



**U.S. Interagency  
Council on Homelessness**

**Fiscal Year 2024  
Congressional Budget Request**

**MARCH 2023**



I am pleased to present the Congressional Justification for the fiscal year (FY) 2024 budget request of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). This request for \$4.8 million is critical to supporting USICH’s mission to prevent and end homelessness in America.

Homelessness is a deadly public health crisis. According to the latest annual Point-in-Time Count, 582,462 people experienced homelessness in the United States on a single night in January 2022. But this is only a snapshot in time. According to the 2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, over the course of a year, at least twice that number, more than 1.2 million people, experience homelessness.

After homelessness rose from 2016 to 2020, the combined efforts of Congress, communities, and the federal government have flattened that curve—and we did so during a pandemic, proving that progress can happen even during the most difficult circumstances. Now, USICH has a plan to reverse the trend and ultimately end homelessness.

*All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* sets a bold goal to reduce homelessness 25% by 2025. To accomplish this goal, we must scale up our efforts to move people into housing and, as importantly, we must develop and deploy new and innovative strategies to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place. Prevention is critical to eradicating homelessness, because every year roughly 900,000 people exit homelessness, yet roughly the same number of people fall into homelessness.

During FY2024, USICH will work with the 19 federal agencies that make up our council to coordinate the implementation of *All In* and to support mayors, governors, providers, and other state and local partners as they implement our strategies in their communities. As part of implementation, USICH will work with the White House on a new federal initiative to help targeted cities and states address the recent and tragic rise in unsheltered homelessness.

I am confident that our work together will move us closer to the day that every American has a safe, stable, and permanent place to call home.

Jeff Olivet, Executive Director  
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

# I. About USICH

USICH was first authorized by Congress in 1987 when large bipartisan majorities in Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, which President Reagan signed into law. The law recognized the complexity of coordinating federal efforts to address homelessness. Homelessness is a cross-system problem that no single agency, sector, or jurisdiction can end on its own. That is why the Congress charged USICH to coordinate the federal response to homelessness and create a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness and maximize the effectiveness of federal programs to address homelessness.

USICH is the only federal agency solely focused on ending homelessness, and it brings together the collective power of 19 other agencies to coordinate the federal response at the state and local level. USICH has senior regional advisors spread across the country who work directly with governors, mayors, Continuum of Care leaders, and others involved in ending homelessness.

# II. FY2024 Request

To support our continued work, USICH presents its FY2024 Budget Request. **The total funding level is \$4,800,000, a 20% increase over our enacted FY2023 budget, funding 21 FTEs and necessary operational costs.** This request reflects a proposed increase of three FTEs (moving from 18 to 21 FTEs) and corresponding increases to applicable personnel and operating categories.

	2022 Actuals	2023 Request	2023 Enacted	2024 Request
<b>Total Obligations, Actual/Estimate</b>	\$3,798,867	\$4,700,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,800,000

## Comparisons by Budget Object Classification: 2021 - 2023

	2022 Actuals	2023 Request	2023 Enacted	2024 Request
<b>11.0: Personnel</b>	\$2,007,467	\$2,991,619	\$2,543,600	\$3,019,155
<i>FTP</i>	18	18	18	21
<b>12.0: Civilian Personnel Benefits</b>	\$690,164	\$809,792	\$721,423	\$856,929
<b>21.0: Travel and Transportation of Persons</b>	\$152,459	\$205,000	\$172,600	\$222,000

<b>22.0: Transportation of Things</b>	\$5,083	\$1,500	\$2,481	\$3,282
<b>23.0: Communications, Utilities, and Misc.</b>	\$51,032	\$69,000	\$63,600	\$45,300
<b>25.0: Services</b>	\$875,972	\$603,089	\$482,796	\$642,834
<b>26.0: Supplies and Materials</b>	\$16,690	\$20,000	\$13,500	\$10,500
<b>Total Obligations, Actual/Estimate</b>	<b>\$3,798,867</b>	<b>\$4,700,000</b>	<b>\$4,000,000</b>	<b>\$4,800,000</b>

### **OC 11.0 Personnel - \$3,019,155**

USICH drives federal policy through a dedicated, multifunctional staff. Our employees work nimbly and efficiently across the federal government, in close partnership with state and local governments, and with the non-profit and private sectors to end homelessness and foster housing stability throughout the country. Staff coordinate the work of federal partners across HHS, HUD, VA, and other Council member agencies to better align their investments and achieve maximum impact and return on investment of taxpayer dollars. The agency intends to fill the vacant legislative affairs position during FY2023.

USICH uses its OPM-approved performance management system to sustain and encourage continued high performance among our staff. This tool helps support the ability to recruit and maintain our staff to carry out the Agency's mission.

For FY2024, USICH requests funding for 21 FTEs (three FTEs in addition to the existing staff of 18). These staff carry out the agency's policy work, collaborate with our federal partners and national, state, and local stakeholders, carry out our internal mission support functions, communications work, and other areas – all in support of the mission of the agency. In FY2024, USICH's funding level would support a new FTE to assist in financial management and analysis. This FTE will add needed bandwidth and expertise to transactional responsibilities, analysis, and processing of expenses. In addition, to support the significant work of implementing the Federal Strategic Plan, our request includes 2 FTE in the policy division; a policy director and a research analyst. The FY2024 request also supports an authorizing legislative proposal that would amend the statute (42 U.S.C. §11314(a)), which sets the Executive Director's salary at Executive Schedule Level V. The budget table above incorporates the requested increased salary for the Executive Director from Executive Schedule Level V (\$172,100) to Executive Schedule Level IV (\$183,500). For more information, see Section VI of this Congressional Justification.

### **OC 12.0 Civilian Personnel Benefits - \$856,929**

These costs reflect agency-provided and OPM-approved benefits for all applicable employees.

### **OC 21.0 Travel and Transportation of Persons - \$222,000**

Headquarters and regional staff work directly alongside state and local stakeholders to provide guidance and develop

cross-sector partnerships and solutions. Travel costs are necessary to support USICH's ability to directly engage with partners and further progress towards ending homelessness in states and communities. An increase in travel funds is requested to support the travel necessary for work with local communities on implementation of the Federal Strategic Plan.

USICH continues to utilize technology as much as practicable to preserve and maintain our local partnerships virtually, particularly considering the ongoing pandemic. We recognize also that working directly with our partners on the ground allows us to build relationships which translate to local actions and policy change.

USICH continues to maximize the stakeholder work conducted through each trip, ensuring travel funds are used in the most cost-effective manner.

#### **OC 22.0 Transportation of Things - \$3,282**

Estimated costs are for mailings and deliveries.

#### **OC 23.0 Communications, Utilities, and Miscellaneous - \$45,300**

These costs cover office and cellular phones, internet connectivity, postage, and package delivery costs.

#### **OC 25.0 Services - \$642,834**

This category includes agency-leased office space, as well as operations assistance and infrastructure support from USDA and GSA in finance, payroll, human resources processing, outside auditors for compliance with the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act, information technology desktop and network support and other operational support items. Services funding also supports USICH communications work in support of the agency's strategic plan, as well as website management and webinars hosted by USICH.

#### **OC 26.0 Supplies and Materials - \$10,500**

This category covers necessary supplies and materials to support the work of USICH.

## **III.All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness**

To fulfill its mission of preventing and ending homelessness in the United States, USICH is charged with developing and implementing a federal strategic plan. The plan reflects the shared commitment by Council agencies to a set of priorities and strategies that will guide interagency efforts in our work to prevent and end homelessness.

### **FY2022 Results: Developing the Next Federal Strategic Plan**

USICH invested significant staff time in FY2022 creating *All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. *All In* is a multi-year, interagency blueprint for a future where no one experiences homelessness, and everyone has a safe, stable, and affordable home.

To develop this plan, USICH undertook a comprehensive input process that included more than 80 listening sessions and an online public comment portal. USICH received more than 1,500 public comments and feedback from organizations

and people who represent nearly 650 communities and every state, including more than 500 people who have experienced homelessness.

USICH synthesized the public input and used it as the basis of the six pillars that are the framework for *All In*. In February 2022, the Council approved these six proposed pillars. In April 2022, USICH shared an early draft of the plan with its member agencies for a pre-clearance review process. In addition, USICH sought input from national consultants, including people with lived experience of homelessness, people with expertise in the areas of racial equity and housing justice, tribal homelessness, LGBTQI+ homelessness, and/or youth homelessness. USICH resolved more than 1,000 comments and proposed edits through this process, and in August 2022, the USICH Council voted to approve submitting the plan into federal interagency clearance process.

## **FY2023 Anticipated Results: Finalizing the Federal Strategic Plan and Moving Toward Implementation**

### **Finalizing the Plan and Release**

*All In* was submitted into the federal interagency clearance process on September 1, 2022. Through two rounds of review, the USICH Policy Team resolved nearly 2,000 comments. USICH coordinated closely with the White House and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to coordinate release of *All In* with an announcement of the all-of-government place-based effort to address unsheltered homelessness and the release of the 2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress. *All In* was publicly released on December 19, 2022.

To educate and engage national and local leaders and stakeholders, the USICH Policy Team held a national webinar on *All In* on January 10, 2023. Nearly 3,000 people attended the webinar and shared their comments and questions about the plan. USICH will soon be releasing a Frequently Asked Questions document on its website to address the common questions that were asked during that webinar.

From December 2022 through March 2023, USICH staff and leadership presented *All In* to various stakeholder groups including its national partners, comprised of more than 100 national organizations focused on preventing and ending homelessness, federal agencies, and State and local groups. USICH shared *All In* at other national events such as the Bipartisan Policy Committee Webinar in February 2023. USICH also briefed House and Senate authorizing and appropriations committee staff and testified about *All In* at a hearing before the Senate Housing, Transportation, and Community Development Subcommittee of the Senate Banking Committee on March 8, 2023.

### **Implementation of the Plan**

The USICH Policy Team began planning for implementation in quarter one of FY2023, convening its Council Policy Group in November and then again for an in-person meeting in December to discuss workplan development, prioritize strategies for FY2023 interagency action, and develop workgroups. USICH developed workplan templates that were sent to Council agencies in March 2023 to identify agency commitments and timelines so that implementation actions and outcomes could be monitored and tracked.

*All In* includes 30 strategies and nearly 180 actions across the six pillars of the plan. Through an interagency process, 27 actions were prioritized for interagency action in FY2023. Agencies will participate in promoting the 27 actions, in addition to the other strategies that were identified in the plan. Our goal is to track all progress that supports the goals included in the plan. We will do this in addition to emphasizing the prioritized items for the creation of work plans and

specific time targeted actions. Our intention is to develop annual work plans and to provide updates on the progress of the work plans and the *All In*. We will also provide annual updates to the plan informed by progress made and opportunities for additional actions.

USICH is in the process of forming interagency working groups based on the following pillars from *All In*: Lead with Equity, Use Data and Evidence in Decision Making, Scale Housing and Supports, Improve Effectiveness of Homelessness Response Systems, and Homelessness Prevention. Activities associated with the Collaboration pillar will be integrated across these working groups. Each working group will be comprised of Council agency representatives from those agencies who have committed to actions within a particular pillar. Action Teams will be formed from within each of the working groups to execute specific actions. USICH also plans to invite non-federal stakeholders to participate in these action teams, including people with lived experience of homelessness.

USICH will track and publicly report on progress of *All In* implementation through its Performance Accountability Report and a performance management plan. USICH will also provide updates on Council-related activity in its newsletters and will work with member agencies to develop dashboards and other mechanisms to allow for greater transparency and accountability. USICH will also begin working on an update to the federal strategic plan, to be released within the calendar year.

The Policy Team currently includes a director of policy initiatives who leads and oversees the overall implementation of *All In* with two policy directors and one program analyst—a team of four. Current staffing levels present significant challenges to the agency’s ability to advance the work with urgency across 19 member agencies and 5 interagency working groups.

### **White House-USICH Unsheltered Initiative**

In June of 2022, the Council requested that the White House Domestic Policy Council (DPC) and USICH work together to develop and implement an all-of-government effort to address unsheltered homelessness. Although *All In* was still being developed, this strategy (which is included in the Homelessness Response pillar) was prioritized by the administration for immediate action, due to the alarming rise and trends related to unsheltered homelessness.

Since then, the DPC and USICH formed an Interagency Policy Council to develop a place-based initiative to address unsheltered homelessness in select communities with some of the highest counts of unsheltered people. Details of the initiative are still being finalized but is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2023. The USICH Policy Team and National Initiatives Team will play significant roles leading and project managing the overall implementation of the initiative. It is anticipated that in FY2023, there will be an intensive effort to kickoff efforts in the selected communities, developing initiative tools and process guides, and standing up coordination across the site teams and among the federal partners. This work will require increased travel resources above what is anticipated for normal agency operations.

## **FY2024 *All In* Implementation**

### **Ongoing Workplan Development and Tracking Progress**

USICH will enter FY2024 with the implementation of *All In* fully launched. The agency will develop new FY2024 workplans to prioritize actions for the next fiscal year. USICH Policy Team will be managing the five working groups and tracking activity across all agency commitments. In addition, USICH will also be making significant contributions to carrying out the strategies, developing tools and guidance, gaining input from the field, conducting analysis to inform policy recommendations, and more.

One of the key themes that runs throughout the pillars of the plan is the identification of barriers within existing programs that create burdens on individuals seeking assistance and the organizations that serve them. USICH is committed to reducing barriers to access housing and services for people at risk of or who are experiencing homelessness.

In FY2024, USICH will release its annual update to the federal strategic plan, as required by statute. This update will reflect the lessons learned through implementation and input from the national, state, and local leaders.

To carry out these responsibilities effectively and to make progress towards meeting the Administration's goal of reducing overall homelessness by 25%, USICH requests funding for two additional FTEs on the Policy Team. This additional staffing capacity will allow USICH to manage the working groups more efficiently, produce more tools and guidance, and complete research and analysis more quickly in order to form and act on policy recommendations.

### **Unsheltered Initiative**

USICH anticipates that the White House-USICH unsheltered initiative will continue in selected sites through FY2024. USICH Senior Regional Advisors will be heavily engaged with the selected sites within their regions and working to ensure coordination across sites as well as promoting lessons learned, key themes, and promising practices to the Council member agencies. The USICH Policy Team will be working to promote policy and agency action recommendations based on what is being learned in the field. The agency will develop tools and guidance to further support the federal teams working with sites. It is anticipated that increased travel will be required, above and beyond what is anticipated for normal business.

## **IV. Management, Finances, and Operations**

USICH strives to work effectively and efficiently to achieve its mission with a streamlined staff. In FY2022 and FY2023, USICH has taken significant steps to strengthen its management, operations, and fiscal governance to increase transparency and accountability and these will be further augmented in FY2024.

### **Results**

To improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of USICH management and operations and to address the recommendations in two GAO reports<sup>1</sup>, USICH has created a strong framework for managing and reporting performance. The core components of this framework are: 1) new and robust draft USICH bylaws, 2) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and 3) an annual Action Plan. Below is a description of each of these components.

1. **Bylaws:** The purpose of the bylaws is to establish the procedures by which the Council meets its statutory obligations and to guide Council actions and decisions. The bylaws outline rules around authority levels, rights, and expectations. It is a high-level governance document that incorporates all current statutory requirements in 42 U.S.C. § 11313; clarifies responsibilities of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Council Members; delegates specific duties to the Executive Director; and delineates responsibility for recurring provisions in appropriations law and other Congressional directives.

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<sup>1</sup> GAO-20-602 and GAO-22-105110



The draft bylaws were shared with all Council member agencies for review and will be presented to Council for adoption by majority vote in March of 2023. Once final, the new bylaws will replace a council Charter adopted in 2020 and be posted on the USICH webpage. The bylaws will be reviewed and updated as needed.

2. **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** USICH has developed a set of SOPs that capture areas where written policies and procedures are necessary and/or desirable for efficient operations of the agency. The SOPs provide step-by-step instructions for critical USICH functions, their oversight, and the mechanism to immortalize decisions and actions. The SOPs provide details on how USICH will be accountable for all duties and obligations in our authorizing statute and the requirements in each year's appropriations law and accompanying reports. They are intended to be internal management tools to ensure that USICH efficiently meets its responsibilities.

In FY2022, USICH developed SOPs for a number of high-priority activities and requirements and work is underway to create SOPs for additional areas of agency activity throughout FY2023.

3. **Action Plan:** Our new bylaws and SOPs are supplemented by an annual agency action plan. The FY2023 action plan is a tool for day-to-day management of agency activities and includes deadlines, outcomes, and responsible parties for each of 5 areas of strategic areas of focus:

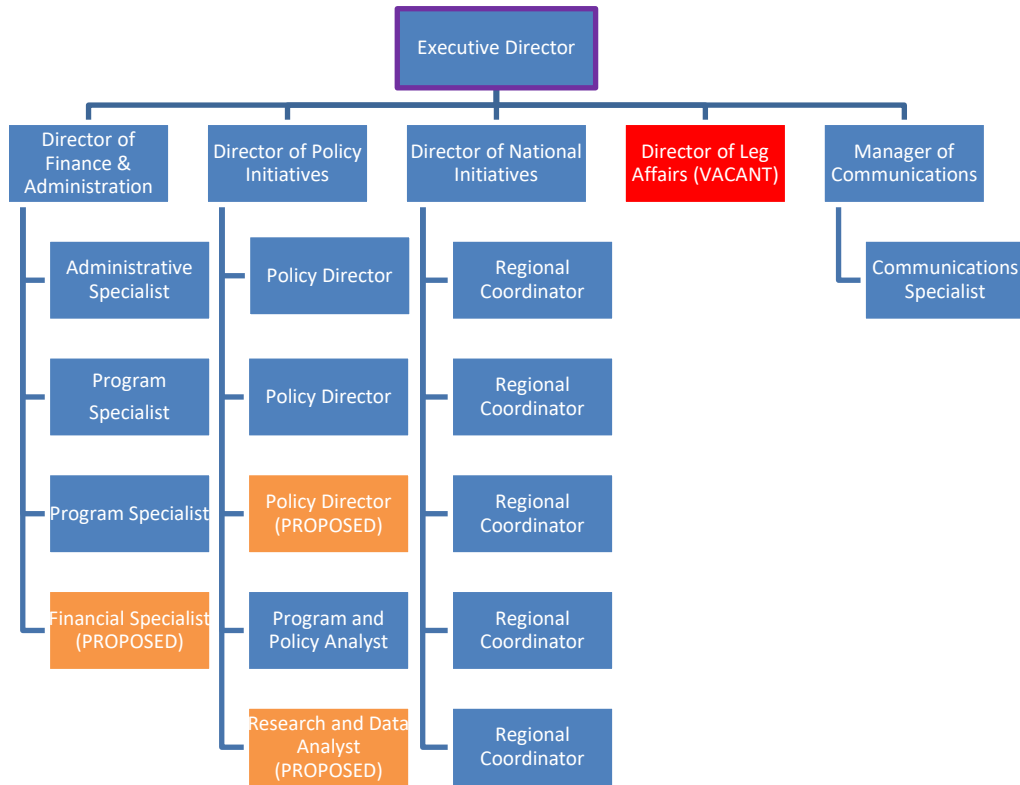
- Establish Agency Controls
- Fulfill Statutory Requirements
- Strengthen Organizational Culture
- Implement Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness
- Increase the Agency's National Impact

Agency leadership will review progress towards achieving this plan at least monthly with staff, updating the action plan as needed to ensure responsiveness to the rapidly changing environment in which the agency operates.

## **FY2024 Plans**

In FY2024, USICH will ensure compliance with our Bylaws and SOPS and expand the set of SOPs in place to guide agency processes. Importantly, in FY2024, we will strengthen our financial systems and accountability. USICH will invest in the staffing of the Finance and Administration Division with one new FTE added to financial management and analysis. This FTE will add needed bandwidth and expertise to transactional responsibilities, analysis, and processing of expenses. We will also strengthen protocols with our financial partners to ensure policies and checks are in place to bolster accuracy and accountability.

## V. Organizational Chart



## VI. Legislative Proposals

The 2024 Budget supports the following legislative proposal and will seek changes through the authorization process:

**Change in Salary Level for Executive Director.** This legislative proposal would enact a statutory change that would adjust the USICH’s Executive Director salary from Executive-Schedule V (\$172,100) to Executive Schedule IV (\$183,500). In evaluating this proposal, USICH reviewed the salaries of similar sized independent agencies and regional commissions. USICH believes this increase aligns with the role of the Executive Director, which is a highly visible role that requires a broad range of high-level skills, expertise, and experience in order to successfully advance the complex agenda that is required by *All In*.

## VII. APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The 2024 President’s Budget includes the proposed appropriation language below.

*For necessary expenses (including payment of salaries, authorized travel, hire of passenger motor vehicles, the rental of conference rooms, and the employment of experts and consultants under section 3109 of title 5, United States Code) of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness in carrying out the functions pursuant to title II of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended, \$4,800,000.*