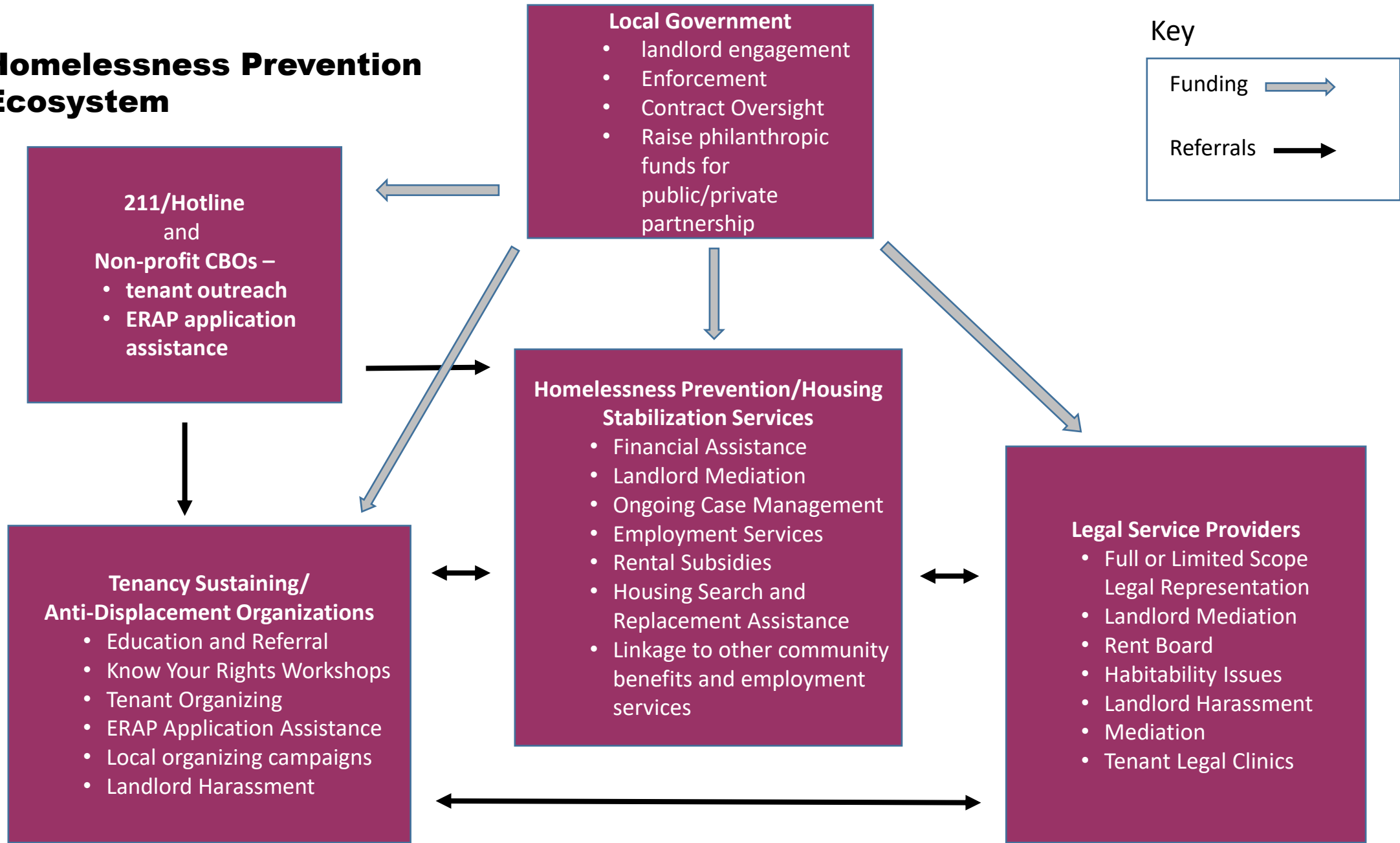
### Eligible Population:

- ***Lost housing and either seeking shelter or in shelter for short period***
- ***Presenting for homelessness assistance***
- *Doubled up*
- *0-30% AMI*

### Targeting criteria:

- *Could resolve quickly with little need for ongoing help*
- *Highly impacted communities and neighborhoods*

# Homelessness Prevention Ecosystem



# Targeting and Eligibility

## Goals:

- Reduce racial disparity among residents who are becoming homeless.
- Reduce homelessness inflow to permanent housing exit ratio.
  - Threshold income eligibility: **income no higher than 50% of AMI with prioritization for households <30% AMI.**
  - Prioritize households **in targeted geographic zones** identified in each county based on factors such as high incidences of homelessness, eviction, poverty, COVID-impact and rent burden will also receive higher priority for assistance. The geographic zones also become the focus areas for partnering with neighborhood-based organizations that provide trusted connection to the network.
  - Use evidence-based assessment to target resources to households that have the highest likelihood of becoming homeless.

# Online Application Portal and Web-based Database

- Simple online platform provides information to applicants, accepts client application and documents and manages the assessment and approval process
- Built-in assessment questions based on current research that prioritizes households with higher risk of homelessness
- Applicants can complete application on own or receive assistance or hyper-local, trusted neighborhood organizations can provide navigation or submit an application on a participant's behalf
- Agencies use back-end database function to confirm eligibility, determine amount of financial assistance, and approve and track payment
- Back-end provides data visualization capability to report on demographics, income levels served, expenditures approved and other factors

# Services Offered

**Goal:** Short term assistance to help low-income households resolve housing crises that would otherwise lead to homelessness.

Assistance may include one or more of the following:

**Financial Assistance** – generally ranging 1-6 months, with ERAP it can be up to 18 months

**Legal services** – landlord mediation, tenant advocacy and eviction representation

## Post-ERAP/Phase 2

**Household Stabilization Services** - housing navigation, housing search and replacement assistance, financial counseling, case management, income stabilization/workforce, and connection to other community resources.

**Economic Mobility** is a critical part of prevention, so we have begun a pilot partnering with selected social enterprises and providing participants who are ready with direct linkage to jobs.





## **Regional Homelessness Prevention System: Common Elements and Value Added**

- **Geographic data-informed, equity-based targeting to high need areas**
- **Evidence-based Risk Assessment Tool**
- **Common Eligibility Criteria**
- **User-friendly Online Portal for Applicants and Non-Profit Service Providers**
- **Services Offered/Consistency in Service Delivery**
- **Training Curriculum/Learning Collaboratives**
- **Research Evaluation/Metrics**
- **Program Oversight for Continual Improvement**
- **Technical Assistance to Guide Implementation**
- **Alignment of Funding Streams with Best Practices**
- **Increased Donor Confidence**
- **Long-term Sustainability**



[www.allhomeca.org](http://www.allhomeca.org)

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