



# WELD'S WAY HOME 2.0

Strategic Plan To Prevent  
And End Homelessness  
In Weld County



# Purpose – Vision – Guiding Principles

## Purpose

To connect individuals and families with an array of needed and aligned resources in order to obtain greater household stability.

## Vision

Every person in Weld County has the means to attain and maintain safe, adequate, and affordable housing for the sake of full participation in community life.

## Guiding Principles

Ending homelessness requires a coordinated effort by many community resources and organizations to improve existing homelessness, homelessness prevention, and household stability response systems. In order to create lasting system changes, Weld's Way Home requires the partnership of many different agencies and individuals. Weld's Way Home believes in fostering community and partnerships between nonprofit agencies, state and local government, businesses, landlords, foundations and donors, the faith community, law enforcement, emergency responders, and individuals and families experiencing homelessness and household instability. In order to end and prevent homelessness this Weld's Way Home plan has been developed using these guiding principles.

- Homelessness and household instability is the result of system-level failures that require upstream system-level solutions.
- Every person in Weld County should have safe and stable housing regardless of current life circumstances.
- Ending homelessness requires both addressing homelessness and preventing homelessness through household stability resources.
- Ending homelessness requires removing barriers to housing resources through Housing First practices, including harm reduction, trauma-informed care and person-centered care.
- Data-driven and evidence-based solutions are the gold standard for improving response systems.
- An effective response system contains a network of flexible and comprehensive continuum of services that re-establish stability, provide wrap-around supportive services, achieve holistic health and well-being, and prevent homelessness to begin with.
- Individuals at-risk of becoming homeless require access to effective safety nets and opportunities to help achieve increased stability for themselves and their families.
- This plan must remain flexible to respond to changing community needs, new data, and emerging best practices.



Dear Friends,

Here we offer to you Weld's Way Home 2.0, Weld County's strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness, an updated plan that builds on the success of the original Weld's Way Home shared effort.

In 2016, a community-wide collaboration of volunteers and providers came together to develop the first Weld's Way Home strategic plan. These dedicated community members understood that ending homelessness requires coordinated system-level change and that reforms and improvements would take time, dedication, and hard work to achieve. Over the next five years, partnerships formed, volunteers came together, and capacity was built to accomplish the work outlined in the original plan. Some of these key successes include the establishment of the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care and the coordinated entry system, the opening of the Housing Navigation Center, and the revitalization of the High Plains Housing Development Corporation—a nonprofit housing developer dedicated to building affordable housing in Weld County.

Weld's Way Home 1.0 laid the foundations for improving Weld County's homelessness response system. This updated plan seeks to broaden the work to include coordinated household stability and homelessness prevention shared effort. The need for an updated Weld County strategic plan that focuses on both prevention and homelessness is clear. The 2021 Point-in-Time Count in Weld County found 215 people living in shelters or outdoors, down from 256 in 2015, but far short of the progress needed to end homelessness in Weld County.

Between 2010 and 2020, the population in Weld County grew by 36.15% and continues to increase steadily. Weld County has more than 340,000 residents; it is estimated the population will reach 710,000 by 2050. This rapid growth has strained the Weld County housing market. In 2022, the median home price in Weld County reached \$507,000, up from \$373,500 in 2020 representing a 35.7% increase in just two years. Additionally, the average rent in Weld County increased 41% between 2010 and 2019, hitting an average of \$1,626 per month for a two-bedroom apartment in 2022. Now, 45.5% of households that rent in Weld County are rent burdened, spending more than 35% of their annual wages on rent.

As Weld County grows, the number of households experiencing household instability and homelessness will also increase unless we rise to the challenge and work together to create and maintain effective and affordable housing and homelessness response systems. Homelessness and housing instability are solvable challenges. To begin with, we must acknowledge as a community that homelessness is a housing problem and that no person should ever have to sleep outside or have to choose between paying for rent and feeding their families.

Most importantly, solving homelessness and housing instability requires community collaboration and partnerships. The work of Weld's Way Home is only accomplished with the dedicated support and hard work of service providers, funders, community members, elected officials, community leaders, businesses, and you.

The plan outlined before you is a result of years of planning and hard work of over 30 community partners. Every agency brings a level of knowledge, passion, and dedication to the plan that would not be possible through a single entity. Without the below-listed caring organizations, there would be no Weld's Way Home plan and no end in sight for this potentially devastating community challenge.

We acknowledge that we can accomplish much more as a united effort than any one of us can alone. As such, we humbly ask you to read this plan with a collaborative mind and we invite you to join us on Weld's Way Home.

A Woman's Place  
Almost Home  
Carbon Valley Help Center  
Catholic Charities  
City of Greeley  
Colorado Rural Collaborative  
Connections for Independent Living  
Envision  
Greeley Family House  
Greeley-Evans School District 6  
Greeley-Weld Habitat for Humanity  
Habitat for Humanity of the St. Vrain Valley  
High Plains Housing Development Corporation  
High Plains Library District  
Hope @ Miracle House  
Immigrant and Refugee Center  
of Northern Colorado  
Jobs of Hope  
Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains

Mosaic Church  
North Colorado Health Alliance  
North Range Behavioral Health  
Northern Colorado Continuum of Care  
Northern Colorado Veterans Resource Center  
Saint Patrick Presbyterian Church  
Stepping Stones of Windsor  
Street Lights of Grace Ministry  
The Rock Found  
The Weld Trust  
United Way of Weld County  
Volunteers of America  
Weld County Department of Human Services  
Weld County Department of  
Public Health and Environment  
Weld Food Bank  
WeldWerks Community Foundation  
Women 2 Women

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# Executive Summary

United Way of Weld County convened the initial Weld's Way Home strategic planning meeting in July 2015. Through regular meetings, focus groups, and a community-driven process, the first Weld's Way Home Strategic Plan to Address and Prevent Homelessness in Weld County was released in fall 2016.

This Weld's Way Home Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Weld County, also referred to as Weld's Way Home 2.0, is building on a foundation of success. For over two years, United Way hosted monthly meetings—including nonprofits, Weld County agencies, the cities of Evans and Greeley, community volunteers, funders and faith groups—to set new priority areas and work plans.

## The Challenge

A complex combination of rising housing costs, slowly rising wages, systemic failures, poor support systems, and ineffective homelessness response systems are driving the current state of household stability and homelessness in the United States, including in Colorado and Weld County.

Weld's Way Home frames household stability as existing on a continuum. Households along the continuum face unique challenges that require targeted strategies designed to address the needs of each household. Individuals and families move across the continuum at different points in time. Major life changes such as loss of income, household breakup, or health challenges can cause a household's place on the continuum to shift significantly.

Homeless ↔ Unstable ↔ Paycheck-to-paycheck ↔ Stable ↔ Self-sufficient

The federal government defines homelessness in two ways. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition includes people who are experiencing literal homelessness or are at severe risk of living out-of-doors, in a car, or in a place not suitable for human habitation. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act expands on HUD's definition and includes those who are living with another household out of economic necessity, also known as "doubling up." The Weld's Way Home plan addresses the challenges faced by those described in both definitions.

## Trends in Homelessness and Household Stability

In 2016, when the first Weld's Way Home plan was released, national data showed that both the number of people experiencing homelessness and those considered at-risk of homelessness were on the decline. While populations at-risk of homelessness have continued to decrease, nationally homelessness is now on the rise. Additionally, inequities and systemic disparities exist among communities experiencing homelessness. Notably, people of color are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and the proportion of older adults experiencing literal homelessness is increasing.



Despite the national rate of homelessness increasing over the last five years, Colorado has managed to continue to decrease and stabilize the number of people living outdoors overall. However, Colorado has some of the fastest increasing costs of living expenses of any state and many households are moving closer to instability. Local household stability and homelessness trends are similar to those seen across Colorado, though the picture is more complicated given the large number of people that have moved to Weld County over the past decade.

## Exploring Causes of Household Instability

The Weld's Way Home work group identified nine causal factors and their root causes through a consensus-building workshop and community survey. The causal factors identified include insufficient income, insufficient affordable housing inventory, mental and physical health challenges, internal and external trauma, inadequate education and training, under-developed life skills, chronic unsafe environment, discrimination, and legal barriers. Weld's Way Home 2.0 outlines strategies to help Weld County households address these factors and improve household stability.

## Cost of Homelessness

Multiple national studies reveal that it is less expensive to connect households experiencing homelessness to permanent housing as quickly as possible than it is to manage homelessness through police and fire response, emergency shelter, physical and behavioral interventions, and more. Furthermore, children of families that are experiencing literal homelessness or endure chronic housing instability are more likely to experience a variety of negative short and long-term outcomes, including an increased risk of poor health, continued housing instability later in life, traumatic experiences, etc.

## The Solution: Preventing and Ending Homelessness

To end homelessness, Weld County's response system must include two complementary approaches:

1. Preventing homelessness, which involves a wide-range of community based efforts to stabilize people before their housing option ends.
2. Ending homelessness, which involves working with those already experiencing homelessness to help them get back into housing as quickly as possible.

Preventing homelessness strategies include one-time emergency assistance, food assistance, housing vouchers, critical repair assistance, affordable housing, transportation assistance, and mental health services. Ending homelessness requires coordinated Housing First strategies to improve Weld County's homelessness response system. The Housing First framework is a nationally adopted, evidenced-based strategy that has ended homelessness in many communities across the United States. "Housing ready" interventions, deriving from another commonly used method of homelessness assistance, require that households meet defined attitudinal and behavioral requirements—sobriety, getting and keeping employment, etc.—as a condition of gaining housing. The Housing First model, characterized by practices like harm reduction and trauma-informed care, recognizes that getting neighbors back into housing as quickly as possible leads to better outcomes for the individual and the community. Additionally, homelessness strategies like street outreach and emergency shelter are more efficacious when utilizing the Housing First model.

## Weld's Way Home 2.0 Work Plans

Weld's Way Home 2.0 outlines 11 priority areas, four from the original Weld's Way Home plan and seven new areas identified from the community driven process: advocacy; landlord engagement; police partnerships; coordinated household stabilization assistance; diversity, equity and inclusion; transportation; and information sharing. By building on the momentum of the first Weld's Way Home plan, Weld's Way Home 2.0 and its partners will raise awareness and remove barriers to household stability, so that more of our Weld County neighbors will have a solid foundation on which to live and thrive.

## Evaluation and Sustainability

As with Weld's Way Home 1.0, the 2.0 plan uses shared measures to determine the impact that collective efforts have on preventing and ending homelessness in Weld County.





## Introduction

In 2011, a rising number of households were seeking shelter in Weld County. In response, in 2012 United Way of Weld County brought together community agencies to form the Weld Homeless Coalition. The coalition worked to stabilize seasonal emergency shelter resources, define populations of people experiencing homelessness, and increase collaboration amongst homeless serving agencies. Although this work was impactful, it was quickly realized that a more intentional and focused response was needed to end homelessness in Weld County. To tackle this issue, United Way of Weld County convened the first Weld's Way Home (WWH) strategic planning meeting in July 2015.

Through regular meetings, focus groups, and a community-driven process, the first Weld's Way Home Strategic Plan to Address and Prevent Homelessness in Weld County was released in the fall of 2016. The plan identified eight priority areas: 1) Community Education, 2) Shared Intake and Assessment, 3) Discharge Planning, 4) Street Outreach, 5) Housing Navigation Center, 6) Cold Weather Shelter, 7) Expanded Case Management Services, and 8) Affordable Housing with Case Management. The original plan also established Housing First as the necessary framework to end homelessness in Weld County as the previously utilized housing ready approach had not fully addressed the issue.

Over the next five years, the WWH Collective Impact group, a body made up of community volunteers, nonprofit partners, government staff and elected officials, and business partners, began addressing the eight priority areas of the Weld's Way Home plan and made significant progress in improving homelessness response services in Weld County. Table 1 highlights these key successes and advancements brought about by the first WWH plan. With many of the original goals of the first plan accomplished, the WWH group realized that it was time to evaluate the success of the plan, identify the continuing gaps and weaknesses in the homelessness response system, and update the WWH plan to address the current needs of the Weld County community.

Beginning in fall 2019, United Way of Weld County led an expanded group of housing and homelessness service providers in a second evaluation and strategic planning process, focusing on homelessness prevention and diversion. This group identified key priority areas in household stabilization and homelessness prevention. The work completed by this group, along with the continuing and unaddressed priorities of the original WWH plan, are presented here, in this second version of the Weld's Way Home Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Weld County (WWH 2.0).



**stable housing  
reduces moving and  
changing schools,  
saving children**

**3 TO 6  
MONTHS  
of learning**



**Table 1**

WWH 1.0 Priority	WWH 1.0 Accomplishments
Community Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated homelessness resource information in 211 Colorado and local resource databases.</li> <li>Streamlined community access points to resources through the Housing Navigation Center and regular community collaboration.</li> <li>Raised awareness about the extent of homelessness in Weld County and how to solve it.</li> </ul>
Shared Intake and Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care.</li> <li>Launched the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS).</li> <li>Standardized client intakes across agencies through the adoption and implementation of Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT).</li> <li>Established a case conferencing process to quickly identify, assess, and house people experiencing homelessness through housing navigation and resource prioritization.</li> <li>Established an active By-Name List of people experiencing homelessness to provide real time data about housing needs in Weld County and coordinate housing resources.</li> <li>Established Housing Navigator positions to directly work with individuals on the By-Name-List to connect them with housing resources and work to keep them housed through wrap-around tenant support services.</li> </ul>
Discharge Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved discharge planning by creating new case management capacity through the Housing Navigator program.</li> </ul>
Street Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established the Housing Navigator program (formerly Community Health Worker program), based out of the Housing Navigation Center, to serve as a community-based Street Outreach team.</li> <li>Identified 124 hard to reach individuals experiencing homelessness and built trust, provided services, and housed 42 of the most vulnerable individuals.</li> </ul>
Housing Navigation Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established and opened the first physical Housing Navigation Center in Weld County on April 1, 2019. The Housing Navigation Center provides resources to help people survive their experience of homelessness, connects people to permanent housing solutions as quickly as possible, and coordinates housing and homelessness resources across Weld County.</li> <li>As of June 2022, the HNC has housed 194 households and prevented 90 households from experiencing homelessness.</li> </ul>
Cold Weather Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined the cold weather shelter as a service of the Housing Navigation Center to ensure dedicated space, support staff, and funding plan to increase shelter stability.</li> <li>Increased community partnerships at the cold weather shelter to provide not only emergency shelter, but also on-site health, housing, and case management services.</li> </ul>
Expanded Case Management Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded homelessness case management and wrap around services through CAHPS and the Housing Navigator program.</li> <li>Closed communication gaps by establishing weekly CAHPS case conferencing calls to coordinated case management services.</li> <li>Developed proactive case management strategies through street outreach efforts to bring services to individuals living out-of-doors.</li> <li>Leveraged existing resources and partnerships, such as Squad 1 and co-response, to improve care coordination, reduce 911 calls, and provide ongoing support for the most vulnerable individuals in Weld County.</li> <li>Began to shift case management philosophies toward Housing First principles to reduce barriers and increase housing opportunity and success for people experiencing homelessness.</li> </ul>
Affordable Housing with Case Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revitalized the High Plains Housing Development Corporation, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to developing affordable low income and permanent supportive housing units in Weld County.</li> <li>Increased the availability of funding for the development of affordable housing units through the use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.</li> <li>Collaborated with the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment to launch the Housing and Land Use Project to foster policy and system-level changes to update zoning and land use codes to create more opportunities for affordable housing development.</li> </ul>

Homelessness and housing instability are system problems, not an individual/household problem, and therefore needs solutions that improve and address the current response system. System-level change is a slow process that requires continuous planning, implementation, and evaluation by communities to determine if these system changes are making an impact. Many of the accomplishments of the WWH 1.0 plan created new systems that are now beginning to demonstrate their positive impact on Weld County's response system. Table 2 summarizes these system changes and describes how the system must function to end homelessness.

Table 2

	Priority Area	How the System Is = Managing Homelessness	Weld's Way Home = Ending Homelessness
Homelessness Prevention	Community Education	Many people in Weld County do not have a correct understanding of homelessness including its presence, its causes, and how to help someone experiencing homelessness.	All community members understand that homelessness is a challenge for Weld County and can identify the major causes (i.e. unaffordable housing) and know where to direct those needing assistance.
	Affordable Housing with Case Management	Due to a tight rental market, finding and maintaining housing for very low-income households is difficult.	With more affordable options, vulnerable households can move rapidly from homelessness to housing (with limited emergency shelter stays) and remain stable with case management designed to keep them in housing.
	Homelessness Prevention	Usually in the form of food, rent/utility assistance, or gas/motel vouchers, this assistance often is given as first-come, first-served, is dependent on funding, and doesn't always include follow-up or support services.	Emergency assistance efforts are coordinated, high utilizers are targeted for more intensive support, and diversion and evaluation of fund uses are pragmatic elements. At-risk households are connected to stabilizing case management.
	Discharge Planning	Homeless individuals and families leaving institutional care facilities are sometimes discharged to the streets without plans for safety, follow-up, and housing.	When someone is released from an institution and they are without housing, there is a response system in place to make sure they are not released to living out-of-doors or in a car.
	Diversion	Any household that presents needing services is assessed and placed into that agency's programs designed to help the homeless.	Any household presenting for services is helped to identify available resources they already have so as to divert them from entering the homelessness response system.
Homeless	Street Outreach	There is no systematic outreach to those sleeping out-of-doors or in a car.	Outreach staff work to intentionally identify individuals and families sleeping out-of-doors or in a car, create trusting relationships with them, and connect them to the homelessness response system when the person experiencing homelessness is ready to do so.
	Shared Intake and Assessment	Each agency has unique assessments, entrance requirements, and regulations for people entering their programs. Access to assistance varies.	Agencies give the same assessment that can be shared across the system and all assessed individuals/families have access to the same resources, regardless of how they entered the system. This is called the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS).
	Emergency Shelter	Shelters are available but they are constantly full with waiting lists due to stays sometimes extending past 120 days.	All shelters will operate under a Housing First model, which will unclog the system so shelter stays will not extend past 30 days.
	Cold Weather Shelter	A new plan, location, funding stream, etc., is created every year and is not guaranteed.	There is a dedicated space and staff/funding plan that can be used year after year. Shelter need will diminish as Housing First/CAHPS moves vulnerable people out of shelter more quickly.
	Navigation Center	Even with available resources, there is not a clear entrance into the homelessness response or prevention system.	Individuals and families experiencing homelessness and their neighbors know how to connect to needed resources.
Housed	Expanded Case Management	There is no case management available outside of program enrollment for households getting off the streets, living doubled-up, etc.	Any individual or family in the homelessness response system will have access to a case manager.

Although the first WWH strategic plan made significant improvements in the homelessness response system in Weld County and Northern Colorado, national and local trends in increasing housing cost, comparatively low wages, and economic instability continue to create a volatile housing situation for Weld County residents. The current problems of household instability and homelessness are complex and vast issues that require collaborative, coordinated, and evidence-based solutions like those outlined in this plan.



## The Challenge

The current state of homelessness and household stability in the United States is driven by a complex combination of rising housing costs, slowly rising wages, and ineffective homelessness response systems. Nationally, housing prices are increasing disproportionately to income and the amount of people living in unstable housing conditions, due to economic hardship, continues to increase. Households are spending an increasing percentage of their income on housing costs, leaving less money for other essential costs such as health care, transportation, food, and personal development. Since 2000, the amount of renters who are rent-burdened has increased from 39 to 49 percent.<sup>1</sup> These increasing costs often push many families to live doubled-up with friends or relatives. Many households are without reliable personal or structural support networks, leaving them dangerously close to homelessness. Colorado and Weld County have not escaped these national trends, with many Weld County households facing unstable housing situations or experiencing literal homelessness.

### Household Stability Defined

Weld's Way Home views household stability as existing on a continuum. Households along each point on this continuum face unique challenges that require strategies that are responses to the needs of each household. Households often move across the continuum during different points in time. Major life changes such as loss of job, household breakup, or health challenges can cause a household's place in the continuum to shift significantly. According to Bankrate's 2021 Emergency Savings Survey, 51% of Americans have less than three months' worth of savings for expenses in an emergency, while 25% of Americans have no emergency fund at all.<sup>2</sup> This fact highlights how easily households can slip into unstable situations and even homelessness. A coordinated and effective response system, which includes prevention assistance, will prevent households from entering homelessness and help households maintain or improve their place on the continuum. Trauma-informed care and harm reduction principles inform Weld's Way Home recognition that not every household will obtain 100% self-sufficiency as some household's will require lifetime support and every household has a unique need. Weld's Way Home defines five levels along the household stability continuum:

<sup>1</sup> Housing Burden: All residents should have access to quality affordable homes, [https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden#/?year=2000](https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden#/?year=2000)

<sup>2</sup> Bankrate 2021 Emergency Savings Survey, <https://www.bankrate.com/banking/savings/emergency-savings-survey-july-2021/>



a Colorado resident would  
have to work  
**2.2** FULL-TIME  
JOBS  
at minimum wage to afford  
a 2-bedroom rental home



**Homeless** — Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. Often requires temporary or ongoing support to meet basic needs and to take steps toward being rehoused.

**Unstable** — Stress-inducing reliance on emergency services for food, clothing, shelter, and/or health care. Immediate needs outweigh long-term considerations.

**Paycheck-to-paycheck** — Salary is predominantly devoted to expenses with little to no emergency savings or room for error. Emergency assistance, in addition to ongoing government assistance, may be occasionally used.

**Stable** — May have some reliance on government or other ongoing assistance for basic needs. However, because of that assistance the burden of stress is mitigated as individuals feel a greater sense of immediate security. It is rare that these households need emergency assistance, and as such feel stable most of the time. In good months, they may be able to contribute additional funding to savings or pay down debt, and have some funds to spend on unessential needs such as entertainment.

**Self-sufficient** — Ongoing state of wellness and financial security that allows one to meet personal needs, support dependent family members, and save for the future.

### Homelessness Defined

The federal government recognizes different definitions of homelessness. The two most widely used are those of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as established by 24 CFR 578.3 of the Homeless Definition Final Rule, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act) amended both definitions.

HUD categorizes the criteria for defining homelessness into four sections:

- Category 1** Literally Homeless: an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence.
- Category 2** Imminent Risk of Homelessness: an individual or family who will imminently lose their primary night-time residence.
- Category 3** Homeless Under Other Federal Statutes: unaccompanied youth individuals under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition.
- Category 4** Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence: any individual or family who is fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, has no other residence, and lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.



The McKinney-Vento definition, most widely used by the US Department of Education and local school districts, is more inclusive than the HUD definition. In addition to the above criteria, McKinney-Vento also defines those that are living doubled-up because of economic hardship as homeless.

Weld's Way Home addresses those in Weld County who would be considered homeless under both definitions. For purposes of this effort the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness, which includes persons living doubled-up, applies. In the instance when two households are living together in the same residence and this is not by choice, the household that does not have its name on the lease or mortgage is considered homeless.

To align with national homelessness efforts, Weld's Way Home categorizes people experiencing homelessness into four groups. By planning for these different populations, we can better serve those experiencing homelessness, as the needs and available resources for each population vary.

**Veterans** — Any individual who has served at least one day of active duty in the armed forces.


**Families** — Any group with at least one adult (over 24) or youth (18-24) AND at least one child under the age of 18.

**Individuals** — Adults over the age of 24 who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Individuals can include both unmarried and married individuals, without children under the age of 24. For example, a married couple would make up a household of two individuals.

**Chronic** — Any individual that has a disability—substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability—and has been living in a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or a safe haven for at least 12 months continuously or on at least four occasions in the last three years where those occasions cumulatively total at least 12 months.

**Youth** — Any individual between the ages of 18-24 that is experiencing homelessness (HUD definition). Weld's Way Home also includes unaccompanied minors, any child or youth (under the age of 18), that is without a legal guardian and is not in foster care or the care of any other public or private institution.

Additionally, Weld's Way Home recognizes that ending homelessness also requires preventing homelessness in the first place. Studies show that it is less expensive to help a household stay in housing than it is to wait for them to fall into homelessness and then assist in re-establishing a permanent residence.<sup>3</sup> The WWH 1.0 plan established foundational work in the area of homelessness prevention and household stabilization; however, WWH 2.0 dives further into household stability services in order to help low-income households stay housed.



the life expectancy for those  
living in a home is  
**77 vs 41 YEARS**  
for those who are homeless

<sup>3</sup> "Family Options Study," [http://www.huduser.gov/portal/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/FamilyOptionsStudy\\_final.pdf](http://www.huduser.gov/portal/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/FamilyOptionsStudy_final.pdf)





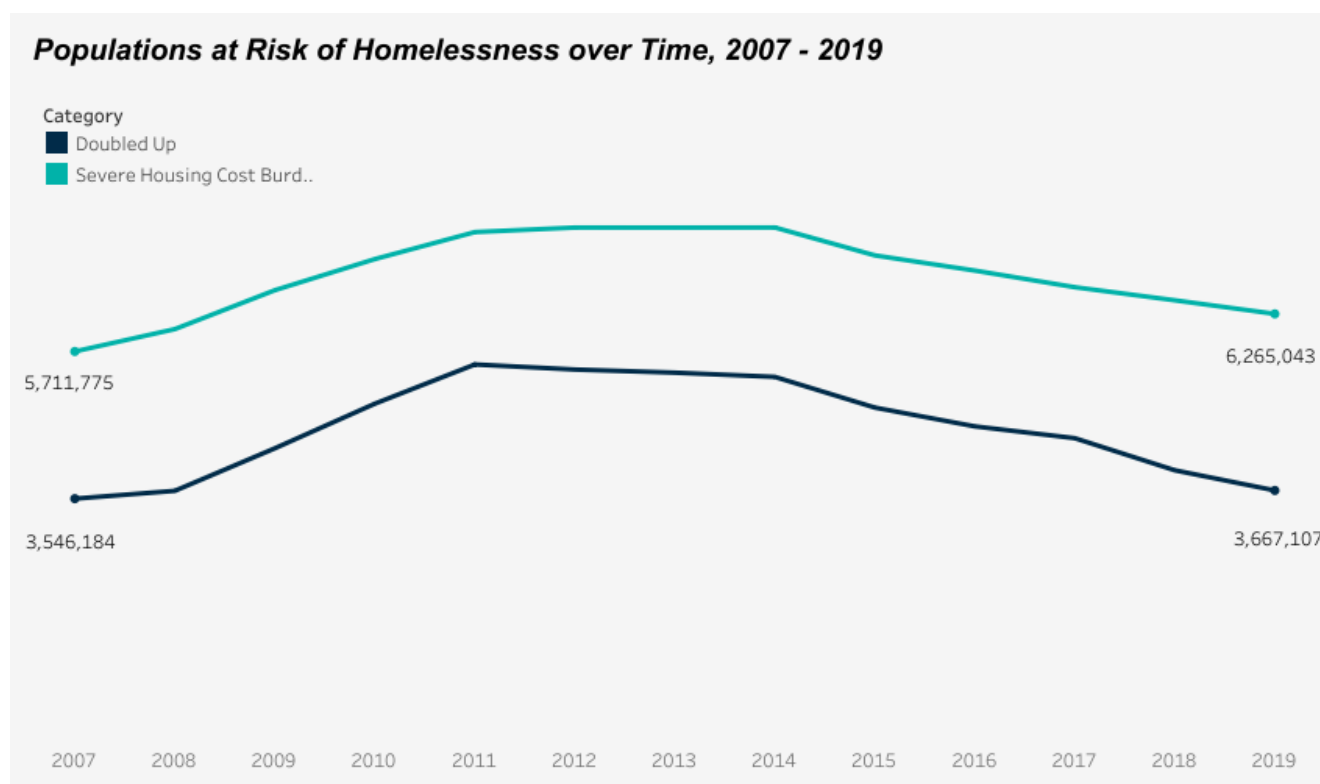
# Trends in Homelessness and Household Stability

## National Trends

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), an individual or family is considered homeless if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence, is sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (car, park bench, under bridge, etc.), and/or is fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence. In addition to these qualifications, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act includes those sharing housing (doubled-up) due to a loss of housing or economic hardship as homeless.

In 2016, when the first Weld's Way Home plan was released, national data showed that both the number of people experiencing homelessness (Graph 2) and the number of people considered at-risk of homelessness (Graph 1) were on the decline. While populations at risk of homelessness have continued to decline, homelessness is now on the rise. Despite the improvements in the population's ability to maintain stable housing, certain populations see increased difficulty in accessing housing resources. This could suggest that while improvements are being made in providing stability, those at the most extreme risk still do not have the resources to keep themselves housed.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, it is challenging to understand the current and future impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on housing stability as national data is still emerging.

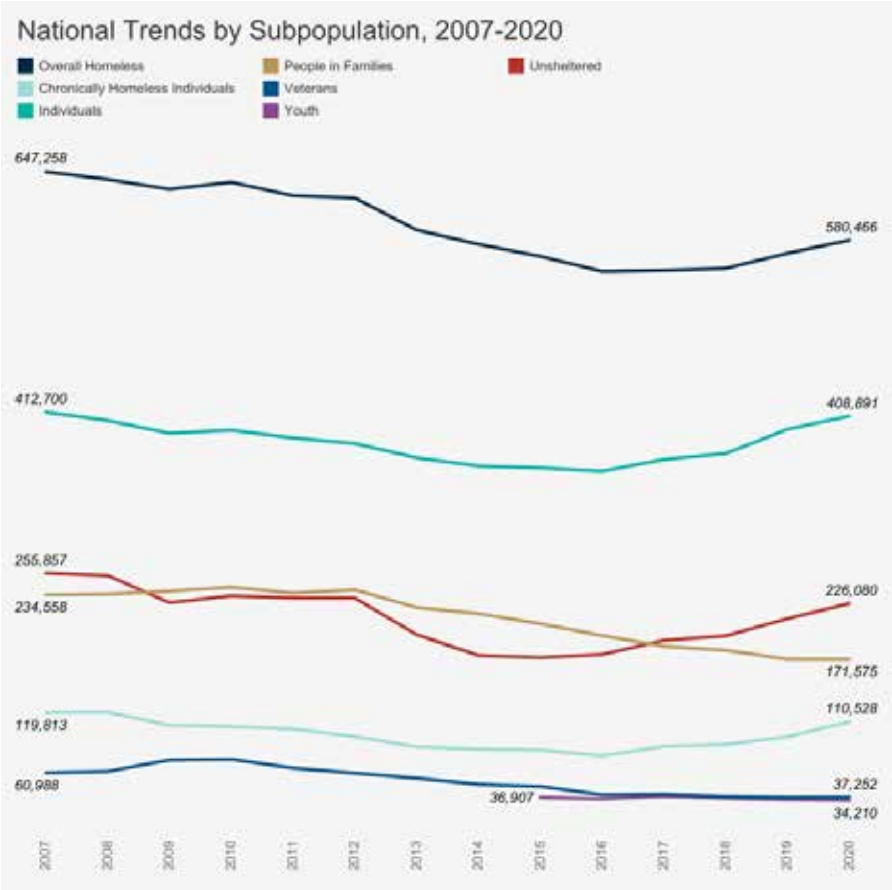
Graph 1



<sup>4</sup> "State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition," <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2021/>

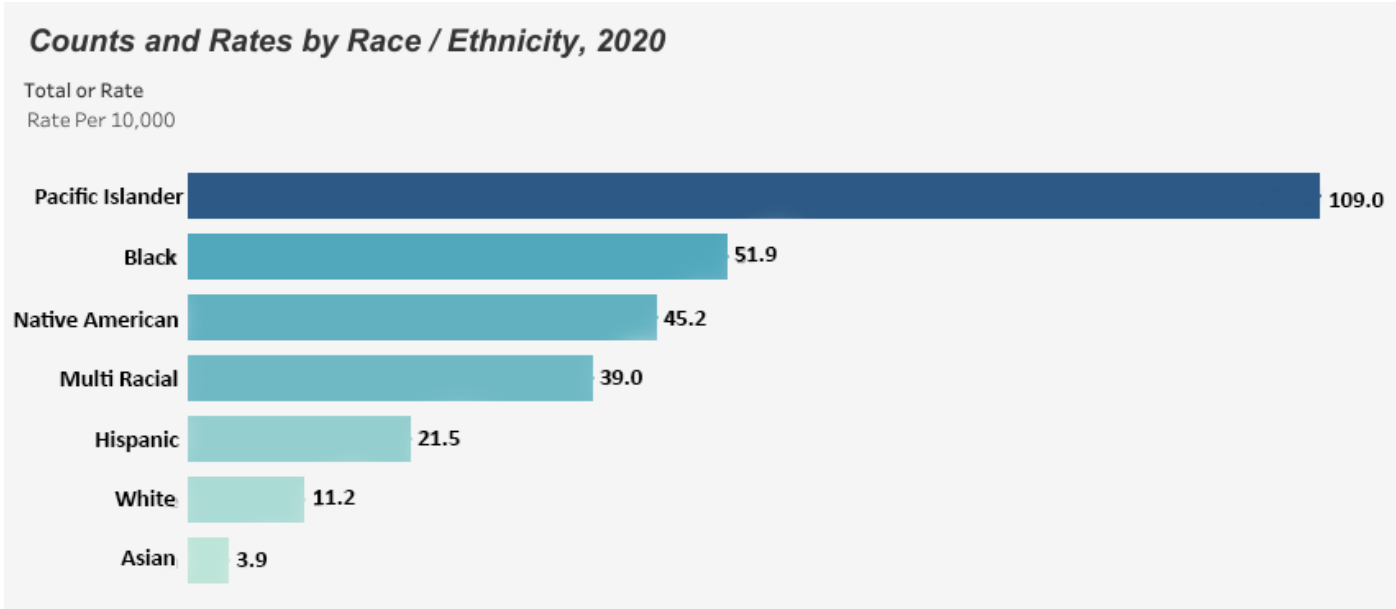
Shifting trends in the demographics of people experiencing homelessness and household instability are important to note, as strategies to address these populations should consider the inequitable impact of household instability on these subpopulations. Nationally, the number of older adults experiencing homelessness has increased while there has been a downward trend for younger individuals. The share of the homeless population that is over 65 increased from 16.5% in 2007 to 23% in 2017. Researchers point to the increasing number of older adult renters as a reason to expect this trend to only grow as they enter retirement without adequate savings due to household wealth erosion in their working years. Rent prices have increased faster than income growth over the last 15 years, and once older adult renters transition to fixed incomes, the likelihood of housing costs outpacing income only increases. All these factors point towards the need to not only offer shelter to those experiencing homelessness, but also to actively increase the availability of affordable housing, and especially for older adults.<sup>5</sup>

Graph 2



Disproportionate rates among marginalized groups continues to be a major predictive factor of homelessness (Graph 3). Hispanic, Native American, and Black households have much higher rates of homelessness than their White (Caucasian) counterparts while Pacific Islanders have a drastically higher rate at almost 10 times that of White (Caucasian) individuals. Systemic factors have led to higher rates of unemployment, lower wages, less access to healthcare, and higher incarceration rates among these populations. These factors and other forms of discrimination cause these groups higher levels of household instability and, in-turn, homelessness.<sup>6</sup>

Graph 3



<sup>5</sup> "The Growing Problem of Older Adult Homelessness," <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/blog/the-growing-problem-of-older-adult-homelessness>

<sup>6</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-2021/>

## Colorado Trends

Despite the national rate of homelessness quickly increasing over the last five years, Colorado has managed to continue to decrease and stabilize the number of people living outdoors in the state overall.<sup>7</sup> However, Colorado has some of the fastest increasing costs of living expenses of any state in the nation and many households are moving closer to instability. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has put further strain on Colorado's housing resources, threatening to reverse the housing stability gains made over the last decade.

## Colorado Statewide Point-in-Time Count Data

Every year during the last 10 days of January, communities across the nation are federally mandated to conduct a Point-in-Time Count (PIT Count). This PIT Count is completed to help local areas better understand year-over-year trends by looking at how many individuals and families are experiencing homelessness on a given night. While this data is not exhaustive and is widely considered an under-representation of the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community, it can be used to see if progress is being made to end homelessness. Nationally, there are approximately 18 individuals experiencing homelessness per 10,000.<sup>8</sup> In Colorado, the rate is now 17.1 per 10,000. This is significantly lower than in 2016, when Colorado's rate was 18.6 per 10,000.<sup>9</sup> The following shows the full trend of Colorado PIT Count data collected from 2007 to 2020 and how the numbers have changed over time.

State of Colorado Point in Time Count Data 2007-2020						United States Point in Time Count Data
YEAR	Total Individuals Experiencing Homeless	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Total in ES and TH	Unsheltered Homeless	Total Individuals Experiencing Homeless
2007	14,225	3,630	3,341	6,971	7,254	647,258
2008	14,747	3,492	3,385	6,877	7,870	639,784
2009	15,268	4,895	4,136	9,031	6,237	630,227
2010	15,482	4,895	4,136	9,031	6,451	637,077
2011	15,116	3,004	3,142	6,146	8,970	623,788
2012	16,768	3,527	3,733	7,260	9,508	621,553
2013	9,754	4,048	3,543	7,591	2,163	590,364
2014	10,028	4,025	4,058	8,083	1,945	576,450
2015	9,953	3,806	3,328	7,134	2,819	564,708
2016	10,550	4,513	3,098	7,611	2,939	549,928
2017	10,940	4,160	2,921	7,081	3,859	550,996
2018	10,857	4,180	2,348	6,528	4,329	552,830
2019	9,619	4,853	2,578	7,431	2,188	567,715
2020	9,846	4,603	2,330	6,933	2,913	580,466

When these Colorado PIT Count numbers are compared to the national average, Colorado has dramatic comparative improvement. Since 2007, Colorado PIT Count data has shown a decrease in over 30% while the national average shows only a 10% decrease. In the table to the right one can see how the state and national trends compare through the years.

Change in Total Homelessness <sup>10</sup>	CO	USA
2007-2020	-30.8%	-10.3%
2008-2020	-33.2%	-9.3%
2009-2020	-35.5%	-7.9%
2010-2020	-36.4%	-8.9%
2011-2020	-34.9%	-6.9%
2012-2020	-41.3%	-6.6%
2013-2020	0.9%	-1.7%
2014-2020	-1.8%	0.7%
2015-2020	-1.1%	2.8%
2016-2020	-6.7%	5.6%
2017-2020	-10.0%	5.3%
2018-2020	-9.3%	5.0%
2019-2020	2.4%	2.2%

<sup>7</sup> <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness-report/colorado/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.hud.gov/press/press\\_releases\\_media\\_advisories/hud\\_no\\_21\\_041](https://www.hud.gov/press/press_releases_media_advisories/hud_no_21_041)

<sup>9</sup> "2016: The State of Homelessness in America," <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/2016%20State%20of%20Homelessness.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3031/pit-and-hic-data-since-2007/>

## Statewide McKinney-Vento Data

Every Colorado school district must have at least one homeless education liaison, per the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This is the contact for any children and youth who experience homelessness, including those who live doubled up. This liaison helps youth and their families connect to resources, such as free school lunches and transportation to the child’s school if the family is forced to move out-of-district. The district liaison ensures school attendance stability when other aspects of the child’s life are unstable. Homeless education liaisons are required to record and report the total annual number of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Colorado McKinney Vento Data 2010-2020			
YEAR	Total Homeless* Youth in CO Schools <sup>11</sup>	% of Students Homeless (CO total) <sup>12</sup>	Change in % Homeless from Prior Year (CO total)
10/11	21,487	2.55%	
11/12	23,680	2.77%	0.22%
12/13	23,293	2.7%	-0.07%
13/14	24,062	2.74%	0.04%
14/15	24,685	2.78%	0.04%
15/16	23,954	2.66%	-0.12%
16/17	21,943	2.42%	-0.24%
17/18	23,089	2.54%	0.12%
18/19	22,224	2.44%	-0.1%
19/20	21,420	2.35%	-0.09%

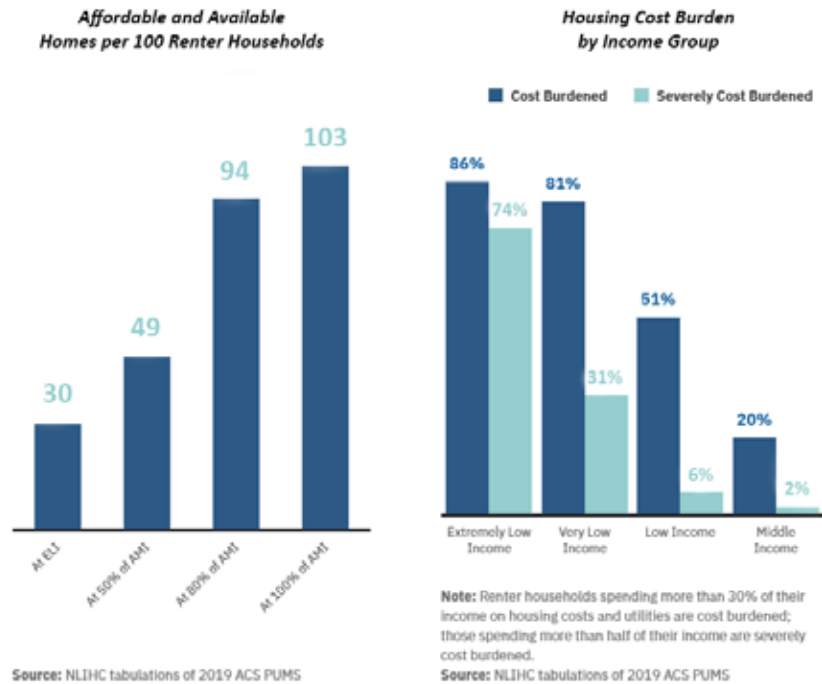
\*Homeless totals include those living doubled up due to economic hardship.

## Household Instability in Colorado

In Colorado, 45% of renters and 19% of homeowners are considered housing cost-burdened (defined by HUD as spending over 30% of their income on housing). Worse still, 11% of Coloradans spend over 50% of their income on housing, categorizing them as “severely cost burdened.”<sup>13</sup> As housing costs increase, the higher the risk that households will be impacted by other expected and unexpected expenses such as medical bills, car repairs, etc. This is especially true for renter households who are classified as extremely low income (30% of AMI, Area Median Income). There are simply not enough affordable homes available for people who are at these lower income levels. The following graphic, provided by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, shows the relationship between income and being housing cost-burdened for households in Colorado.<sup>14</sup>

Approximately 18% of Coloradans moved in 2019, while only 14% of individuals nationwide moved.<sup>15</sup> Moving can put a great deal of stress, psychological and financial, on those in the household. Paying deposits and other fees associated with moving to a new residence add up quickly for low-income households.

It is important to understand that household stability impacts many aspects of a household’s livelihood. One of the most notable impacts caused by household instability are those on health. Often, households experiencing instability are forced to choose between healthcare and housing. When housing costs go beyond 30% of that household’s income, it leaves less money for things like doctor visits, adequate health insurance, or medications.



Among Colorado renters that earn less than \$50,000 per year, more than half have reported putting off necessary medical care due to costs, 42% have put off their annual checkup, and just over a third have skipped refilling their medications.<sup>16</sup> Almost 300,000 Coloradans admitted to skipping a medical appointment due to lack of transportation.<sup>17</sup> Low-income areas are also more likely to have older houses that were built with lead pipes and lead-based paint. 47% of homes in Colorado built before 1978 contain lead paint.<sup>18</sup> Lead is known to have detrimental behavioral and cognitive effects on children. Children in households that move frequently, more than three times in a year, have been found to be more likely to have chronic health conditions.<sup>19</sup> Each of these health factors and many others contribute to greater household instability.

## Weld County Trends

Identifying the total number of people in Weld County who are experiencing homelessness is a difficult task. Not only are different households identified as homeless when using different definitions, but many individuals and families do not wish to identify as homeless. For those willing to respond, there are several survey tools available for communities to identify the number of people experiencing homelessness, to visualize trends, and to understand conditions and needs. In recent years, Weld County has utilized the PIT Count, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and VI-SPDAT data so that we may better get to know those experiencing homelessness. Both the PIT Count and the VI-SPDAT gather demographic information and other data about individual and family experiences of homelessness.

## Weld County Point-in-Time Count

Weld County has conducted an annual PIT Count since 2013. The PIT Count takes place during the last 10 calendar days of January. Each year, communities complete a count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness staying in shelters. Every other year, in addition to the sheltered count, a count of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness is completed. For the sake of consistent data, in 2016 Weld County began conducting a sheltered count as well as a biannual unsheltered count, the later of which started in 2017. It is important to note that the unsheltered count was not completed in 2021 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Weld's Way Home partner organizations support and participate in the annual PIT Count facilitated by the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) because the annual PIT Count helps allocate financial resources from HUD and helps the community better understand the experiences of households experiencing homelessness in Weld County.<sup>20</sup>

While the 2021 PIT Count found 215 people experiencing homelessness in Weld County, this is believed to grossly under-represent the true number, as it does not include households that are living doubled up or couch surfing (estimated to be around 14,000 households).<sup>21</sup> Though these individuals are not sleeping outdoors, they are still considered to be homeless by the definition being used here because they lack a fixed night-time residence, as their name is not on a lease or mortgage.

**Weld County PIT Count Data 2016-2021<sup>22</sup>**

YEAR	Total	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Youth (Age 0-24)	Chronic	Veteran
2016	179	116	63	*	85	1	8
2017	259	152	63	44	91	41	15
2018	199	147	52	*	75	22	11
2019	249	178	55	16	79	42	14
2020	240	176	64	*	88	35	12
2021	215	172	43	**	49	70	19

\*Unsheltered not counted this year

\*\* Unsheltered not counted due to COVID-19

Between 2019 and 2021, Weld County has seen a consistent decline in the number of households experiencing homelessness. However, this is a difficult trend to maintain as more people move to Colorado, housing prices continue to rise, and housing stock fails to meet the community's needs.

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/homeless\\_data](https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/homeless_data)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/pupilcurrent>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file\\_attachments/Housing%20Equity.pdf](https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/Housing%20Equity.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <https://nlihc.org/housing-needs-by-state/colorado>

<sup>15</sup> U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/CO>

<sup>16</sup> Enterprise Community Partners, "2019 Survey: When Housing Costs Undermine Health and Peace of Mind," <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/blog/health-survey-renters>

<sup>17</sup> Colorado Health Institute, Colorado Health Access Survey 2017

<sup>18</sup> National Center for Healthy Housing (2018)

<sup>19</sup> Cutts DB, Meyers AF, Black MM, Casey PH, Chilton M, Cook JT, et al, "US housing insecurity and the health of very young children," *Am J Public Health* 2011;101(8):1508-14. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2011.300139

<sup>20</sup> A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a local or regional planning body that is responsible for coordinating the funding and delivery of housing and services for people experiencing homelessness in its service area.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.weldgov.com/files/sharedassets/public/government/documents/final-consolidated-plan.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.coloradocoalition.org/BoSCoCPTHIC>



## McKinney-Vento Data

Although the PIT Count data showed a decline in youth living out-of-doors, McKinney-Vento data shows a more nuanced picture of the state of youth homelessness in Weld County. McKinney-Vento data includes youth who are living in households that are doubled up, not just living outdoors. Since 2010, the number of homeless youth (using this McKinney-Vento definition) has increased by almost 300 students. This indicates that we continue to see an increasing percentage of Weld County residents who live doubled up because of economic hardship, further increasing household instability.

Weld County McKinney Vento Data 2010-2020 <sup>23</sup>				
YEAR	Total Homeless* Youth in Weld County Schools	Total Population of Students in Weld County School Districts	% of Students Homeless*	Change in % of Students Homeless from Prior Year
10/11	682	37,848	1.80%	
11/12	770	38,401	2.01%	0.21%
12/13	953	38,632	2.47%	0.46%
13/14**	1,743	39,604	4.40%	1.93%
14/15	1,013	40,968	2.47%	-1.93%
15/16	678	41,820	1.62%	-0.85%
16/17	702	42,872	1.64%	0.02%
17/18	834	43,746	1.91%	0.27%
18/19	1,037	44,687	2.32%	0.41%
19/20	976	45,343	2.15%	-0.17%

\*Homeless totals include those living doubled up due to economic hardship.

\*\*Disproportionately large numbers due to Northern Colorado floods of 2013.

## Northern Colorado Continuum of Care By-Name List

The first iteration of the Weld's Way Home plan helped to establish the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC) and the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS), also known as coordinated entry. Through the CAHPS coordinated entry system, households experiencing homelessness in Larimer and Weld counties are identified by case managers across homeless serving agencies using the standardized VI-SPDAT assessment. Once households are identified, they are added to the By-Name List, a living list of most everyone experiencing homelessness in both Weld and Larimer counties.

While the PIT Count is an important tool for year-to-year trend analysis, the By-Name List is updated weekly with to-the-date numbers that more accurately reflect the current need in Weld County. The list is updated as people move into housing and when people fall back into homelessness. Weekly case conferencing calls by NoCO CoC staff and partner agencies ensure that the By-Name List stays as up-to-date as possible. Additionally, by comparing the total number of people experiencing homelessness with the number of people now housed, we can measure how close Northern Colorado is to ending homelessness and identify how many more housing resources are required. This table summarizes the CAHPS By-Name List numbers as of April 2022.

Veteran CAHP System		Adult CAHP System		Family CAHP System		Youth CAHP System	
# Assessed - Larimer	410	# Assessed - Larimer	1,146	# Assessed - Larimer	423	# Assessed - Larimer	66
# Assessed - Weld	222	# Assessed - Weld	410	# Assessed - Weld	178	# Assessed - Weld	28
# Assessed - Other	14	# Assessed - Other	10	# Assessed - Other	7	# Assessed - Other	0
# Housed - Larimer	314	# Housed - Larimer	311	# Housed - Larimer	237	# Housed - Larimer	12
# Housed - Weld	133	# Housed - Weld	106	# Housed - Weld	138	# Housed - Weld	8
# Housed - Other	96	# Housed - Other	75	# Housed - Other	51	# Housed - Other	3
Total Assessed	646	Total Assessed	1,566	Total Assessed	608	Total Assessed	94
Total Housed	543	Total Housed	492	Total Housed	426	Total Housed	23
% assessed that are housed: 84.06%		% assessed that are housed: 31.42%		% assessed that are housed: 70.01%		% assessed that are housed: 24.47%	



In Weld County **43%** of renters  
and **24%** of mortgage payers  
**SPEND MORE THAN 35%**  
of their income on housing, making  
them vulnerable to a financial crisis

### **Household Instability in Weld County**

In Weld County, housing costs have increased while wages have stayed comparatively stagnant. Additionally, Weld County's population is projected to double by 2040, from 300,000 to 600,000 residents. With a lack of affordable housing already straining our communities, population growth will only exacerbate the problem, and more households will find themselves facing housing instability. Additional housing units will need to be built across Greeley and Weld County to keep up with demand.

While housing supply is a key factor in household stability, other types of household stabilization resources are essential for keeping households stable. While there are urban centers within Weld County, it also contains a great deal of rural space. This further complicates the already difficult task of addressing household instability. Households in rural communities like ones found in Weld County face particular stability challenges. Food deserts, or areas where residents have little to no access to affordable and nutritious food, are common in Weld County. Limited food options often mean households have to choose between paying for food, housing, or other important bills. Similarly, housing deserts or areas where affordable housing is difficult or impossible to find are common around Weld County. Households are at higher risk of housing instability when they have to spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Rural areas also have less access to benefits and services from governmental agencies and nonprofits than their urban counterparts. This means that households experiencing instability in rural areas have fewer options when seeking assistance. At over 4,000 square miles, Weld County is geographically larger than Rhode Island, Delaware, and New York City combined. Delivering services and addressing gaps in rural communities is key to addressing household instability in Weld County.



## Exploring Causes of Household Instability

Many different factors contribute to household instability. Some households experience instability due to overcrowding or a lack of supportive services such as food or transportation. Others have to spend the majority of their income on housing, have to move frequently, or have homes that need major repairs, are physically dangerous (exposed wire, lead paint, structure reached end of usable life, etc.), or are located in unsafe neighborhoods. Many households experience a combination of these problems. Due to the number of factors that can destabilize households, solving household instability is a complicated process that requires collaboration and coordination.

One example of an overlooked factor in household stability is access to transportation. Oftentimes for someone to fully participate in the community they must have reliable access to a vehicle. This is typically an unwritten requirement, though this sometimes becomes a written one when filling out a job application. Often employers ask questions such as, “Do you have access to reliable transportation?” Answering “no” to this question may preclude that individual from getting a job they are otherwise qualified for. This is particularly true in rural areas similar to those found in Weld County. Additionally, there are many costs associated with owning a vehicle; the regular cost of fuel, the semi-regular oil change, and the occasional set of new tires or repairs. Although a vehicle is expensive to own, it is often a necessity for individuals to maintain employment or otherwise participate in community activities. If a household is already struggling to maintain stability, the sudden loss of transportation can be catastrophic. Without a vehicle they may need to rely on public transportation. Without an efficient public transportation system buses may run late and bus stops can be miles from certain residences or even completely absent. In the latter scenario, this means when an individual’s vehicle breaks down, they are no longer able to get to work. In most low-income jobs, this almost certainly means immediate termination.

Transportation was used as one example here, but it is clear how unexpected healthcare costs, child care complications, or any other inconvenience or expense could be detrimental to a household’s stability. It is far too easy for individuals, even those that are employed full-time, to lose their housing due to unexpected circumstances.

### **Causes of Household Instability**

The original Weld’s Way Home plan primarily focused on addressing the needs of individuals currently experiencing homelessness. To fully address the issues of homelessness and household instability, the WWH 2.0 strategic planning group expanded the plan to include comprehensive work plans to address household instability. To understand how to develop these household instability work plans, the group first needed to identify the factors that caused households to experience instability in Weld County. To identify these factors, Weld’s Way Home held a consensus-building workshop with Weld County agencies that work directly with those experiencing household instability. The group identified nine potential causal factors of household instability and their root causes.

The WWH work group then surveyed English and Spanish speaking utilizers of emergency services to better understand which of the nine causal factors had the greatest impact on the households’ ability to remain stable. These surveys were distributed to clients of nonprofits serving low-income households across Weld County. The results of the 1,119 returned surveys are below.

Causes of Household Instability: Consensus Building Community Survey Result									
Causal Factor	Insufficient Income	Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory	Mental & Physical Health Challenges	Internal & External Trauma	Inadequate Education & Training	Under-developed Life Skills	Chronic Unsafe Environment	Discrimination	Legal Barriers
1st	Not Enough Food (771)	Cost (492)	Physical Health (411)	Job Loss (228)	No College Degree (275)	Lack of Access to Benefits (225)	Family Tragedy/Death of a Family Member (160)	Race (254)	Arrest History (124)
2nd	Amount of Money You Make (509)	Availability (262)	Mental Health (195)	Unexpected Event (227)	No High School Diploma/GED (201)	Lack of Resources That Can Help (205)	Family Member Needing Constant Care (126)	Age (218)	Incarceration (46)
3rd	Bills (461)	Eviction (112)	Addictions (99)	Loss of Household Member (199)	No Trade School Certification (106)	Lack of Knowledge of Resources (170)	Addiction (113)	Ability or Disability (138)	Immigration Status (38)
4th	Medical Expenses (257)			Household Crisis (152)		Lack of Coping Skills (106)	Family/Spouse Abuse (102)	Gender (128)	
5th	Debt (236)			Natural Disaster (33)		Lack of Planning (105)	Fire/Flood/ Home Catastrophe (42)	Medical Condition (125)	
6th	Lack of Transportation (199)					Difficulty Adapting to Change (98)		Physical Features (88)	
7th	Distance to Travel for Work (109)					Lack of Self-Care Skills (54)		Career or Parental Status (84)	
8th	Child Care Cost (102)					Lack of Conflict Resolution Skills (51)		Marital Status (64)	
9th	Bankruptcy (42)					Lack of Parenting Skills (29)		Gender Identity (24)	
10th								Sexual Orientation (23)	

## Causes of Household Instability: Narrative

This section dives deeper into the causes of household instability identified by Weld County residents through the community survey. The Weld's Way Home work group used these priority areas to develop the Weld's Way Home 2.0 work plans.

### Insufficient Income

Unsurprisingly, lack of consistent income was the most common factor contributing to household instability. Rising cost of living expenses such as food, gasoline, and utilities can quickly deplete a household's monthly budget when minimum pay rates are below cost of living expenses. Regular assistance from community programs, such as local food banks, can free up income to increase the household's ability to pay for rent or other bills. Increasing access to healthcare can protect households from unexpected medical expenses. Many of the WWH 2.0 work plans seek to increase access to these cost saving services to help reduce the financial burden of household instability. Advocating for higher wages is also an important strategy to increase overall household income.



### **Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory**

Without an inventory of affordable and supportive housing options, many of Weld County's residents struggle with paying for housing costs. As discussed in the data trends section, households who contribute more than 30% of their income towards housing costs experience a variety of other negative health outcomes. The rising cost of lumber, water, and other building inputs have also increased the cost of building new homes. As Weld County's population continues to increase, it will be important for municipalities to incentivize developers to build affordable housing options. Additionally, poor renter protections and lack of rent controls disproportionately impact under-served low-income populations.<sup>27</sup> WWH 2.0 seeks to increase moving in opportunities through increased affordable housing development, landlord partnerships, information sharing, and advocacy.


### **Mental and Physical Health Challenges**

Mental and physical health challenges create many barriers for households experiencing housing instability. Medical bills and prescription costs can put a huge burden on household finances. In 2019, 26% of households in the U.S. reported having problems paying medical bills.<sup>28</sup> Ensuring that households have access to affordable healthcare is a key strategy to keep households stable.

Mental health challenges, such as substance use disorders, anxiety, or depression are an impactful problem for many households facing instability. Individuals who suffer from severe mental illness have a difficult time prioritizing bills, housing, employment, personal health, etc. In addition, many community resources, organizations, and government benefits have strict rules against substance use, which limits the amount of support available to individuals struggling with substance use disorders.

### **Internal and External Trauma**

Trauma-inducing events such as job loss, natural disasters, loss of a household member, or other unexpected crises can include a large expense and increase stress on a household's ability to take care of their financial obligations. Trauma can also impact an individual's mental or physical health, limiting their capacity to participate in society, and increasing risks as outlined above. Ensuring individuals and families have access to emergency support systems is critical to help households process traumatic events and avoid other complications that could destabilize their household.

A photograph of a person sleeping in a tent, illustrating housing instability. The person is wearing a green beanie and a white jacket, and is lying down with their head on a pillow. The tent is brown and has a mesh window. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting an outdoor setting at night.

**63%**

**of extremely low-income  
households in Weld County  
SPEND MORE THAN 50% of  
their income on housing**



## **Inadequate Education and Training**

Many causes of household instability overlap in clear ways. Insufficient income can be a barrier to education and workforce training for many lower income households. Poor outreach and advertising for education or workforce programs can leave households unaware of the resources available to them. As an individual's level of education increases, their median income also increases and unemployment rates decrease.<sup>29</sup> Ensuring that youth graduate high school or encouraging them to obtain a GED is crucial for their future household stability. Education and workforce development are not addressed in the Weld's Way Home 2.0 Plan, however United Way of Weld County and partner agencies focus on education and workforce development through its Thrive by 25 Collective Impact initiative.

## **Under-developed Life Skills**

Self-care, coping, and conflict resolution skills are important for household stability as it allows households to plan for and adapt to sudden changes. Understanding how to find and access benefits, access emergency financial assistance, and create basic household budgets are a few examples of the life skills needed to ensure household stability. Expanding awareness of available resources and providing skill development opportunities is an important strategy implemented in the Weld's Way Home 2.0 plan.

## **Chronic Unsafe Environment**

The physical environment in which individuals live, work, and play greatly impacts their quality of life and stability. Abuse within a household can create dangerous and stressful conditions, which force individuals to leave the household. Households that interact with police more often incur additional costs and are often experiencing household instability in some capacity. Low-income households are at higher risk of exploitation from landlords and are more likely to live in homes that do not meet basic health and safety standards. These households may not address these issues with authorities, as they fear that they will be forced to leave their home for repairs, get evicted entirely if the building is condemned, or forced out by the landlord in retaliation.<sup>30</sup>

## **Discrimination**

Housing discrimination based on race, income, age, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity is well documented and prevalent in many housing related systems despite the fact that there are federal and state laws banning such discrimination. Discriminatory policies, laws, and policies have created a housing system that intentionally creates barriers for these groups of people. Redlining, community policy, credit checks, high deposit requirements, excessive late fees, and gentrification are just a few examples. Additionally, documents relating to housing, such as bills or leases, are often only available in English. This can be a significant barrier for non-English speaking households and can lead to households missing payments or losing benefits.

## **Legal Barriers**

Individuals who have been arrested or incarcerated face additional legal barriers that make it difficult to acquire stable employment. Housing options are also significantly limited for those with a sexual related criminal offense or individuals with a criminal history. Additionally, discrimination in the legal system puts poor and under-served households at higher risk of eviction.<sup>31</sup> Weld County is also a secondary resettlement community for refugees, meaning that once a refugee arrives in the United States they are likely to be placed into a secondary community like Weld County due to family connections and abundant labor employment opportunities. This population faces many legal barriers to household stability. Receiving a green card can be a complex and difficult process. Immigrants who are undocumented often cannot access community services and therefore are at higher risk of household instability.

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<sup>27</sup> Eviction And Health: A Vicious Cycle Exacerbated By A Pandemic, Health Affairs Health Policy Brief, April 1, 2021. DOI: 10.1377/hpb20210315.747908

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/issue-brief/data-note-americans-challenges-health-care-costs/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/701697>


<sup>31</sup> [https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/greenberg\\_et\\_al\\_.pdf](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mdesmond/files/greenberg_et_al_.pdf)



## Cost of Homelessness

There are both financial and human costs associated with the current and too often lacking homelessness response system. Creating an effective system allows communities to use resources in an efficient way to save money and save lives. Direct financial costs of homelessness include cost for medical treatment, emergency shelter operation costs, behavioral health costs, and the cost of law enforcement. Examples of human costs include crowded and unclean public spaces, public perception of safety around homeless populations, and the cost of human suffering and loss of life associated with living outdoors. There is much focus on the direct financial cost of homelessness, however it is important to recognize the human cost is extremely high for households experiencing homelessness; those who experience chronic homelessness have a life expectancy 30 years shorter than the average American. The most cost-effective solution to end homelessness is to work to house people as quickly as possible and to help them maintain their housing through Housing First programming.

Each year, communities spend large amounts of money maintaining homelessness. In 2006, the Denver Housing First Collaborative published a cost benefit analysis, which provided housing and services to 100 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. The study compared the costs of the services utilized before and after entering Housing First programs. During the program, the total cost of medical expenses (emergency room, inpatient, and outpatient care) decreased by an average of \$7,755 per person. Detoxification costs decreased by \$8,732 per person. Total nights in jail decreased from 488 nights to 116 nights for an average savings of \$1,371 per person. Because these individuals now had a permanent residence, emergency shelter costs were eliminated for a total savings of \$13,688 per person. All of this combines to a total cost savings of \$31,545 per person over the course of two years. If you include the cost of Housing First programming, there is a net cost savings of \$4,745 per person.<sup>32</sup> This study does not take into account the time law enforcement officers spend enforcing anti-homeless laws and dealing with problems that arise, so the savings to public services is actually greater. In short, the cost of housing and offering ongoing support to those experiencing chronic homelessness is far less than the amount the community spends to maintain services for this population.



**30%**

of the homeless population  
in the United States  
are **FAMILIES WITH  
CHILDREN**

## **Cost of Family Homelessness**

One of Weld County's biggest challenges is a lack of affordable housing. More than half of low-income households in Colorado spend more than 50% of their income on rent. A 2015 Piton Foundation study found that Weld County had a deficit of 3,866 affordable rental units for families living on 30% of the Area Median Income (\$19,890 per year).

When a community has limited to no affordable housing options (to rent or to buy), community members start to experience a host of negative outcomes. Vulnerable individuals and families often must choose one or more of the following: having high residential mobility (moving often), living doubled or tripled up with other families, choosing to live in housing that is unaffordable and therefore lacking funds for other necessities, getting stuck in a cycle of perpetual renting of inadequate and unaffordable housing, and/or opting to live in low-cost, often poor quality housing. Conversely, affordable housing can benefit a household and even a whole community. Outcomes of affordable housing deficits and housing instability include:

### ***High Residential Mobility (Changing Residences Often)***

- High residential mobility is associated with significant deficits in childhood educational achievement.
- Residential stability facilitates better knowledge of and access to available community resources and social support networks for families with longer tenures. In contrast, residential moves are often accompanied by declines in social connections, whether assessed by children's social network sizes, popularity, or parents' familiarity with their children's friendship networks.
- When children do not have to move regularly, their school attendance is better, and they have a higher chance of ending the school year in the same school in which they started.

### ***Living Doubled or Tripled Up***

- Overcrowding has been linked with symptoms of psychological problems among elementary school-aged children; one possible reason for this link is that children in crowded living spaces have less control over their actions and interactions, which leads to a loss of self-efficacy and a feeling of helplessness.
- Adolescent teens and young adults living in crowded housing environments are more likely to engage in substance abuse as well as sexual risk behaviors that can lead to HIV, STDs, and unplanned pregnancies.

### ***Perpetually Renting Inadequate and Unaffordable Housing***

- Households with housing cost burdens frequently cut corners on spending on health care and nutrition.
- Affordable housing offers the opportunity for homeownership, which represents the largest source of wealth accumulation for most households. Lack of affordable housing options limits upward mobility opportunities especially for low-income households.
- Renters stay in their residences for an average of 2.5 years, while homeowners stay for about 13 years. School-age children whose parents own their homes are less likely to exhibit behavior problems than those whose parents rent their homes.
- For young adolescents, living in a rented home has been linked with a greater likelihood of psychological distress and having a child before age 18.

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<sup>32</sup> [https://shnny.org/uploads/Supportive\\_Housing\\_in\\_Denver.pdf](https://shnny.org/uploads/Supportive_Housing_in_Denver.pdf)



## The Solution

### Preventing and Ending Homelessness

To end homelessness, Weld County's response system must include two complementary approaches:

1. Preventing homelessness, which involves a wide-range of community based efforts to stabilize people before their housing option ends.
2. Ending homelessness, which involves working with those already experiencing homelessness to help them get back into housing as quickly as possible.

WWH 2.0 addresses both of these strategies with comprehensive work plans that lay out action steps to create and improve existing response systems. Preventing and ending homelessness requires the use of best practices, such as Housing First approaches and coordinated entry, to create new strategies and systems. This can be a difficult and time-consuming process. The work plans outlined in this document are intended to create lasting change and will take three-to-five years to complete. While the results of some of these changes will be immediately noticeable, most system changes take time to impact the community. WWH uses community-wide measurable goals, program data, and national and state data to track the impact of the strategies outlined in this section.

#### Preventing Homelessness

##### Strategies to Support Household Stability

In the United States, homelessness and household instability strategies have heavily emphasized emergency services for those who have already lost their housing. Research has shown that emergency assistance is less financially efficient than homelessness prevention strategies.<sup>33</sup> Types of prevention strategies utilized in Weld County include:

##### **One-Time Assistance**

Many households experiencing household instability only need emergency financial assistance once to regain stability.<sup>34</sup> Common types of one-time assistance include:

**Rent/Mortgage/Utility Assistance** — When a household is having trouble paying a particular bill such as rent, utility, or mortgage due to some other unexpected expense, temporary loss of income, etc., this type of assistance can help cover these costs. Organizations typically pay the bill directly and require proof of income.

**Food Assistance** — It is not uncommon for households experiencing household instability to cut back on food. During times of financial hardship, households often have to make difficult decisions to cut food, medication, or other essentials. Food banks and other food assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), help ensure households have adequate nutrition while also helping the household free up money for other housing related expenses.

## ***Housing Vouchers***

Housing voucher programs are typically resourced by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They provide funds to local public housing agencies (PHAs) which provide housing vouchers to those who qualify. Housing vouchers are a form of housing assistance given to individuals or families that are very low income, older, and/or disabled.

HUD housing vouchers come in two forms: Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly Section 8) and Project-Based Vouchers. Housing Choice Vouchers allow individuals or families to choose their own dwelling in the private market. These vouchers can be used with any landlord that agrees to rent to the voucher recipient(s). Project-Based Vouchers are tied to units at specific housing communities. If the individual or family moves from this housing, the voucher does not follow them.

Recipients of either type of voucher pay no more than 30% of their income on rent; for instance, if a household has \$1,000 a month in income, it would pay \$300 for rent and HUD would pay the remainder through the voucher program. One drawback of this program is that there is an upper limit to how much can be paid with vouchers. That means if an individual or family is in an area with high housing prices, it still may be difficult to find housing they can afford even with the voucher.

## ***Critical Repair Assistance***

Some dwellings are so damaged that they are dangerous for those that live in them. Roof leaks, electrical problems, mold, and other issues can become too expensive for homeowners or renters to repair. In the most severe cases, this can lead to these houses being deemed too dangerous for occupation and being condemned by housing inspectors. Providing financial assistance to pay for these repairs can prevent individuals from losing their housing.

## ***Affordable Housing***

Having an adequate supply of affordable housing is a vital strategy for preventing homelessness. HUD defines affordable housing as housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs, including utilities.<sup>35</sup> Household stability is difficult to achieve if a household must spend a large portion of their income on housing costs. Housing costs can be impacted through changes in policies that increase housing stock, reduce or stabilize the price of housing, set limits on the amount of rent landlords can collect, or increase the income of workers.

## ***Transportation Assistance***

Reliable transportation systems guarantee that households have access to employment opportunities, food, medical treatment, and other essential services. Reliable transportation systems include access to well-maintained roads, safe bike paths, accessible sidewalks, and public transportation. Transportation is required to maintain employment and complete general daily tasks. Public transportation plays a key role in helping individuals maintain stability when they are not able to access private forms of transportation. Transportation assistance can come in the form of free or reduced bus passes, car repair assistance, or free bike programs.

## ***Mental Health Services***

For many Americans, it is vital that mental health services are provided to allow for self-sufficiency. These services can be a financial burden or impossibility for even those who are insured. Supplying these services for low-income individuals is important for their well-being.

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<sup>33</sup> <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/housing-shelter>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/research-shows-rental-assistance-reduces-hardship-and-provides-platform-to-expand>

<sup>35</sup> <https://archives.hud.gov/local/nv/goodstories/2006-04-06glos.cfm>



## Household Stability Priority Areas

The Weld's Way Home group used the results from the consensus building workshop and community survey to develop the following priority areas. These priority areas were decided upon to address the identified causes of household instability *while considering the gaps within the community resources that are currently provided.*

Priority Area		Related Causes
Racial Equity	Widening the scope of communities and cultures who have access to information, resources, and opportunities.	1. Insufficient Income 2. Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory 3. Education & Training 4. Life Skills 5. Discrimination 6. Legal Barriers
Coordinated Entry	Establishing and implementing a coordinated entry system for homelessness prevention services.	1. Insufficient Income
Landlord Partnership	Facilitating landlord-tenant relationships in order to foster inclusive and affordable housing options.	1. Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory 2. Chronic Unsafe Environment 3. Under-developed Life Skills 4. Discrimination 5. Legal Barriers
Police Partnership	Improving interactions amongst police and individuals currently experiencing homelessness as well as those on the verge of losing housing.	1. Mental & Physical Health Challenges 2. Internal & External Trauma 3. Discrimination 4. Legal Barriers
Transportation	Ensuring community-wide access to affordable and reliable transportation.	1. Insufficient Income 2. Education & Training 3. Life Skills 4. Chronic Unsafe Environment
Advocacy	Increasing public legislative support for WWH efforts and offering additional support for outside household stability initiatives.	1. Insufficient Income 2. Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory 3. Chronic Unsafe Environment 4. Discrimination 5. Legal Barriers
Information Sharing	Improving community access and comprehension of household stability resources.	1. Insufficient Income 2. Insufficient Affordable Housing Inventory 3. Mental & Physical Health Challenges 4. Discrimination

The Weld's Way Home work group decided to focus on 7 out of the 9 identified causes of homelessness identified in the community assessment. The group decided that "Health Challenges" and "Trauma" were not causes the WWH 2.0 plan would address. As such, work plans were not developed for these areas. The WWH group felt that the issues of health and trauma were largely being addressed by major healthcare providers in Weld County including Banner Health, North Colorado Health Alliance, North Range Behavioral Health, Salud Family Health, Sunrise Community Health, UCHHealth, the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment, and others.

# Ending Homelessness

## Background

The first WWH plan set the groundwork and improved many systems for those experiencing homelessness. The first step in ending homelessness is to define an overarching strategic framework to guide all efforts. Nationally, a range of housing strategies have been implemented to varying degrees of success. These can largely be collected under one of two frameworks: housing ready or Housing First. Traditionally, most housing programs have used the housing ready framework, which has shown to not reliably end homelessness. The first WWH plan adopted the Housing First approach to guide the work and implement Housing First practices within programming community-wide. Current research continues to support the effectiveness of Housing First programs over a housing ready practice. Although many agencies adopted Housing First principles as part of the first WWH plan, not all have done so. WWH 2.0 continues to use the Housing First framework and works to increase the adoption of best practices across all of Weld County.

## Housing Strategies and the Housing First Concept

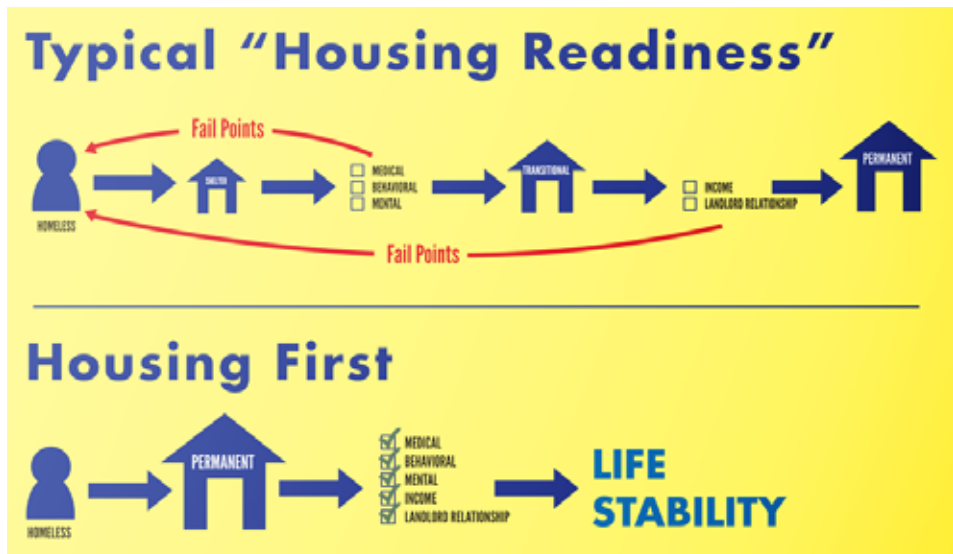
**Housing Ready** — Housing ready focuses on a person or family’s “readiness” for housing by creating expectations that must be met before permanent housing is provided. Examples of this include completing a structured, 120-day program, maintaining sobriety, needing to have and/or search for a job, etc. Thus, access to vouchers, subsidies, etc., can be withheld if someone is deemed “unready.” This process leaves people in their homelessness if they cannot immediately achieve certain standards like sobriety, permanent employment, etc.

**Housing First** — Known as a harm reduction model, Housing First provides opportunities for housing without pre-condition. Housing First is a whole-system response that offers non-time limited, affordable housing as quickly as possible for individuals and families experiencing homelessness while providing the level of supportive services people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness. The approach begins with an immediate focus on helping individuals and families to move back into housing. Income, sobriety, and/or participation in treatment or other services are not required as a condition for getting housing. While income is not a requirement, this does not mean housing resources are provided for free. Housing First programs often provide temporary rent assistance and household’s rent payments are capped based on income.

This model is based on the understanding that those experiencing homelessness are more likely to find success in addiction and medical treatment (mental and physical), attaining employment, connecting with a stable support system, etc., if doing so while living in permanent housing. Numerous studies have shown that Housing First is less costly than maintaining people in their homelessness.<sup>36</sup> Housing First strategies seek to decrease barriers to housing and services.

There are five core Housing First principles:

1. Immediate access to permanent non-time limited housing with no readiness requirements
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Recovery orientation
4. Individualized and client-driven supports
5. Social and community integration





Permanent housing with  
needed supports **SAVES**  
**\$15,733**  
**PER PERSON PER YEAR**  
on average in public costs for shelter,  
criminal justice, health care, emergency  
room, and behavioral health

**Harm Reduction** — Harm reduction is an approach or strategy aimed at reducing the risks and harmful effects associated with substance use and other high-risk behaviors. Recognizing that abstinence may be neither a realistic nor a desirable goal for some users (especially in the short term), the use of substances is accepted as a fact and the focus is placed on reducing harm while use continues. Housing and shelter programs that use harm reduction prioritize the safety of individuals over requiring sobriety. While harm reduction is often associated with substance use, this strategy is often also applied to other types of public health interventions such as safe sex initiatives, vehicle safety, public safety, and housing and shelter activities. Harm reduction is a realistic, pragmatic, humane, and successful approach to addressing issues of substance use.

**Trauma-Informed Care** — Trauma-informed care (TIC) is a method of service delivery and health care practice that considers the past lived experience of people experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is never a choice and is often caused by a series of traumatic events in someone's life. Additionally, an experience of homelessness is a traumatic event that can compound existing trauma and health concerns. TIC seeks to understand a person's trauma and how it impacts their current state of health and homelessness. By identifying and treating this trauma, homeless serving agencies can address barriers to stability and help the individual heal these lifelong wounds. Instead of wondering "What is wrong with this person?," TIC requires service providers to ask themselves "What happened to this person?" to fully understand the factors that are impacting the individuals current situation. Becoming trauma-informed means recognizing that people have many different traumatic experiences, which often intersect in their lives. Well-meaning service providers can often re-traumatize clients who need understanding, support, and individually conscious care.<sup>38</sup>

**Person-centered Approach** — A person-centered approach is where the person is placed at the center of the service and treated as a person first. The focus is on the person and what they can do, not their condition or disability. Support should focus on achieving the person's aspirations and be tailored to their needs and unique circumstances. A person-centered approach:

1. Supports the person at the center of the service to be involved in making decisions about their life.
2. Takes into account each person's life experience, age, gender, culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and identity.
3. Requires flexible services and support to suit the person's wishes and priorities.
4. Is strengths based, where people are acknowledged as the experts in their life with a focus on what they can do first, and any help they need second.
5. Includes the person's support networks as partners.

A person-centered approach should support and enable a person to build and keep control over their life.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> "Trauma Informed Care," <https://nationalhomeless.org/issues/trauma-informed-care/>

<sup>39</sup> "What is a person-centred approach?," <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/psychosocial/principles/Pages/person-centred.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/emergency-response/outreach>

## Shelter and Housing Resources

### Short-Term Shelter and Access Points

**Street Outreach** — Street outreach is a type of engagement strategy that involves moving outside the walls of an agency facility to engage with people experiencing homelessness who may be disconnected and alienated not only from mainstream services and supports, but from the services targeting homeless persons. This is incredibly important work designed to help establish supportive relationships, give people advice and support, and enhance the possibility that they will access necessary services and support that will help them move back into housing.<sup>40</sup> Street outreach uses Housing First principles to build trust with people who often do not have a favorable experience with the current homelessness response system. This outreach method understands that it is unreasonable to expect people who have experienced severe trauma to come to services, such as going to appointments. Instead, street outreach brings services to vulnerable households and does not penalize them for being unable to access services in a more traditional manner. WWH 1.0 established a small street outreach team and WWH 2.0 aims to expand street outreach efforts and to help to create a more coordinated and proactive street outreach strategy.

**Emergency Shelter** — Emergency shelter is designed to provide immediate relief and assistance, including temporary shelter, to any individual or family experiencing homelessness. Under the Housing First approach, individuals or families may be placed in an emergency shelter until an assessment can be completed to determine which housing option is best for them. Individuals and families may also be placed in emergency shelter if permanent (non-time limited) housing options are not immediately available.

**Transitional Housing** — Transitional housing is designed to provide up to two years of assistance to individuals (particularly youth) and highly vulnerable families who are experiencing homelessness. Transitional housing is often used for families who need more intensive case management, and allows people to further stabilize before moving back into non-time limited housing. While a complementary part of the homeless response system for certain populations, *transitional housing is not considered a Housing First strategy.*

### Permanent (Non-Time Limited) Housing Options

**Independent Housing (Market Value)** — Housing is maintained by the household without ongoing additional assistance. As such, housing costs can be impacted by the whims of the market/economy (no rent controls or subsidies).

**Supportive Housing** — Combines and links permanent, affordable housing with flexible, voluntary support services designed to help tenants stay housed and build the necessary skills to live as independently as possible.

**Rapid Re-Housing** is a housing program that provides temporary financial assistance to households experiencing housing instability. Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) is one of many supportive housing options. It is an intervention designed to help individuals and families quickly exit homelessness and return to non-time limited housing. Services and support associated with RRH includes, but is not limited to, housing search and landlord negotiations, short term financial and/or rental assistance, connection to resources, and other client-driven case management. This type of assistance has proven to be particularly successful for families who do not need extended support. It also helps to increase turnover in shelters, which allows more families to be served. RRH is considered a Housing First strategy.

**Subsidized Housing** includes federally funded housing options like rent restricted housing units and housing voucher options. A variety of housing voucher programs exist, such as HUD-VASH for veteran households and Housing Choice Vouchers that are often managed by local housing authorities. Households are required to pay 30% of their income for these types of housing resources.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> <https://cdola.colorado.gov/office-of-rental-assistance/housing-voucher-programs>



**Permanent Supportive Housing** is a comprehensive housing program reserved for the most chronically homeless households. Tenants may live in their homes as long as they meet basic obligations of tenancy, such as paying rent. While living in permanent supportive housing (PSH), also known as supportive housing, people have access to the support services that they need and want, and have a private and secure place to make their home, just like other members of the community, with the same rights and responsibilities. PSH is an evidence-based housing intervention that combines non-time limited affordable housing assistance with wrap around supportive services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. While participation in services is encouraged, it is not a condition of living in the housing. Housing affordability is ensured either through a rent subsidy or by setting rents at affordable levels. There are three primary forms of supportive housing: single-site housing, scattered-site housing, and mixed housing. PSH is considered a Housing First strategy.

## Coordination with the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care

**Coordinated Entry** — Coordinated entry is a process developed to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis have fair and equal access and are quickly identified, assessed for vulnerability, referred, and connected to housing and assistance based on their strengths and needs.<sup>42</sup> Coordinated entry systems are necessary to create an effective homelessness response system. Coordinated entry uses Housing First principles, such as low-barrier entry and person-centered care to house the most vulnerable households first. The Northern Colorado Continuum of Care (NoCO CoC), a HUD-established homelessness planning region, founded the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS) as the region's coordinated entry system. CAHPS uses a standard tool, called the VI-SPDAT, to assess households experiencing homelessness, assist their needs and vulnerability, and assign appropriate housing resources. WWH 2.0 recognizes the importance of CAHPS in ending homelessness in Weld County and seeks to strengthen CAHPS by encouraging all Weld County agencies to participate in CAHPS for the benefit of their clients.

**Homeless Management Information System** — The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology database used to collect client-level information and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless households.<sup>43</sup> The NoCO CoC helped to implement HMIS for homeless serving agencies and programs in Weld County. HMIS is also a Colorado statewide system that provides a tool for case managers to inventory client service use and allows program managers to better track the flow of clients in their programs. Additionally, HMIS provides real-time data that is used to accurately track the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community at any given time. This allows local areas to more effectively allocate resources and track meaningful community goals and objectives as they work to end homelessness. The WWH 2.0 plan understands the importance of data-driven solutions and has adopted HMIS as the best tool for tracking accurate data about people experiencing homelessness in Weld County.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Coordinated-Entry-and-HMIS-FAQs.pdf>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hmis/>

# Weld's Way Home 2.0 **12** Priorities

## Advocacy

Increase local government and broader community support for Weld's Way Home initiatives to increase household stability resources through policy change.

## Coordinated Household Stabilization Assistance

Establish and implement a shared coordinated entry system for homelessness prevention services.

## Information Sharing

Improve community access and awareness of household stability resources.

## Landlord Partnership

Facilitate landlord-tenant relationships to prevent evictions and to foster inclusive and affordable housing options.

## Police Partnerships and Criminal Justice System

Engage with law enforcement entities to reduce legal barriers and explore new ways of policing housing vulnerable populations.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ensure that historically underrepresented communities have equitable representation and access to information, resources, and opportunities.

## Transportation

Improve community-wide access to affordable and reliable transportation.

## Community Education

Increase community awareness of the realities of homelessness, root causes of household instability, and where to find resources.

## Housing Navigation Center with Cold Weather Shelter

Find a long-term location for the Housing Navigation Center and cold weather shelter to ensure stability of services.

## Expanded Case Management Services

Close gaps in case management services and improve current practices for better housing outcomes.

## Affordable Housing, Housing Retention and Move-in Opportunities

Increase the amount of available housing resources to expand move-in opportunities and keep people housed.

## Faith Engagement

Work with the Weld County faith community to coordinate resources, engage volunteers, and identify new ways to increase household stability.

Weld's Way Home is dedicated to a **Housing First** model. It includes an evidence-based understanding that people will be more successful when they have the stability and support of housing. Housing First helps

those experiencing homelessness move into appropriate housing as quickly as possible. As a harm reduction model, Housing First negates the detrimental consequences of living in homelessness. Once a person is again used to living indoors, they can more effectively utilize supportive services.



**INCREASED LIFE STABILITY**

**DECREASED RETURN TO HOMELESSNESS**

**COMMUNITY COST SAVINGS**

**Compared with traditional programs, Housing First participants show increased success at gaining and maintaining employment, accessing physical and mental health services, achieving sobriety, and reaching other personal goals.**



# Weld's Way Home 2.0 Work Plans

## Advocacy

Household instability is caused by systemic issues that impact a household's ability to pay rent. High cost of living combined with low pay makes it difficult to keep up with bills. Discriminatory housing policy creates barriers for low-income households and communities of color. When housing policy is discussed and changed, it is important to have advocates at the table to support effective and evidence-based solutions. Creating a network of advocates at the community and governmental level is vital for ensuring lasting policy change that increases household stability and decreases barriers to maintaining stability.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Advocacy			
Goal	Increase community and local and state government support for WWH initiatives to increase household stability resources through advocacy and policy change.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase representation from local government in the WWH Collective Impact process.</li> <li>2. Build relationships with policy makers to increase public support for policies that align with WWH goals and objectives.</li> <li>3. Increase WWH representation at public hearings about policy discussions involving household stability policies.</li> <li>4. Advocate for and support new and existing policy development to increase household stability in Weld County.</li> </ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable
		Domain	Community Awareness and Advocacy
Barriers	Volunteer and staff capacity, complicated policy systems	Available Resources	Public legislators and officials and town council meetings, Housing and Land Use Project
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of city and government officials who support effective household stabilization strategies and best practices.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of new household stabilization policies and regulations at the local government level.</li> </ol>		

Advocacy Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Recruit county staff and municipal elected officials to participate in WWH planning process	1a: Identify prominent government staff and officials with interest in WWH initiatives	Advocacy Workgroup and WWH Partners	Staff/volunteer time, networking	Would elected officials be a continual part of this process? Is their continued involvement realistic? Is there anyone below the officials who could represent them in meetings or workgroups? Should public official outreach be limited to specific asks that arise out of the work sessions?
	1b: Create recruitment pitch and extend formal invitation to join	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff/volunteer time	
	1c: Continue to seek public representation as group evolves and municipalities elect new officials	Advocacy Workgroup	Time, networking opportunities	
	1d: Keep key administrators aware of ongoing initiatives	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff time, outreach	
2nd Task: Implement process to advocate for household stability concerns as the group determines potential actions to request of public officials	2a: Identify key public officials	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff/volunteer time, networking	When would it be most effective? Scheduling, timing, process for requesting work sessions. Work with Police Partnership Workgroup to target officials for criminal justice reform.
	2b: Develop targeted asks, aligned with household stability initiatives	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff/volunteer time	Advocate for governmental budget and policy change.
	2c: Determine timing and process for requesting work sessions	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff/volunteer time	Create standard operating procedure.
	2d: Reach out to identified officials with a formal proposal	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff time, outreach	
3rd Task: Research and show support for existing policies and upcoming policy changes that support household stability	3a: Identify existing policies and upcoming policy changes	Advocacy Workgroup	Research, staff time	Are we, as the homelessness prevention group, allowed to officially sign-on in support of legislation that addresses some of our priorities, or would the board of directors at all of the nonprofit partner agencies need to approve that to lend support?
	3b: Send representatives to council meetings and openly advocate and support said policies	Advocacy Workgroup	Staff/volunteer time, outreach	Read through meeting notes, work plan sessions.
	3c: Connect our efforts to legislative advocacy work already occurring around access and discrimination	Advocacy Workgroup	Research, staff/volunteer time	
4th Task: Work with state and federal legislators to keep them informed of local efforts and their positive impacts	4a: Identify state and federal stakeholders	Advocacy Workgroup	Research, time	
	4b: Develop and implement a multi-channel outreach work plan for sharing WWH achievements and any goals that may involve legislative support	Advocacy Workgroup	Research, staff/volunteer time, outreach	Potentially utilize any recruited municipality officials.



Coordinated Household Stabilization Assistance

Communication among organizations in Weld County is crucial for providing households with the support they need. Having individuals sign voluntary release forms, which allows for sharing of information and provides for more individualized plans and resources to be allocated quickly enough to be effective is a plan goal. A well-executed information sharing system to coordinate homelessness prevention resources, similar to the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS) that currently exists for people experiencing homelessness, would ensure households receive the emergency assistance they need to stay housed.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Coordinated Household Stabilization Assistance			
Goal	Establish and implement a shared coordination system for homelessness prevention services.		
Objectives	1. Design or adopt a coordinated entry/ referral system for homelessness prevention services. 2. Implement the coordinated system for homelessness prevention throughout Weld County.	Target Population(s)	Unstable
		Domain	Emergency Services and Homelessness Prevention
Barriers	Community education, inter-organizational agreement of referral methodology, client privacy	Available Resources	CAHPS, Unite Us
Desired Outcomes	1. Implement a coordinated entry system to prevent homelessness. 2. Decrease the number of households entering homelessness through coordinated prevention efforts and streamlined resource distribution.		



every day **21**  
people experiencing  
homelessness **DIE FROM**  
**A PREVENTABLE CAUSE**

## Coordinated Housing Stabilization Assistance Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Establish a shared tracking system for coordinated entry and referrals	1a: Research UNITE US as coordinated entry and referral system for WWH organizations	Workgroup	Research, time	Possible trial run before larger group commitment?
	1b: Explore other options	Workgroup	Research, time	Can CAHPS adapt to prevention/diversion as well as housing? What does 211 Colorado use? Can we use a system that communicates with external platforms? Alternatives: FindHelp.org, CharityTracker, CCMP.
	1c: Create a Release of Information that is approved by all WWH partner agencies	Workgroup	Staff time	UNITE US has their own ROI.
	1d: Make final decision with majority consent from members	ALL	1a/1b	
2nd Task: Implement system within community	2a: Establish workflow and training to help decrease duplication of work	UWWC Staff and selected referral interface	Time	Trainings may be provided by referral interface.
	2b: Create partner agency agreement/expectations	Workgroup	Time	
	2c: Promote active utilization of system among WWH members	UWWC Staff	1st Task and 2a/2b	Provide resources from 2a and 2b to new users.
	2d: Encourage and promote use within community	Information Sharing Group	1st Task and 2a/2b	Provide resources from 2a and 2b to new users.

Information Sharing

Ensuring that information about available resources are accessible in a variety of locations and formats can increase the utilization of these resources. Ensuring community representatives and agencies have the ability to share information with each other is another important avenue to direct those seeking resources to the right organizations.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Information Sharing			
Goal	Improve community access and awareness of household stability resources.		
Objectives	1. Increase availability of household stability resource information to all community members. 2. Improve inter-organizational communication and coordination to prevent gaps in services. 3. Ensure information sources and resources are accessible to all community members through equitable and inclusive practices.	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable, Paycheck-to-paycheck
		Domain	Community Awareness and Advocacy
Barriers	Systemic barriers and legal discrimination, funding	Available Resources	211 Colorado, UWWC Staff, web resources
Desired Outcomes	1. Increase the number of people who understand and are aware of the household stability resources available. 2. Increase the percentage of people who know how to access these resources.		



Mobile home communities account for **100,000 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING** in Colorado


Information Sharing Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Develop literature for those experiencing household instability	1a: Identify gaps in 211 Colorado Information Referral and information sharing	Information Sharing Workgroup	Time, research	Consider alternative means of communicating information (infographics, video, etc.) to be inclusive of those with different learning styles (auditory, kinetic, etc.) and to be inclusive of all cultures.
	1b: Ensure all materials are accessible in other languages and are considerate of alternate learning styles and cultural differences	Immigrant and Refugee Serving Nonprofits	Time, research, money for translation service	This would require working with the immigrant and refugee communities to ensure that the information is not just translated but transposed into something that is culturally accessible.
2nd Task: Improve availability of resource information to community members	2a: Develop relationships with utility companies in order to send materials with utility bills	Information Sharing Workgroup	Design time, outreach	
	2b: Add 211 info to other types of receipts (library, grocery store, etc.)	Information Sharing Workgroup	Design time, outreach	
	2c: Improve online awareness and accessibility of information through easily curated links and social media posts/advertisements	Information Sharing Workgroup	Marketing, design time	Make sure online linked resources are easily accessible (mobile, PC, Apple, non-US settings, etc.).
	2d: Improve digital access (including internet access, mobile-friendly websites, and online literacy)	Information Sharing Group	Advocacy, educational materials	Free downtown public access to Wi-Fi, online literacy courses for older adults.
3rd Task: Encourage and improve the communication between WWH organizations	3a: Develop questionnaire for participating organizations to learn of information sharing process	Information Sharing Group	Time, survey	
	3b: Implement an organization to organization communication and referral process so that the community has trust in getting the help they need regardless of entry point	Information Sharing Group	UNITE US or other shared referral system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Security of information between organizations.</li> <li>2. Clarity of language.</li> <li>3. Clarity of process.</li> <li>4. Minimize duplication of services.</li> <li>5. Leverage existing tools for sharing information if possible.</li> </ol>
	3c: Educate partner organizations to minimize improper referrals and improve spread of information	Information Sharing Group	Training materials, time, outreach	
4th Task: Ensure information sources mentioned in other groups are accessible to targeted community members	4a: Work with Racial Equity Workgroup to raise awareness in the community about different cultural norms of neighbors, i.e.: different smells due to different foods being prepared, family size norms (definition of family), etc.	Information Sharing Group	Communication materials, outreach	Cultural fun sharing events to find commonalities and joys of differences (Greeley Multicultural Festival, etc.).
	4b: Work with Advocacy Workgroup to reach out to municipalities and county government to participate in group	Information Sharing Group	First finalize plan for presentation before inviting	
	4c: Work with Police Partnership Workgroup to improve community awareness of non-police options to call for non-emergencies	Information Sharing Group	Communication materials, outreach	



### Landlord Partnership

Developing relationships with local landlords is an important strategy for Weld’s Way Home. These relationships would provide a chance to collaborate with and learn from the individuals making daily decisions about housing options for their tenants. Building strong landlord relationships would help to prevent evictions, improve renter-landlord relations, reduce costs for tenants, and influence many other factors of household stability.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Landlord Partnership			
Goal	Facilitate landlord-tenant relationships in order to foster inclusive and affordable housing options and prevent evictions.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Improve education around tenant lease requirements and common problems between landlords and tenants.</li><li>2. Create incentives for housing providers to increase inclusive and affordable housing options.</li><li>3. Increase the accessibility of emergency rent assistance for tenants and landlords.</li><li>4. Reduce stigma around housing unstable households through landlord engagement, education, and partnerships, to increase flexible housing opportunities.</li></ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable, Stable
		Domain	Household Stabilization and Housing Resources
Barriers	Property management cooperation/ capacity, affordable housing inventory, social stigma	Available Resources	Housing Choice Vouchers, Existing Agency/Landlord Relationships
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Reduce the number of evictions in Weld County.</li><li>2. Increase the number of landlords and property managers who participate in CAHPS and partner with WWH organizations.</li></ol>		



People living in shelters are **MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY** to have a disability compared to the general population

Landlord Partnership Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Identify common issues landlords experience and develop solutions for resolving real time problems with tenants	1a: Partner with one landlord/ property management company with industry influence to provide insight into rental concerns	Nonprofit partners will reach out to internal staff and board to help identify an influential landlord	Time, outreach	It may be worthwhile to talk with the landlord contact/connection to go through some commonly misunderstood aspects of a lease, and work on making that information more understandable/ accessible to prospective or current renters.
	1b: Connect with additional property managers to understand what makes a good tenant (cultural differences)	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	Time, outreach	How to find landlords? Does the county have info from Housing Choice Vouchers? Human Services Advisory Commission.
	1c: Create a document summarizing concerns	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	Time	How to find landlords? Does the county have info from Housing Choice Vouchers? Human Services Advisory Commission.
	1d: Distribute document to tenants as an educational reference material	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	1c	
2nd Task: Develop network of property owners who are willing to work with re-housing and retention efforts	2a: Create a case showing benefits to landlords to be active in the process before reaching out and craft a presentation stating the case	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	Database of rental property owners/ property managers	Present case to apartment association meeting to gauge interest. Involve a UWWC board member connected to the business community to develop and make presentation. Develop personalized presentations to most likely candidates.
	2b: Connect with landlords to add more to the "pool"	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	Databases, community recommendations, outreach	Invite owners to join a "Stable Housing Initiative" or something that identifies them as allies to the cause.
	2c: Track which landlords and property management companies willing to work with re-housing agencies	Agencies that work closely w/ landlords/property mgmt. companies	Tracking sheet, volunteer time	
	2d: Connect with low income housing projects ahead of time to identify the landlords and begin early discussions		Advocacy, educational materials	400 low-income housing units coming soon.
3rd Task: Utilize outside funding opportunities to take financial burden off of landlords and tenants	3a: Identify rental support options	211 Colorado	Research, support documents	
	3b: Identify funding sources that can allow landlords to share some of the financial risks	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	Research, support documents	Some federal funds available.
	3c: Identify education process for landlords and tenants; goal is to keep tenants in properties longer	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	3a and 3b	Provide an information packet with known relief options for the respective parties.
	3d: Help landlords understand and access rental relief supports so they can share this information with tenants who are struggling, preferably before eviction is the next step	Landlord Partnership Workgroup	3a, 3b, and 3c, outreach	It is adding another layer of work for property management, but if they could apply on behalf of tenants or alongside them, they might really appreciate being able to tap into those resources.

## Police Partnerships and Criminal Justice System

Police have frequent contact with people experiencing homelessness and household instability. Developing partnerships with local police departments would be helpful for identifying households who need frequent stabilization services and would allow staff to proactively outreach to those households to provide additional support and ease the burden of knowing which resources can help which households that currently rests with local law enforcement. Additionally workshops, trainings, and informational resources for officers and first responders about how to assist housing unstable individuals would help them to better serve these populations.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Police Partnership and Criminal Justice System			
Goal	Engage with law enforcement entities to reduce legal barriers and explore new ways of policing housing vulnerable populations.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identify and address areas of improvement for police interaction with households experiencing homelessness and housing instability.</li><li>2. Develop a collaborative and ongoing relationship with local police departments, law enforcement entities and household stability focused organizations.</li><li>3. Decrease stigma and discrimination against people experiencing homelessness and housing instability among law enforcement entities.</li></ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable
		Domain	Household Stabilization and Housing Resources
Barriers	Organizational capacity, law enforcement capacity	Available Resources	Weld County Sheriff's Office, local police departments
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Decrease incarceration rates for individuals experiencing homelessness.</li><li>2. Reduce costs associated with police interactions for those experiencing homelessness and household instability.</li><li>3. Decrease rate of evictions through law enforcement/landlord partnerships.</li></ol>		

Black/African American persons

account for **40%** OF THOSE  
**EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**  
while comprising 13% of the overall  
United States population



## Police Partnership and Criminal Justice System Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Consider potential improvements in law enforcement interactions with homeless and unstably housed individuals	1a: Consider what law enforcement interactions could look like for both preventing and ending homelessness	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, research	How does this compare to what they hope their interactions look like? Partner with police to spot unstably housed individuals/households and direct them toward community resources.
	1b: Understand if ideas align with law enforcement's current or prospective practices	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, outreach, meetings	Do they want this? What are they already doing in this area? Would it be value add?
	1c: Meet with local police chiefs and sheriff to gauge their interest or if they could use support to address this topic	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, outreach, meetings	It would be good to gauge if the local police departments would like some support around this issue and be open to modifications.
2nd Task: Develop relationship with police departments and nonprofits to educate both parties	2a: Proactive reaching out to the police	Police Partnership Workgroup		Police partnerships at nonprofits and having them build relationships with both staff and clients.
	2b: Training and guidelines for nonprofit staff; how to respond as staff when PD are on site	Police Partnership Workgroup	Guidelines from PD, training materials	How to interact with vulnerable populations and officers while police are on site.
	2c: Education; host a panel discussion; get in front of the issue; educate self and the community (e.g. check out a human)	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, research, marketing, presenters, meeting space	Utilize the library to bring groups together for learning.
	2d: Provide PD with educational information about special populations and help to educate on immigrants, refugees, homeless, youth, etc.	Police Partnership Workgroup	Research, training materials	Utilize the library to bring groups together for learning.
	2e: Work with Advocacy Workgroup to suggest and implement policy changes that could change the culture of how police interact with vulnerable populations	Police Partnership Workgroup	Proposal for changes, volunteer time	Initiate change at a higher level of the criminal justice system.
3rd Task: Develop a group of providers who can assist as social support when police have to respond to a situation involving our neighbors experiencing homelessness	3a: Offer "on call" agency supports to help de-escalate police interactions	Volunteer Agencies	Volunteer time, guidance from experts	Squad 1 expansion?
	3b: Research models to embed behavioral health care workers into the police program (see Douglas County example)	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, research	
	3c: Determine if these teams are necessary and a right fit for our community	Police Partnership Workgroup	Time, group meetings,	If law enforcement can lean on the experts in these other areas, perhaps can help with de-escalation and create a two-way learning environment.
	3d: Determine disconnects between Squad 1, co-response, NRBH crisis and Banner/UCHealth community paramedic team	Police Partnership Workgroup	Research, time	
	3e: Reach out to local law enforcement agencies to explore potential partnerships	Police Partnership Workgroup	Outreach	Chief of Evans PD, Chief of Greeley PD, Weld County Sheriff's Office

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Providing equitable access to services, employment opportunities, housing, and other community resources is crucial to ensuring that traditionally marginalized groups are able to achieve and maintain household stability. Current housing systems were built to oppress communities of color.<sup>44</sup> An intentional effort to address these inequities is required to end them. The WWH plan considers equity as a key pillar of every aspect of the plan, therefore the WWH group works to ensure that all work outlined in the plan is implementing equitable, diverse, and inclusive principles.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion			
Goal	Ensure that communities of underrepresented populations have equitable representation and access to information, resources, and opportunities.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Research and understand the full scope of cultural and racial inequity in Weld County.</li><li>2. Increase representation of LGBTQ+, communities of color, differently abled, and other underrepresented populations in household stability related conversations.</li><li>3. Create opportunities for inclusion and development within marginalized communities.</li><li>4. Increase access to translated documentation for non-English speakers.</li></ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable, Paycheck-to-paycheck, Stable
		Domain	Community Awareness and Advocacy
Barriers	Systemic barriers, cultural barriers, language barriers, trust/faith in community organizations to be equitable and inclusive	Available Resources	Cultural events, High Plains Library District
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All people have equitable access and awareness of resources regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.</li><li>2. Increase equitable housing solutions, policies, procedures, and best practices to reduce negative housing outcomes for under-served populations.</li></ol>		

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/systemic-inequality-displacement-exclusion-segregation/>

In 2019, **1 IN 10**  
**OR AROUND 23,000**  
**Weld County adults reported having**  
**an unstable housing situation**





## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Further research ways in which our community is experiencing racial and cultural inequities	1a: Utilize demographic data to catalog evictions, homelessness	DEI Workgroup	Court/county records; Evictionlab.org	Gather data driven non-anecdotal evidence for a baseline understanding of extent to which inequalities are present.
	1b: Connect with nonprofits that serve rural populations and others to find out more about racial inequity and housing instability throughout all of Weld County	DEI Workgroup	Research, staff time, outreach	
	1c: Review the triage tools (VI-SPDAT, etc.) to make sure they are not inadvertently creating racial inequities/barriers	DEI Workgroup	Time	HUD - 4 Pillars of Racial Equity. <a href="http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/EQUITY-INCLUSION.PDF">www.hud.gov/sites/documents/EQUITY-INCLUSION.PDF</a> <a href="https://www.youthcollaboratory.org/equity-and-liberation-resourceshttps://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Advancing-Racial-Equity-through-Assessments-and-Prioritization.pdf">https://www.youthcollaboratory.org/equity-and-liberation-resourceshttps://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/COVID-19-Homeless-System-Response-Advancing-Racial-Equity-through-Assessments-and-Prioritization.pdf</a>
2nd Task: Improve representation of LGBTQ+ and communities of color	2a: Include people of color in nonprofit organization staff and board leadership	Nonprofit Leadership, Board of Directors	Networking, outreach	Reach out to workforce and education services.
	2b: Invite community members and community groups to join WWH	DEI Workgroup	Networking, outreach	Time of the meeting does not lend itself to community members who work in the private sector. Conversations have started with Hispanic Women of Weld County about representation from their organization.
	2c: Create Lived Experience Committee	DEI Workgroup	Grant support to provide stipends to participants	This group could test and review the work plans developed in order to make sure the ideas actually meet the needs of the communities (i.e. do the resources reflect the cultural needs of the communities being assisted?).
3rd Task: Create opportunities for communities of color and LGBTQ+ to engage in the wider community	3a: Ensure communities are given opportunities for workforce development and other programs to develop skills to improve household stability	DEI Workgroup	Denver Health Foundation publication	Explore workforce development in light of racial, gender, and sexual identity representation.
	3b: Organize arts and story sharing events	DEI Workgroup	Marketing materials, volunteers, time	Potentially offer the option to share anonymously to avoid negative stigma associated with homelessness.
4th Task: Work with Information Sharing Workgroup to improve access to translated documents for non-English speaking renters/homeowners	4a: Offer translation services to property management companies, housing authorities, etc., for advertising and tenant communications purposes	DEI Workgroup	Translator, staff time, outreach	Is it possible to ask the major property management/landlords to consider a standard application/lease that could be translated for consistency? Offer class standards to design consistency around cultural and language proficiency.
	4b: Develop relationship w/ utility companies	DEI Workgroup	Translator, staff time, outreach	
5th Task: Establish a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council who can oversee WWH activities to ensure all plans and activities maintain a sense of accountability to minority groups and marginalized individuals	5a: This group would regularly meet to discuss the activities and plans of the community collective impact initiative areas through a diversity and inclusion lens	DEI Workgroup	Networking, outreach, recruitment, staff time	Could span over other UWWC Collective Impact initiative areas (Reading Great by 8, Thrive By 25, and Aging Well).

## Transportation

Transportation is an essential resource in today's economy. For unstable households and people living paycheck-to-paycheck, public transportation may be their last option if they lose access to their regular means of traveling. Only one-sixth of Weld County's population has access to public transportation. Expanding both awareness and availability will be vital to ensure that vulnerable community members have the means to access jobs, important opportunities, and the key resources needed to keep them housed.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Transportation			
Goal	Improve community-wide access to affordable and reliable transportation.		
Objectives	1. Develop a better understanding of the public transportation availability and needs of metro and rural areas in Weld County.	Target Population(s)	Unstable, Paycheck-to-paycheck, Stable
	2. Expand transportation options to meet the determined needs. 3. Increase access to essential services and employment through improved county-wide transportation systems.	Domain	Household Stabilization and Housing Resources
Barriers	Social stigma, lack of transportation infrastructure, capacity of current public transportation system	Available Resources	NFRMPO, Greeley-Evans Transit, AARP
Desired Outcomes	1. Decrease the social stigma around public transportation options. 2. Increase the number of people who utilize public transportation. 3. Increase the availability of public transportation options through policy and local government participation.		

Transportation Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Assess community demand to improve overall availability and access	1a: Research what assessments/data already exist involving community transportation needs	Transportation Workgroup	Research, staff time	Is expanded transportation services part of the county's long-term strategic planning? Remember to expand the concept of transportation beyond motorized vehicles/bus systems (include walking, biking, etc.).
	1b: Assess current municipal community needs to better guide new routes and providers	Transportation Workgroup	Existing assessments/data, new surveys if needed, staff/volunteer time	Join GET community feedback meetings for input regarding routes and needs. How far is GET willing/able to expand? VIA has moved into the Carbon Valley area.
	1c: Assess needs of rural community in terms of where they are going and where there are a lack of resources	Transportation Workgroup	Existing assessments/data, new surveys if needed, staff/volunteer time	Survey areas outside of Greeley/Evans to document transportation needs including older adult services.
	1d: Research what other rural areas in Colorado and United States are doing to meet transportation needs	Transportation Workgroup	Research, staff time	This is vitally important when coupled with affordable housing often being located outside of urban/metro areas. This means that people may be housed but unable to travel to their job, grocery store, etc.

## Transportation Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task (cont.)	1e: Determine walkability of target areas and advocate for improving safety and ease of travel for pedestrians	Transportation Workgroup	AARP Walking Audit Toolkit	The provided Walking Audit can be completed and shared with elected officials to advocate for needed improvements in target areas. The existence and quality of sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, lighting, trash, loitering/suspicious activity all factor into walkability.
	1f: Remain in contact with NFRMPO to potentially utilize RideNoCO resources in Weld County	Transportation Workgroup	Outreach	Are Uber/Lyft participants? Are alternative modes of transportation also included (i.e. bike/scooter sharing systems)? What type of scheduling options are available?
2nd Task: Improve community awareness of available resources	2a: Determine what resources exist and are available to the public; organize into an accessible list	Transportation Workgroup	Staff time	
	2b: Determine public awareness of the available resources and what gaps/barriers are preventing people from knowing about these resources	Transportation Workgroup	Existing survey data, new survey if needed, staff/volunteer time	Are there stigmas around the different transportation resources available? How to find that out/how to address it?
	2c: Develop transportation resource documentation to fill in gaps in community awareness	Transportation Workgroup	Staff time	See 2e.
	2d: Work with GET to ensure that printed materials are available in all needed languages	Information Sharing Work Group/ Diversity and Inclusion Group	Translators, outreach (new transit manager)	Will need to interface with IRC NoCO, High Plains Library District, and Greeley-Evans School District 6. Start a discussion with other Weld County school districts on language needs in their areas. Use 2020 US Census information to give guidance but not details.
	2e: Provide and improve the availability of printed and online resources in Weld County	Information Sharing Work Group	Resources list from 2a	Current resources: GET website, Google maps (limited).
3rd Task: Discuss Transportation need with major employers to increase transportation access for employees	3a: Assess businesses for workforces that have transportation needs (Bring up the 100 employees "encouragement" to lower emissions and how ride-sharing can address both needs at once)	Chambers of Commerce as convener with a WWH rep as a presenter/facilitator	Research, staff time	Does IRC NoCO or Jobs of Hope have any information on either 3a or 3b?
	3b: Assess businesses for difficulties in maintaining employees due to transportation barriers	Chambers of Commerce as convener with a WWH rep as a presenter/facilitator	Potential survey	Cargill is offering transportation as a benefit. Within this there will need to be conversation on if businesses are willing to adjust their work schedules to match bus schedules rather than shifting bus schedules to match business times.
4th Task: Future casting/long-term strategic plan	4a: Implement smaller scale transportation options in the community (micro mobility implementation)	Transportation Workgroup	Outreach to companies as they expand through Weld County	Micro-mobility refers to scooters and other alternative "motorized" options that are not cars.

## Community Education

Understanding the root causes of a problem is important for solving it. Homelessness is too often misunderstood and stigmatized by community members and even professionals that provide resources. Reducing stigma and fostering community empathy that provides a network of services that can be utilized without fear of judgment is critical to reaching those who are reluctant to receive aid. Education, community outreach, and standardized training programs help to create this supportive environment. Reducing stigma and discrimination is also important for removing barriers to services. Additionally, educating the community on where to find resources, and streamlining resource access points, is a key strategy to connect people quickly to available resources.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Community Education			
Goal	Increase community awareness of the realities of homelessness, root causes of household instability, and where to find resources.		
Objectives	1. Reduce stigma and discrimination against people experiencing homelessness or household instability through community education, volunteer engagement, and media. 2. Encourage fair and equitable service delivery for people experiencing homelessness through targeted education for homeless serving professionals (health care, employers, etc.).	Target Population(s)	Weld County Community
		Domain	Community Awareness and Information Sharing
Barriers	Systemic barriers and legal discrimination, funding	Available Resources	Social media, strong partner networks
Desired Outcomes	1. Increased number of community members who understand and support Housing First principles and housing as a human right.		

Community Education Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Create a targeted Community Education Campaign	1a: Develop/identify a community educator position	Community Education Workgroup	Research, staff time, funding	
	1b: Research current homelessness education materials	Community Education Workgroup	Existing assessments/ data, new surveys if needed, staff/ volunteer time	
	1c: Identify potential avenues of community education (social media, presentations, volunteer engagement, etc.)	Community Educator	Research, staff time	
	1d: Create a community education outreach plan	Community Educator	Research, staff time	Library involvement?
	1e: Develop education materials and curriculum	Community Educator	Research, staff time, outreach	
	1f: Launch education campaign	Community Educator	outreach	

## Community Education Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
2nd Task: Maintain social media and website presence	2a: Determine best platforms to maximize reach for this issue	Community Education Workgroup	Internet, social media, staff time	Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.
	2b: Create a targeted social media strategy and posting schedule	Community Education Workgroup	Internet, social media, staff time	New posts every X days, different formats and media styles.
	2c: Focus on sharing Housing First content: educational materials, success stories, articles, resources, etc.	Community Education Workgroup	Internet, social media, staff time	
	2d: Give intermittent public updates on the work of WWH	Community Education Workgroup	Internet, social media, staff time	
	2e: Create online public facing version of the WWH 2.0 plan on the website	Community Education Workgroup	Internet, social media, staff time	Do this for all CI groups so the community can see what impacts are being made and what the future plans and objectives are.
3rd Task: Create outreach materials to inform various groups about Weld's Way Home 2.0	3a: Create summarized versions of the plan targeted toward the general public and key stakeholders	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time	Government Entities, Business, Medical Facilities, Faith-based Agencies, Funders, etc.
	3b: Identify key stakeholders who should know more about WWH 2.0	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time	
	3c: Create a regular distribution plan for WWH 2.0 materials	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time, flyers, funding	
	3d: Develop and distribute other materials, such as press releases and radio interviews	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time	
4th Task: Create a Targeted Education Outreach Plan for Homelessness Serving Professionals	4a: Identify potential education and provider partners willing to lead these trainings	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time	
	4b: Create a training curriculum/presentation focusing on Housing First, harm reduction, de-stigmatization, and stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness	WWH Workgroup, and Homelessness Educators	Research, best practices, staff time	The training will be targeted to professionals who work with people experiencing homelessness to help provide tools and information on how to work with this vulnerable population.
	4c: Identify service providers who could use the training for their staff	WWH Workgroup, and Homelessness Educators	Research, staff time	
	4d: Promote the training to Weld County service providers and other groups	WWH Workgroup, and Homelessness Educators	Funding, staff time	Could target church groups, government, businesses, or other nonprofits.
	4e: Establish a regular training schedule and evaluation for training effectiveness	WWH Workgroup, and Homelessness Educators	Staff time	



## Housing Navigation Center with Cold Weather Shelter

One of the biggest achievements of the original WWH plan was the establishment of the Housing Navigation Center (HNC). The HNC offers a centralized safe place to go to for health services, documentation, lockers, and shelter during the cold weather months. The HNC serves as a single access point for community members to receive housing services. Maintaining long-term operations and establishing a permanent location will allow the HNC to build out current and new HNC services to improve community homelessness response, connect people with housing resources quickly, keep those experiencing homelessness safe, and help to end homelessness in Weld County.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Housing Navigation Center with Cold Weather Shelter			
Goal	Find a long-term location for the Housing Navigation Center and cold weather shelter to ensure stability of services.		
Objectives	1. Mobilize community support to ensure stable long-term operations of the Housing Navigation Center and cold weather shelter service.	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable
	2. Work with local government and community partners to create a permanent Housing Navigation Center facility, potentially through the creation of the Weld Village concept.	Domain	Homelessness Services
Barriers	Funding, zoning and municipal codes, stigma, neighborhood considerations	Available Resources	Local Government Support
Desired Outcomes	1. Identify a permanent facility for the Housing Navigation Center that will meet the current needs of people experiencing homelessness, including emergency shelter.		

Housing Navigation Center with Cold Weather Shelter Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Ensure short-term stability for the Housing Navigation Center and cold weather shelter for the next 5 years by expanding current services and outreach	1a: Maintain relationship with current property management to sustain current rental agreement	UWWC	Staff time	
	1b: Increase HNC staff capacity and street outreach capacity	UWWC, WWH Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Funding, staffing	
	1c: Increase and improve current Good Neighbor activities (Good Neighbor clean-up, neighborhood outreach, Lived Experience Committee)	Managing Director of HNC	Staff time	
	1d: Expand the Lived Experience Committee to help inform programing and build relationships with neighbors	Transportation Workgroup	Staff time	
	1e: Create an outdoor space and expand day shelter activities to reduce loitering concerns	UWWC, Local Municipalities	Funding	

## Housing Navigation Center with Cold Weather Shelter Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task (cont.)	1f: Improve and expand partnerships with local municipalities and law enforcement to coordinate outreach	UWWC, Local Municipalities, Law Enforcement	Staff time, outreach	
	1g: Increase in-house programming and in-house agencies to increase housing opportunities	Managing Director of HNC	Staff time	
	1h: Reduce barriers to shelter and explore other sheltering options to reduce outside camping	UWWC, Local Municipalities	Funding, staff time	Pet friendly, outdoor tent area, safe parking for overnight sleeping.
2nd Task: Identify and secure a long-term location for the Housing Navigation Center with cold weather shelter	2a: Continue exploring a campus model concept as a long term location option	UWWC, Local Municipalities, Community Partners	Research, funding, staff time, community evaluation and buy-in	
	2b: Create a long term planning document for the HNC and potential campus to help communicate the idea to the community	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	Are there stigmas around the different transportation resources available? How to find that out? How to address it?
	2c: Investigate if the HNC with cold weather shelter is feasible within the campus model concept	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	See 2e.
	2d: Explore if the current HNC location at 870 28th St in Greeley is a long term solution with expansion opportunity	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	
	2e: Evaluate potential options for securing a long term location, including funding	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	
	2f: Work with the UWWC Board of Directors to make a decision about the long term location and operations for the HNC	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	The target date for a long-term solution is January 1, 2025.
3rd Task: Ensure long-term stability for the Housing Navigation Center with cold weather shelter at the new location	3a: Increase public awareness of HNC successes to date	UWWC	Marketing, staff time	Community education and fundraising events.
	3b: Establish sustainable funding for expanded HNC and shelter operations	HNC Workgroup	Staff time, funding	Community education and fundraising events.
	3c: Increase community support for the HNC Housing First mission	HNC Workgroup	Marketing, staff time	
	3d: Increase local government support for the HNC and shelter operations	HNC Workgroup	Staff time	
	3e: Reduce stigma and stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness	Community Education Workgroup	Staff time	

## Expanded Case Management Services

Case management services are an essential part of the community response to homelessness. While many current case management services exist, improving coordination between case management agencies is vital. Additionally, gaps in street outreach services in Weld County have left many individuals unable to connect with the services they need. By acquiring and leveraging funding, expanding partnerships, and identifying and filling gaps in services, we can ensure these services are as helpful and efficient as possible.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Expanded Case Management Services			
Goal	Close gaps in homeless case management services and improve current case management practices to improve housing outcomes.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refine the Housing Navigator program workflow and grow capacity to increase positive housing outcomes.</li> <li>2. Work with local hospitals, jails, and shelters to improve discharge planning processes.</li> <li>3. Create regular and collaborative street outreach practices with local law enforcement and other community partners to identify people living outdoors and to provide resources.</li> <li>4. Increase collaboration and communication between existing homeless case management services to improve service delivery and to close gaps.</li> </ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless
		Domain	Homelessness Services
Barriers	Funding, work load capacity, information sharing restrictions	Available Resources	CAHPS, community partnerships, funding
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decrease the average number of days that people experience homelessness before moving into housing.</li> <li>2. Decrease the number of people who are discharged into homelessness.</li> </ol>		

Expanded Case Management Services Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Increase capacity for the Housing Navigator Program	1a: Identify and secure sustainable funding opportunities	UWWC	Funding, staff time	
	1b: Hire additional Housing Navigators and Resource Navigators at the HNC	UWWC	Funding, staff time	
	1c: Refine work flows for the Housing Navigator staff, including street outreach	UWWC	Research, staff time	
	1d: Explore other opportunities and partnerships for Housing Navigator programs at other agencies, including within the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care	UWWC, NoCO CoC	Research, staff time	
	1e: Increase Housing Navigator capacity as a community-based resource for other agencies and programs in Weld County	UWWC	Research, staff time	

## Expanded Case Management Services Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
2nd Task: Explore options for creating a coordinated discharge planning committee/ case conferencing resource	2a: Determine which providers and professionals are involved in discharge planning	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time, outreach	Potential collaboration with the NoCO CoC.
	2b: Recruit agency leaders involved in discharge planning to begin planning conversations	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Targeted outreach materials, staff time	
	2c: Establish a discharge planning committee to investigate gaps in discharge planning and potential solutions	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Group organizational documents, staff time	
	2d: Create a discharge planning improvement plan to determine next steps	Discharge Planning Committee	Staff time	
3rd Task: Establish regular street outreach procedures and increase outreach collaboration	3a: Establish a well-defined and regular street outreach strategy for the HNC street outreach staff	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time	
	3b: Determine which entities are involved in targeted street outreach	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time, outreach	Potential partners include Squad 1, police departments, emergency services.
	3c: Convene a regular street outreach group meeting of involved agencies	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time	
	3d: Discuss challenges and identify gaps in current street outreach resources	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time	
	3e: Establish a formal street outreach community strategy that maximizes the strengths of partner agencies	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time, strategic planning process	
4th Task: Increase cross agency collaboration and participation on regular CAHPS case conferencing calls	4a: Identify gaps in community wide case management that result in people "falling through the cracks"	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time	
	4b: Develop strategies to close the gaps in services and increase collaboration, including in behavioral health	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time	
	4c: Reinforce CAHPS participation as a key strategy for a coordinated homelessness response and re-engage agencies in coordinated entry	UWWC, WWH Workgroup, NoCO CoC	Staff time	
	4d: Identify and pursue additional opportunities for collaboration across homelessness services and case management	Expanded Case Management Workgroup	Staff time, community partnerships	Create collaborative funding applications around identified key funding opportunities.

## Affordable Housing, Housing Retention and Move-in Opportunities

To end homelessness, communities must have a sufficient supply of affordable and supportive housing options. To create housing opportunities WWH 2.0 seeks to identify, expand, and advocate for additional housing solutions. These solutions include leveraging existing housing stock and creating opportunities for new housing resources. It is also important to reduce barriers to current housing and financial assistance through Housing First approaches. Additionally, WWH 2.0 expands wrap-around services to help households maintain their housing.

WWH 2.0 Work Plan: Affordable Housing, Housing Retention and Move-in Opportunities			
Goal	Increase the amount of available housing resources to expand move-in opportunities and keep people housed.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the availability of low barrier first months' rent, deposit assistance for people experiencing homelessness to expand move-in opportunities.</li> <li>2. Increase the availability and accessibility of housing vouchers and Rapid Re-Housing opportunities.</li> <li>3. Identify and utilize potential alternative types of housing opportunities such as tiny homes, accessory dwelling units, etc.</li> <li>4. Stimulate collaboration among government agencies and community partners to increase housing opportunities and decrease barriers to housing.</li> <li>5. Increase affordable and permanent supportive housing development.</li> </ol>	Target Population(s)	Homeless, Unstable, Paycheck-to-paycheck, Stable
		Domain	Housing and Household Stabilization Resources
Barriers	Funding, stigma, documentation requirements	Available Resources	High Plains Housing Development Corporation, current RRH and PSH providers, Greeley-Weld Housing Authority, NoCO CoC
Desired Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased number of available housing opportunities.</li> <li>2. Decreased number of people who are experiencing literal homelessness.</li> <li>3. Decreased number of households paying more than 30% of their income on housing.</li> </ol>		

Affordable Housing, Housing Retention and Move-in Opportunities Work Plan				
Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
1st Task: Identify, increase, and streamline the current inventory of available low-barrier rent and deposit assistance	1a: Determine which agencies regularly assist with rent and deposit assistance	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	Current agencies include EFSP and WWH participants.
	1b: Quantify the amount of regularly available rent, deposit, diversion, and prevention assistance in the community	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	
	1c: Develop a system to clearly communicate and track available assistance among participating agencies	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time, research, 1a and 1b	This resource could be managed out of the HNC to help coordinate community resources.
	1d: Develop a strategy to increase the amount of financial assistance available	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	
	1e: Identify and remove current barriers to accessing deposit and rent assistance	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time, organizational commitment to Housing First principles	



## Affordable Housing, Housing Retention and Move-in Opportunities Work Plan

Tasks	Specify key activities and their details	Who?	Resources needed	Comments
2nd Task: Increase the availability of housing vouchers opportunities	2a: Develop strategies with the NoCO CoC and Greeley-Weld Housing Authority to identify additional housing voucher opportunities	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	Potential collaboration with the NoCO CoC.
	2b: Identify housing resources that would be willing to accept vouchers	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time, partnerships	
	2c: Advocate for increased voucher allotments for Weld County	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	
	2d: Approach voucher managing agencies about increased coordination through CAHPS and other partner agencies	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	North Range Behavioral Health, Connections for Independent Living, and the Greeley-Weld Housing Authority manage housing vouchers.
3rd Task: Increase the availability of Rapid Re-Housing opportunities	3a: Identify and convene the current agencies highly involved in Rapid Re-Housing programs	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	
	3b: Increase the capacity of these Rapid Re-Housing programs	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time	
	3c: Increase coordination through CAHPS and other partner agencies	Affordable Housing Workgroup	Staff time, partnerships	
4th Task: Identify and advocate for affordable and alternative housing options, including supportive housing development	4a: Work with the City of Greeley to identify housing gaps in the community	UWWC, City of Greeley	Staff time	
	4b: Hire a Housing Equity Coordinator and Zoning and Land-use Coordinator through the joint Thriving Weld Housing and Land Use Project	UWWC, WCDPHE	Staff time	This position is funded through a 3-year grant program managed by the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment and United Way of Weld County.
	4c: Research best practices and alternative housing policies	Housing and Land Use Project	Staff time	
	4d: Work with Weld County municipalities to develop new zoning strategies	Housing and Land Use Project	Staff time	
	4e: Increase collaboration between municipalities and developers	Housing and Land Use Project	Staff time	
	4f: Mobilize community support for evidence-based housing policies and strategies	Housing and Land Use Project	Staff time, research	
	4g: Advocate for local policy changes that increase housing opportunity and reduce harm	Housing and Land Use Project, WWH Advocacy Workgroup	Staff time, research, outreach	



# Evaluation and Sustainability

As with WWH 1.0, WWH 2.0 uses shared measures to determine the impact our collective efforts have on preventing and ending homelessness in Weld County. By using data obtained through the Northern Colorado Continuum of Care, the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment's Community Health Assessment, Weld County Department of Human Services, US Census data, and other state and federal data sources, the WWH group determined a set of measures and target values to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the WWH 2.0 plan. These shared measures are referred to as Weld's Way Home's community-wide measurable goals and are listed below.

## Homelessness Services

- Decrease the number of people experiencing homelessness (per CAHPS)

  - Current Value (2020) – 634

  - Target Value (2025) – 350

- Decrease the number of days on average that it takes to re-house people experiencing homelessness

  - Current Value (2020) – 168

  - Target Value (2025) – 45

- Decrease the percentage of school-age population considered homeless (McKinney-Vento)

  - Current Value (2020) – 1.2%

  - Target Value (2025) – 0.5%

## Emergency Services and Homelessness Prevention

- Decrease the percentage of households that lived doubled-up at some point during the previous year

  - Current Value (2020) – 16.5%

  - Target Value (2025) – 14.4%

- Decrease the number of people on some form of public assistance

  - Current Value (2020) – 17.7%

  - Target Value (2025) – 13.9%

## Household Stabilization and Housing Resource

- Decrease the percentage of renters that pay 30%+ of income on housing

  - Current Value (2020) – 52.4%

  - Target Value (2025) – 42.9%

- Increase the number of affordable housing units (80% AMI or less) constructed

  - Current Value (2020) – 78

  - Target Value (from 2021-2025) – 500

- Increase the number of people enrolled in undergraduate college

  - Current Value (2020) – 5.8%

  - Target Value (2025) – 6.8%

In addition to these overarching goals, many individual organizations are collecting more specific data that directly measures impact on the household's they are serving. Monitoring these specific data points allows the agencies participating in the group to connect the work of their organizations to the larger community-wide goals. These organizational data metrics are referred to as the Weld's Way Home Intermediate Measures, which are listed here.

### **Homelessness Services**

% of households experiencing homelessness rehoused in 30 days

### **Emergency Services and Homelessness Prevention**

% of households who have maintained housing for 6 months after receiving an emergency service

% of households who no longer require public assistance

### **Household Stabilization and Housing Resource**

% of households spending less than 30% of income on housing-related expenses

All of the data points collected are reported and available for the public on the Thriving Weld Dashboard, Weld County's tool for viewing community-wide shared goals and outcomes. Visit [www.thrivingweld.com](http://www.thrivingweld.com) to explore the data.

Progress on each work plan will be reviewed at the end of each program year (June 30). As tasks/work plans are completed, the Weld's Way Home work group will re-prioritize areas of focus, based on the current need identified by the people served, the experience of homeless-serving agencies and other partner agencies, any comments/observations made by the general public, and national and state trends (including but not limited to evidence-based best practices, legislation, and funding trends). The plan outlined in this document will require three-to-five years to complete, at which time the priority areas will be re-evaluated and the plan will go through another revision based on current need. Additionally, if the ongoing plan evaluation determines the plan is ineffective, then the plan will also be revised.





## Conclusion

Weld's Way Home is dedicated to decreasing housing instability and homelessness through an aligned continuum of catalyzing services. The vision is that every person in Weld County has the means to attain and maintain safe, adequate, and affordable housing for the sake of full participation in community life.

Those working with Weld's Way Home are determined to provide all Weld County residents with the resources and support needed to achieve household stability, as well as an efficient, timely, and cost effective solution to re-house any individual or family who falls into homelessness. The first Weld's Way Home strategic plan (1.0) made great progress in establishing and improving homelessness response systems in Weld County. By focusing even further on household stability resources, along with homelessness response, we are confident that this updated 2.0 plan will further the work completed in the first plan and strengthen a system that will bring about life-changing and measurable results.

We will continue to work together, across all sectors, to find creative, practical, and personalized solutions to each individual or family's experience of homelessness and household instability. We are aware of the challenges that lay ahead, and yet are unwavering in our confidence that we as a community can overcome these barriers so that every citizen in Weld County has a safe and stable and welcoming place to call home.



# Call to Action

## Your Role in Preventing and Ending Homelessness

Service Providers	Participate in the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement System (CAHPS) in order to leverage all available community resources and ensure more successful outcomes for clients.
	Adopt Housing First principles for emergency shelter and housing programs to help lower barriers to housing, improve housing retention, and create trauma-informed care and person-centered results.
	Submit data to CAHPS, the Thriving Weld Dashboard, and HMIS to ensure data informed planning and response.
	Partner with other agencies that provide household stabilization services (food assistance, employment, transportation) to increase wrap-around services.
	Reduce barriers to emergency stabilization services by adopting low barrier Housing First principles.
Public Sector/ Government and Philanthropy and Foundations	Require grantees to participate in CAHPS in order to achieve maximum impact.
	Invest discretionary and general fund dollars to fill in key resource gaps such as plan execution, staffing, individual plan component start-up, and ongoing planning.
	Align funding with the Weld's Way Home priority areas to ensure maximum leverage and return on investment.
	Participate in WWH work plans and strategic planning processes.
	Work with private landlords and tenants to identify points of eviction intervention.
Public Housing Authorities and Landlords	Incentivize affordable housing development through policy and zoning code changes.
	Refer any individual or family who is homeless or may become homeless (i.e. has an eviction notice) to CAHPS.
	Spread awareness of the issue and solutions to end homelessness to members of your local chamber of commerce, especially the need for affordable housing and landlord/realtor relationships including participating in landlord partnership initiatives outlined in the plan.
	Set aside units specifically for individuals and families experiencing homelessness that are looking for housing and are a part of CAHPS.
Business Community	Reach out to local nonprofits to help stabilize tenants and prevent evictions.
	Encourage staff to volunteer to assist local nonprofits in their efforts to end homelessness and address household instability.
	Work with local homelessness response providers to address issues of loitering and business disruptions through a Housing First and trauma-informed lens to reduce harm.
Faith Community	Consider corporate and business donations to local nonprofits working to prevent and end homelessness through the Weld's Way Home 2.0 strategic plan.
	Volunteer to assist local nonprofits in their efforts to end homelessness and address household instability. One-time volunteer events like serving meals are helpful, but also consider long-term opportunities to support individuals when they move into housing.
	Participate in the Weld Faith Partnership and WWH Faith Engagement workgroup to network and help align faith-based resources.
Law Enforcement and Emergency Responders	Work with homelessness serving agencies to maximize the impact of both financial and in-kind donations, including food, clothing, and hygiene kits.
	Commit to trauma-informed, harm reduction, and person-centered law enforcement trainings and policies specific to working with people experiencing homelessness and housing instability.
	Engage and collaborate with homeless serving agencies to create coordinated response systems that focus on harm reduction, mental health stabilization, and Housing First principles rather than criminalization and punishment.
Weld County Citizens	Work with landlords, tenants, and service providers to reduce evictions and connect households to resources.
	Empathize and embrace people experiencing homelessness as your Weld County neighbors with the understanding that stigma and stereotypes are harmful and do not help to end homelessness.
	Engage with local governments and agencies addressing homelessness and housing stability to provide feedback, advocate for solutions, and participate in initiatives to end and prevent homelessness.
	Get involved in civic engagement by participating in local government processes and talk with elected officials about community challenges.
	Donate time or money to local agencies working to prevent and end homelessness in Weld County.





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## About Weld County & United Way of Weld County

At 4,017 square miles, an area half the size of the State of New Jersey, Weld County is the third largest county in Colorado. Our home is consistently ranked as one of the top 10 agricultural and energy producing counties in the United States. There is great wealth and opportunity in Weld County. We are thankful for it.

Nevertheless, there are persistent challenges indicating some of our neighbors lack the opportunity to thrive. The United Way of Weld County board of directors has identified and is resourcing five initiative areas that, with your support, can solve Weld County's long-term challenges. Find out more at [www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/initiatives](http://www.UnitedWay-Weld.org/initiatives).

- **Reading Great by 8: Building the foundation for early childhood success.** Currently 39% of Weld County children are reading to learn by the beginning of 4th Grade; a goal is to increase this to at least 43% by 2024.
- **Thrive by 25: Connecting youth to caring adults.** Currently more than 1 in 4 Weld County youth do not have a connection to a caring adult; a goal is that by 2024 a solid 75% will have this connection.
- **Weld's Way Home: Preventing and ending homelessness.** Currently there are about 236 individuals and families living outside or in a car in Weld County; a goal is to decrease this to less than 100 by 2024.
- **Aging Well: Helping older adults age well in our community.** City of Evans, City of Greeley and Garden City are now members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities; a goal is to lead the community in becoming more age friendly.
- **Connecting Weld: Linking people to the help that they need.** While Connecting Weld does not have community-wide goals, its activities support the other four United Way initiative areas in achieving theirs.



"Simply put, United Way of Weld County brings our community together. We are proud to be a part of United Way's efforts to build a stronger Weld County, to find solutions to problems, to fill gaps, to connect people with the resources they need and to help people when they need it the most."

- **Marilyn Schock**

president, UCHealth Greeley Hospital

"When organizations come together toward a common goal, we are much more effective. We are proud to collaborate with United Way of Weld County toward positive changes for the citizens of Weld County."

- **Jeff Carlson**

chief executive officer, The Weld Trust

"One of our core values involves giving back to our community. United Way of Weld County does an incredible job of meeting the needs of so many families and agencies and always with compassion and integrity."

- **Scott Warner**

president, Connecting Point

"We have a number of children who still need an awful lot of help with their reading skills. And we, as the adults, have the obligation to figure that out. You can make an investment through United Way that will make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable children."

- **Deirdre Pilch**

superintendent, Greeley-Evans School District 6

In 2019, **1 IN 10**  
**OR AROUND 23,000**

Weld County adults reported having  
an unstable housing situation

a Colorado resident would  
have to work

**2.2 FULL-TIME  
JOBS**

at minimum wage to afford  
a 2-bedroom rental home

the life expectancy for those  
living in a home is

**77 vs 41 YEARS**

for those who are homeless

stable housing  
reduces moving and  
changing schools,  
saving children

**3 TO 6  
MONTHS**  
of learning

Permanent housing with  
needed supports **SAVES**

**\$15,733**

**PER PERSON PER YEAR**

on average in public costs for shelter,  
criminal justice, health care, emergency  
room, and behavioral health

**30%**

of the homeless population  
in the United States  
are **FAMILIES WITH  
CHILDREN**

In Weld County **43%** of renters  
and **24%** of mortgage payers

**SPEND MORE THAN 35%**  
of their income on housing, making  
them vulnerable to a financial crisis