

What Framework Should the Reset Committee use to Prioritize Resources?

The original Portland/ Multnomah County 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness prioritized resources for the chronically homeless with an emphasis on housing first and permanent supportive housing. This framework was consistent with national policy priorities within HUD at the time the 10-Year Plan was written. The Reset Committee will need to decide what framework it will use for allocating and prioritizing resources within the reset Plan. There are a wide range of potential lenses that could be used for allocating and prioritizing resources within the reset Plan. Examples from local and national homeless systems and programs include:

Prioritize by population

- Prioritization of specific target populations (e.g. veterans, youth, families, DV, etc.)
- Prioritization of the most vulnerable populations based on a vulnerability scale

Prioritize by strategy

- Allocating resources by types of programs (e.g. emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, rent assistance, etc.)
- Allocating resources by types of interventions (e.g. prevention, rapid re-housing, housing first, etc.)

Prioritize based on the most efficient use of resources

- Prioritization of the highest resource users (e.g. high utilizers of mental health services, ERs or detox/sobering; high resource using homeless families, etc.)
- Prioritization of households requiring the shallowest subsidies in order to stabilize (e.g. work-able households, etc.)
- Prioritization of households that have a likely source of permanent income (employment, SSI, etc.) and will therefore be able to remain stably housed after the subsidy runs out
- Prioritization of strategies that are well aligned with other systems of care

Prioritize based on HUD priorities

Follow the prioritization outlined by HUD in the federal strategic plan to end homelessness and HEARTH Act:

- End chronic homelessness in 5 years
- Prevent/end homelessness for veterans in 5 years
- Prevent/end homelessness for families and youth in 10 years
- Set a path to end all homelessness
- Reduce the numbers of newly homeless, the length of time people spend homeless, and returns to homelessness

A study¹ of the first 234 10-Year Plans developed across the country found a significant shift in target populations between the first wave of plans and the more recent plans. Eighty-three percent of the earlier plans focused on chronic homelessness compared with only 50% of the more recent plans. The plans in the second wave were more likely to target other subpopulations such as survivors of domestic violence and families. Similarly, while the first wave of plans emphasized outreach and services, the more recent plans have a greater emphasis on rapid re-housing and shortening homelessness. Throughout both waves there has been a consistent focus on permanent housing and prevention.

¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness (2009), "A Shifting Focus: What's New in Community Plans to End Homelessness." Washington, D.C.: NAEH.