



A New Day.

**Homelessness Plan to Address the Passage of State Law #1365
"HB #1365: Unauthorized Public Camping and Public Sleeping"**

2024 - 2025

Members of the Mayor's Homelessness Work Group

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Jacksonville Homelessness Plan to Address the Passage of State Law HB #1365

Introduction:

With the Florida State Legislature passing the anti-camping bill, HB #1365, Mayor Donna Deegan directed her administration to bring together stakeholders working with the homeless population to devise a strategic plan to significantly address this issue. This plan mitigates homelessness and if followed, has the potential to achieve *functional zero* in Jacksonville. Functional zero is the term used to describe when the number of individuals who become homeless is the same number as those who find permanent housing during the same year. The recommendations below in this document were taken from that five-year strategic plan, as they deal with enforcing and responding to the passage of the state law, HB #1365, which must be implemented and enforced locally by October 1, 2024.

Recommendation #1

Identify a point person within the Mayor's Office to oversee this plan

Identifying a point person to lead this effort was the top recommendation from the work group. Dr. Tracye Polson, the Director of Strategic Partnerships in the Mayor's Office, will oversee the execution of this homelessness plan. A single person dedicated to understanding and coordinating all homeless initiatives within the City of Jacksonville will ensure resources are optimized and opportunities are not missed.

Recommendation #2

Expand and improve the homelessness management data collection system (HMIS)

Reliable and transparent data must drive and document this initiative. The homeless data collection system is known as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). This web-based software application is available to all members of the Northeast Florida Continuum of Care and is used to coordinate services, manage operations, and better serve clients.

Recommendation #3

Increase homeless outreach teams to ensure that all parts of Duval County are covered daily and nightly

Increasing homeless outreach teams will ensure all parts of Duval County receive consistent and comprehensive support, both day and night. This expanded coverage will help address immediate needs of those who are unsheltered, connect individuals to shelters and resources, and ultimately reduce homelessness throughout Jacksonville.

Recommendation #4

Increase shelter bed capacity by working with existing shelter facilities

Utilize current bed capacity to 100% and add 136 more bed capacity as needed in the existing four (4) shelter facilities in year one by responding to the changing need in number of beds (capacity) based on new demographic trends (large uptick in homeless women and persons aged 55+, and the need for low barrier shelter).

Recommendation #5

Every shelter enters bed availability daily into Client Track (HMIS)

There are five (5) shelters currently operating in Duval County. Additional staff will ensure that bed availability is entered daily into Client Track (HMIS) and all partner agencies and law enforcement have access in real time to the beds available and will have a hotline number to call to access them. Coverage at the shelters will include nights and weekends (currently no access to this information). This will allow real-time updates to the HMIS system and help promote and expand the “No Wrong Door” policy, **while creating a 24/7 system of homelessness support.**

Recommendation #6

Develop “No Wrong Door” (all doors are open) strategy for coordinated intake

Develop ‘No Wrong Door’ (all doors are open) strategy for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Coordinated Intake – intakes will happen all over the city with different agencies. The goal will be to ensure that available beds are always known and up to date. Staff will be trained to do

outreach, intakes, assessments, and enter data into HMIS (HUD Homeless Management Information System), work with clients to gather all necessary documentation for programs, staff the By Name List and case conferencing meetings, and refer clients to eligible programs. They intersect between outreach staff and moving into a housing program with case managers. Coordinated Intake handles finding locations of shelters, working on the initial assessment of the individual, identifying if it's a critical situation, and collecting all documents that are needed.

Recommendation #7

COJ will contract with provider(s) for housing focused case management support for low barrier shelter and non-congregate shelter.

Outreach and engagement of the city's street homeless must ensure wraparound services are provided to help individuals get on their feet. The need for more case management support is paramount to reaching "functional zero" of homeless individuals in Jacksonville. These case managers would be housed at the "homeless village," the hotels, and shelters to provide education, services, and to help move people to permanent housing, thereby getting us to "functional zero" homeless. This means the number of individuals becoming homeless will equal the number of individuals moving into permanent housing. Case managers work with individuals directly to move them into housing and work with them to get their lives in order.

Recommendation #8

COJ to contract with hotels to secure up to 200 non-congregate shelter beds

To provide more shelter opportunities, and to respond to the need for new available shelter space, the City of Jacksonville will contract with hotels for up to 200 rooms as non-congregate shelters. 100 rooms have been identified as being able to shelter two (2) people at once.

Recommendation #9

COJ will contract with a developer to create a non-congregate, low barrier bridge shelter village (container/"ModPod") for a pilot of 100 beds located adjacent to the Urban Rest Stop or another location as determined by HB #1365

The state's anti-camping legislation (HB #1365,) requires municipalities and local governments to implement the state law prohibiting individuals from camping on public city streets, sidewalks, and parks. Instead, local governments are authorized to build temporary encampments or

shelters to place homeless individuals, for local governments to enforce the law and the unfunded mandate.

Recommendation #10

All shelters, in partnership, develop a 24/7 intake plan for staff and policies

This recommendation is a policy recommendation. Jacksonville currently does not have a 24/7 shelter system or intake plan. To mitigate homelessness, and to enforce the state law (HB #1365) passed in 2024, the City of Jacksonville must create policies and procedures to keep shelters (or at least one shelter) open 24/7 for intake of new homeless residents.

Recommendation #11

COJ to expand the Homeward Bound Program

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) runs a homeward bound program, in coordination with Downtown Vision, Inc., that helps homeless residents in Jacksonville relocate to a stable location back to where they lived before becoming homeless (back to their permanent home). Other cities are identifying communities that are not addressing their homelessness crisis and are transporting their homeless to those cities across the country. We will address this by bringing individuals back to their original communities, their permanent homes, so that they can receive the help, support, and treatment they need from those who know them best. This also allows Jacksonville to devote its resources to only those individuals who live here.

Recommendation #12

Expand and Increase Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Programs

Housing is the solution to homelessness. There are two ways to increase access to housing: development of new affordable units and making existing market housing affordable. With regards to homeless interventions, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides long-term housing coupled with supportive, wraparound services for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and others with significant barriers. This recommendation will monitor the Ability Housing PSH pilot program just launched with the City of Jacksonville and determine its success and growth potential for 2025. It will also expand support for the award-winning Mental Health Offender Program (MHOP) PSH program.

Total Costs Overview

(from all recommendations listed above for year one funding needs)

The costs, listed below, are for each of the recommendations listed above for one year. Some of the costs are adjustable and could be decreased, based on need. You can find the total costs, over five years, in the overall five-year strategic plan to end homelessness – to be released at a later date once fully completed. This 2024 investment will ensure that Jacksonville not only addresses homelessness and the newly enacted state law (HB #1365), this year as required, but will continue to invest in mitigating homelessness through incorporating the rest of the five-year strategic plan in the years ahead.

Recommendation #1:	\$0.00
Recommendation #2:	\$459,917.00
Recommendation #3:	\$590,800.00
Recommendation #4:	\$1,790,000.00
Recommendation #5:	\$650,520.00
Recommendation #6:	\$567,840.00
Recommendation #7:	\$1,318,200.00
Recommendation #8:	\$4,547,400.00
Recommendation #9:	\$3,218,275.00
Recommendation #10:	\$0.00
Recommendation #11:	\$50,000.00
Recommendation #12:	\$447,500.00

Total maximum costs (year one) to fully implement the state law (HB #1365):

\$13,640,452.00