



# **ALL INside Initiative Strategic Reflections, Progress & Opportunities**

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

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# Table of Contents

Click On Titles Below to Jump

- All Inside Initiative..... 3**
- Federal Partnership..... 5**
- All Inside Approach and Lessons Learned..... 8**
  - Site Identification and Planning..... 8
  - Consultation and Recruitment..... 10
  - Prepare for Launch..... 13
  - Implementation..... 16
- Outcomes..... 21**
  - Chicago..... 22
  - Dallas..... 23
  - Denver..... 24
  - Los Angeles..... 25
  - Greater Phoenix Metro Area..... 26
  - Seattle..... 28
  - State of California..... 27
- Building on ALL Inside..... 28**
- Resources..... 30**

## ALL Inside

ALL INside, led by the White House Domestic Policy Council, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and the 19 federal agencies that make up the USICH, partnered with select state and local governments in seven sites for up to two years. The Initiative aimed to strengthen and accelerate local efforts to help people move off the streets and into homes, helping them rebuild their lives and recover from the trauma of homelessness.

### The stated goals of the Initiative were to:

- Embed a dedicated federal official to accelerate locally-driven strategies and enact system-level changes to reduce unsheltered homelessness.
- Deploy dedicated teams across the federal government to identify opportunities for regulatory relief and flexibilities, navigate federal funding streams, and facilitate a peer learning network.
- Launch new efforts to address major barriers to housing, health care, and other support for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.<sup>1</sup>
- Convene philanthropy, the private sector, and other communities to identify more opportunities for support and collaboration

ALL INside leveraged lessons learned from Initiatives like [Strong Cities, Strong Communities](#), where federal employees from different agencies coordinate efforts and *work collaboratively in specific communities, providing cities with technical assistance, working to increase the capacity of local communities and advocating for integrated community solutions – with a special emphasis to support intensive efforts to implement community-driven strategies*<sup>2</sup>. ALL INside’s aim was to integrate efforts of the homeless crisis response system while activating city, state, and federal policy levers and resources and apply the following values across each phase of the work:

- **Sustainable and Asset-Based:** Focus on developing the assets and strengths of systems and people for long-term sustainability and impact.
- **Inclusive and Equity-Driven:** Include partners with equities from a variety of backgrounds, race, gender identities, sexual orientation, abilities, experiences, and points of views. A “do no harm” lens will be applied.

<sup>1</sup> Read the [USICH ALL INside press release](#) to learn about federal agency-specific commitments.

<sup>2</sup> Urban Institute: [Strong Cities, Strong Communities](#) | Urban Institute & HHS-ASPE: [Issue Brief: Facilitating local cross-sector collaboration: Strategies for intermediaries](#) (2021)

- **Model for Strong Partnerships:** Clarify roles and responsibilities, trusting those with lived-experience and local experts, productive discourse, leading with trust and transparency.
- **Supportive and Collaborative:** Aim to understand how and where support is needed through listening.
- **Evidence-Based:** Deeply root strategies, work plans, and activities in data and evidence.
- **Imaginative:** Test courageous new ideas.
- **Outcomes focused:** Help places make reductions in unsheltered homelessness and improve other outcomes for people and communities.

ALL INside was implemented in seven communities, launching in May 2023 and ending in December 2024. The Initiative included: [Chicago](#), [Dallas](#), [Denver](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Phoenix Metro](#), [Seattle](#), and the [State of California](#). Each community was able to make gains, addressing pressing issues and removing system barriers. The Initiative provided no new funding. Rather, it drew on existing agency expertise and resources from FY23 and FY24 budgets as well as the American Rescue Plan and any additional funding provided through competitive grants or future formula funding. Federal agencies committed to the Initiative across these broad categories:

- **Targeted federal resources:** Federal partners and federal technical assistance providers worked to ensure an all-hands-on-deck approach to providing technical assistance and guidance to ALL INside communities.
- **Regulatory relief and flexibility:** Federal and community partners built on lessons learned during the pandemic to identify mechanisms to allow for maximum flexibility and regulatory relief. As problems were identified, partners worked to find solutions and minimize bureaucratic processes to allow for quick action.
- **Data collection and analytics support:** Federal partners provided technical support and additional capacity to help ALL INside communities utilize and analyze all available data. Agencies tapped diverse datasets to help with analysis of local challenges and to develop solutions.
- **Convenings:** Federal partners supported peer-to-peer networks to exchange best practices and approaches; supporting pilot projects, research, and evaluation. Key agencies coordinated collaboration across communities to share resources and best practices.

For each selected community, a federal agency designated a full-time Federal Team Lead (FTL) that partnered with various federal agencies aligned with a community's goals. The White House Domestic Policy Council and federal agencies committed to overseeing the Initiative, removing barriers, and supporting the goals of the Initiative. USICH worked with federal partners and federal technical assistance providers to ensure an all-hands-on deck approach to leveraging federal resources in the communities. USICH also provided day-to-day program

management support, shared information, and tools, and identified roadblocks and challenges for escalation to the White House and federal agencies. The agency also supported the development of metrics to track and report progress and engaged senior federal agency leaders to ensure that the project remained on track.

Overall, the Initiative met many of its goals by providing a structure to identify, discuss, and act on issues confronting communities across the country as they work to address unsheltered homelessness. ALL INside helped transform relationships and approaches that participating and federal partners and communities will carry forward. It has also produced solutions that can be leveraged by other communities nationwide.

## Federal Partnership

**The White House**, through the **Domestic Policy Council** provided the vision and accountability for this Initiative, convening partners to develop ALL Inside, establish commitments, remove barriers, and track progress. **USICH's Interagency Policy Committee on Homelessness**, which consisted of senior advisors from all 19 federal agencies made ALL INside a focus of their coordination during the time that the Initiative was underway. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Veterans Administration (VA) provided Federal Team Leads, who were embedded in communities throughout the Initiative. The VA also contributed staff time to develop tools and metrics for each community so they could track the work of the Initiative. The United States Interagency Council provided backbone support for the Initiative, supporting leadership, oversight, and day to day implementation of the Initiative.

Taking the lead from communities, federal partners also worked to address barriers:

- **Federal Team Leads** provided guidance, coordinated and documented requests from communities.
- The **Department of Transportation** supported critical convenings to evaluate opportunities to expand access to affordable housing and partnering with communities to ensure people can obtain official forms of identification needed to qualify for benefits.
- **FEMA** partnered with Los Angeles to develop guidance about emergency response strategies that can be used across the country.
- **HUD** worked with communities to establish best practices when submitting waivers intended to accelerate placements into housing

- **HUD and VA** partnered with the Los Angeles Mayor’s office to support landlord engagement strategy sessions that opened new units and increased HUD VASH utilization.
- **HHS and HUD** engaged ALL INside communities, along with their states, in the Housing and Services Accelerator Program (HSPA).
- **HHS’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**, provided technical assistance to ALL INside communities, and engaged ALL INside community representatives at a conference to support peer-peer learning.
- The **Social Security Administration (SSA)** established regulatory flexibilities to make it easier for people experiencing homelessness.
- The **VA** partnered with California and State Prisons to support reentry efforts, develop training materials and establish a presence in prisons to meet with Veterans before they are released. This is supported by newly established data sharing agreements to share information and support transition planning.

“Our connection with ALL INside really did help us enhance our outreach capacity. We were able to work with other federal agencies and non-governmental partners to collaborate and build on what was working at the local level and align our agency’s efforts to drive greater impact. We identified pain points that impact access to benefits and services. The agency has been working with ALL INside sites to develop and implement a demonstration project aimed at helping people experiencing homelessness access SSI payments. The demonstration project will modify rules, streamline processes, and provide sites with resources needed to remove the barriers to accessing SSI payments. Improving access to SSI payments will provide people experiencing homelessness with a source of income needed as they transition to stable housing.”

- Senior Federal Partner

# ALL INSide Approach and Lessons Learned

## Site Identification and Planning

### Approach

**Establish Federal Leadership and Commitment:** The White House's Domestic Policy Council (DPC) committed to ensuring that the scope of federal involvement was ambitious, achievable, and consistent with the Administration's values and supported weekly meetings to plan ALL INSide.

**Identify Sites:** The White House, with the support of the DPC and federal agencies with data on homelessness, used national data on unsheltered homelessness to identify potential cities for participation in the Initiative.

**Mobilize Federal Principals:** Federal Agency leaders committed to reducing homelessness by:

- Designating a senior accountable official at each agency to oversee and ensure delivery of the agency's commitments, and to provide support and oversight to any staff dedicated to the Initiative,
- identifying relevant experts within their agencies to respond to community needs,
- removing barriers and identifying opportunities and resources to support selected cities, and
- lending policy expertise to guide high-level decisions for the Initiative.

### Tips

**Coordinating with experts who understand available resources and can articulate the range of strategies federal partners bring to the table is essential. This ensures the Initiative is clearly framed and approaches are well-defined from the outset.**

The White House played a key role in generating commitment and buy-in for this Initiative, with support from USICH and federal agencies committed to preventing and ending homelessness. Although no new funding was allocated to communities, there was a shared understanding that existing resources, such as the Coronavirus Relief Fund, American Rescue Plan Act, and Homeless Assistance funds, could be strategically leveraged for maximum impact. Strategies to supporting communities were identified at the outset, framing the approach the Initiative would take. In a system tasked with creating new housing and services for thousands of people experiencing

homelessness, clarity on what the Initiative would provide was crucial.

**Each community has a different constellation of partners and networks aligned to prevent and end homelessness - identifying the right partners early on will help strengthen the commitments and partnerships needed for a successful Initiative.**

Because this Initiative was driven by the White House, Cities and States were the focus of the place-based Initiative, however; the larger homeless crisis response ecosystem was considered during site selection, which included counties, neighboring cities, regional planning bodies (Continuums of Care), and other important contributors to the homelessness crisis response system.

**It is beneficial to have a core group of committed federal decision makers oversee the effort; this core group should be able to make decisions, remove barriers and support project management, federal team leads, and federal agencies interacting with the Initiative.**

The White House's Domestic Policy Council (DPC) committed to ensuring that the scope of federal involvement is ambitious, achievable, and consistent with the Administration's values. To do this the DPC remained actively engaged in the Initiative, working closely with USICH to monitor progress of the site teams. The DPC also convened the Unsheltered Homelessness Interagency Policy Council (IPC) which regularly and served as a point of escalation to make sure sites and agencies could deliver on their commitments. Importantly, selected agency representatives on the IPC and at USICH made themselves available to the Federal Team Leads who were embedded in the communities. The aim was to ensure that there was a transparent and accessible feedback loop so that as issues are raised, communities received a timely response that offered clarity and insight on available options to consider.

## Consultation and Recruitment

### Approach

**Send an Onboarding Letter:** Once sites were selected, they received a formal onboarding letter from the White House. The letter described the Initiative, roles, and timelines, and expectations for participation.

**Prepare Jurisdictions:** Jurisdictions then indicated an interest and prepared for next steps by:



- **Coordination:** Collaborating with their Continuum of Care and other regional jurisdictions (e.g. counties) to align efforts ahead of consultations.
- **Data Collection:** Gathering available qualitative and quantitative data related to unsheltered homelessness and their community’s specific challenges.
- **Document Sharing:** Providing existing and up-to-date documentation such as strategic plans, Memorandums of Understanding, and other relevant materials
- **Wish List Development:** Compiling a list of areas where federal support was needed, identifying desired flexibilities, and outlining plans to strengthen systems.

**Initiate Consultation:** The goal of this phase was to:

- Share details about the Federal government offerings through the ALL INside Initiative.
- Build trust and transparency among community sites, regional partners, and Federal agencies.
- Initiate the partnership on a positive and collaborative note.
- Assess the community’s needs, gaps, and interests to determine the best fit for federal support.
- Establish an understanding of current strategies, practices, and policies to inform a Memorandum of Understanding and criteria for federal team leadership recruitment.

**Support the Consultation:** Several activities were conducted to support the consultation process:

Session 1	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
People with lived experience/Lived Experience Board	Community-Based Organizations and Outreach Providers	City and County Public Housing Authorities (PHA)	Shelter Providers/Transitional/Permanent Housing Providers
Max Six Participants per Session			

- **Listening Sessions:** Virtual or in-person sessions were organized to hear from key community partners and gather insights.
- **Site Visit:** A team of federal principals visited the community to support consultation goals. These visits were designed to be collaborative and non-burdensome, focusing on gathering existing and

readily available information needed to inform the MOU and federal team engagement.

- **In-Person Discussions:** During the site visits, three facilitated discussions focused on specific topics critical to implementing the ALL INside Initiative.

Sample Plan for In Person Discussion		
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topics: Cross=Agency, Multi-Sector Responses to Unsheltered Homelessness and Comprehensive/ Coordinated Outreach</li> <li>• Planning for Encampment sites after closure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging Unsheltered Residents in Developing Solutions</li> <li>• Addressing Basic Needs (with a focus on behavioral health services) and Providing Shelter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging Unsheltered Residents in Developing Solutions</li> <li>• Addressing Basic Needs (with a focus on behavioral health services) and Providing Shelter</li> </ul>
Max 15 Participants per session (10 is ideal)		

## TIPS

**Get input from local key partners early. To help inform the design of the Initiative, seek out local partners who collaborate well across sectors already or know the needs of impacted communities, including the voices of people with lived experience.**

The site visits helped define issues communities were working on, and their approaches to meeting their biggest challenges. It also helped highlight the existing relationships with federal partners, and an understanding of how federal coordination can support local efforts. It was a great opportunity to understand what disconnects or misunderstandings had formed over time – interpretations of policy creating barriers in the present day may not have been revisited since they had been adopted years ago.

The process revealed how past interpretations of policy had created present-day barriers. Collaborative discussions clarified the regulations, policies, and guidelines affecting the issues. For instance, communities supported Continuums of Care (CoCs) and Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to reassess long-standing expectations,

identify new guidance that allowed greater flexibility to remove burdens on providers and those experiencing homelessness and decrease the amount of time it took to get into housing. Revisiting the purpose and application of federal regulations enabled communities and federal partners to refine what was achievable. Where challenges persisted, these conversations also highlighted potential federal actions that could provide additional support, such as reviewing waivers to help communities address factors impeding access to housing where support could be provided (e.g., documentation and timeframes of service provision).

Given how much it takes to prevent and end homelessness across the housing crisis response system, there are many concurrent activities underway within communities. Through consultation, federal partners can use their lens of what levers are available to help narrow down the themes and strategies that are most likely to be impacted by a place-based Initiative while building on what is already underway in the community. This collegiate, collaborative diagnosis, problem-solving, and assessment requires a willingness to be creative and break traditional roles based on grant management, information sharing, or other types of program oversight.

**Provide a clear framework for federal engagement and specific types of help that federal partners can provide so that communities can formulate their plans effectively, and pivot as needed. When possible, provide tools and examples to demonstrate how federal partners can assist.**

Planning for the ALL Inside Initiative took about a year. Given that funding for homelessness is often provided on an annual or bi-annual cycle, resources available to communities can change even between when the Initiative is conceived and when it is launched in a community. Local communities often have a good understanding of how changes in funding, staffing, and population can impact their system, and drive community goals. Clarity from federal partners about the type of assistance and tools available through the Initiative will help communities frame and update goals so that they can make the most of the Initiative.

Federal Team Leaders remarked that communities were very receptive to direct suggestions, when offered in the form of analysis, options and guidance that was informed by each community's unique situation. Federal Team Leads often relied on consultation with USICH and federal agency representatives to develop meaningful suggestions. Communities appreciated this, expressing that that sometimes they "didn't know what they didn't know" when it came to understanding which federal levers would be best applied to the issues they were facing.

## Prepare for Launch

### Approach

#### **Conduct Consultations and confirm interest:**

- Shared priorities were coordinated, specific goals for each community site were identified, and commitments among federal partners were secured.
- Agreements were documented in **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs/MOAs)**.

**Engage Local Partners:** Community sites worked to secure commitments from key local partners, ensuring alignment of local resources, policies, and efforts with the goals of the Initiative.

**Finalize Federal Support:** Based on cross-cutting themes and opportunities raised during consultations, federal commitments, staff, and other resources dedicated to each community were finalized.

**Select and Assign Federal Team Leads:** Federal Team Leads were chosen based on their experience in federal government or expertise in homelessness-related fields and their fit with initial needs and focus areas of the community sites. Team Leads became the primary liaisons and human connection for the work.

**Provide Onboarding and Training:** USICH Staff organized onboarding and training sessions for Federal Team Leads:

- Federal Team Leads developed presentations summarizing agency roles, programs and key contacts.
- A briefing document was provided for each community including: Community background and context, key partners and contacts, details of the homeless system, and related funding or programs.
- USICH Senior Regional Advisors enriched these materials by providing additional context and analysis based on expertise.

**Announce the Initiative:** Once MOUs were in place, the Initiative was announced publicly through the White House and USICH. A fact sheet was published as a resource for those interested in learning more about the Initiative.

## Tips

**When recruiting partners, clarify roles, be concrete about goals, and keep commitments reasonable. This can help ensure clear expectations and create a blueprint for action that partners can return to throughout the course of the Initiative.**

The MOUs provided a place for community partners to lay out their expectations and prepare partnerships and structures that could support those. The MOUs also provided clarity for new partners because within the homeless system, it is natural for people to change positions regularly. In fact, during the course of ALL INside, contributors at every level changed.

Many communities also had existing relationships with federal agency leads and federal partners. Exploring these relationships early on and understanding how they can be leveraged to support the Initiative will help with role clarification and commitments.

**Support community coordination to establish a structure that will provide ongoing support for the Initiative, mirroring the commitment of the White House's Domestic Policy Council to oversee the Initiative and remove barriers.**

A local implementation team representing core partners can help serve as thought partners and coordinate decisions and action emerging from the work of the Initiative. As communities developed goals and worked to secure commitments, they identified local leads for the project. In addition to jurisdictional appointees, communities identified representatives from key areas where action was expected to take place. These leads could meet on a regular basis to oversee the Initiative and help guide its implementation. They were able to help identify and remove local barriers to issues concurrently as federal partners helped address federal barriers.

**Select Federal Team Leads with experience working in federal government, a willingness to engage in creative problem solving, and an ability to frame questions and pose solutions for local, state, and federal partners.**

Federal Team Leads were charged with marshaling available federal resources to execute the community plan through coordination with the community site and federal partners. They embedded with the communities to provide day to day support, problem solving, and issues identification. They were senior leaders with substantive background in homelessness and/or housing or in a related field and a track record of successful project leadership

who served as the primary point of contact to the community site. These backgrounds helped communities talk through issues and identify what the next steps could be.

**Provide training and resources to Federal Team Leads so that they can take advantage of their work experience and have the detail about other federal programs and the touchpoints of those programs when problem solving; make these resources available to local community leaders as well.**

With 19 federal agencies committed to preventing and ending homelessness, despite their own areas of deep expertise, Federal Team Leads benefited from having access to information about homelessness as a topic, the types of interventions federal agencies support, and contact lists of who to connect with to activate a federal partner. This helped strengthen their ability to move quickly and prevent bottlenecks during community problem-solving.

## Implementation

### Approach

**Develop Workplans:** Federal Team Leads began by coordinating with the community, USICH experts, the Domestic Policy Council (DPC), and other federal agency experts to create an actionable work plan. This plan detailed how federal efforts would support local goals for addressing unsheltered homelessness. Time was intentionally allocated for planning, engaging partners, setting performance and evaluation criteria, and refining strategies.

### Leverage Support and Resources from USICH

- USICH Senior Regional Advisors provided expertise, convened working groups, and facilitated connections between federal and community partners.
- USICH collaborated with the White House DPC and federal agencies to identify resources, including expert working groups, to address community needs.
- Federal Team Leads held regular consultation meetings with USICH Regional Senior Advisors to address barriers and track progress.

**Support Ongoing Communication:** Federal Team Leads communicated directly with the DPC, USICH, and

federal agency representatives to address issues as they arose.

**Track Progress:** Based on the MOUs and work plans, USICH worked with the Federal Team Leads and communities to facilitate the development of metrics to help measure and report progress effectively.

**Engage Volunteers:** AmeriCorps utilized existing grantees and community contacts to recruit volunteers for the Initiative.

**Support In-Person Engagement:** Opportunities were provided for community representatives and federal liaisons to meet in person, strengthening collaboration and advancing the Initiative.

**Quarterly Reporting:** USICH provided briefs that summarized agency accomplishments to keep federal partners, communities, and federal team leads aware of progress.

## Tips

**Commit resources for in-person connections to strengthen resolve, deepen understanding, and accelerate impact.**

There were a number of touchpoints for ALL INside that benefited from in-person connections – the consultation site visits, Federal Team Leads who were able to be present in the community (some were not on-site full time, others were), and the in-person meeting among all the Federal Team Leads and Community Leads. While virtual meetings can provide a benefit of including partners within the homeless response system from a wide region, All INside participants found that in-person meetings were more valuable and provided a stronger catalyst for action when establishing new conversations or creating new relationships.

**Some of the unseen wins are about building relationships, making sure that balls don't get dropped, and helping push projects forward or unwind tricky issues that were blockers for processes underway.**

The federal government is vast – so having a point person who could listen to the issues helped people feel like they were heard. Federal Team Leads helped with myth-busting, making connections, and demystifying federal agencies. They helped keep the momentum going, align partners, connect the dots, and clarify roles. Often, Federal Team Leads, in partnership with USICH Senior Regional Advisors, were able to ensure people had the right contacts, following up to support the conversations so that the work was effective. This helped bridge gaps between communication not just for the communities, but among federal agencies supporting the project.

**Federal Team Leads can elevate nuances of what communities are going through as they attempt to manage regulations and implement policy. Federal team leads can use convening power with state, national and federal partners to open the conversation and explore perspectives.**

Federal Team Leads helped federal partners at all levels understand what the ALL INside Initiative was about. Often, they were essential in helping federal partners understand the nuances of what communities were experiencing on the ground. Federal Team Leads served as liaisons, helping federal partners hear from other agencies and people in communities, which allowed them to look at things from different perspectives. This helped uncover regulations or guidelines that could be adapted, even if they weren't the central focus of a community's request, they contributed to process changes that helped address problem areas. For example, in Dallas, the Federal Team Lead helped facilitate a direct communication between community leaders and the Social Security

Office, which led to the ability for housing navigators and case managers to drop applications off at specific locations. Those applications would then be prioritized by the Social Security Office, allowing the applications to be processed much more quickly.

**Community focus will change. Review and revisit the MOU and metrics regularly, allowing Initiative partners to drive conversations about what success means for the Initiative.**

Because addressing unsheltered homelessness requires multiple tasks from a variety of agencies and resources, at times the ALL INside Initiative partners were pulled in several directions. They revisited the MOU and used metrics to report to partners to help stick to the mission or have a candid discussion if things in the community had changed. Looking at the goals as a "north star" helped people stay committed to the core goals while having the flexibility to respond to the changing needs on the ground.

Another mitigating factor for the Initiative was that at every level, there were changes in who was supporting the Initiative, meaning that while many of the original signatories of the MOUs remained, some people transitioned to other roles and new people took their place – or their seats were left empty for periods of time. Having shared goals provided continuity and clarity even as new partners join the Initiative.

And, in instances where goals did change, Federal Team Leads communicated with key local and federal partners to assess the mitigating factors and potential impact, helping the Initiative pivot. For example, in California, once the State recognized the scope of potential federal leavers available, they saw how the work could effectively impact



a range of populations and communities, so their focus shifted from population-specific goals to broader objectives that could make an impact across all populations.

Adapting changes also meant leaning into projects that were not specifically listed in the MOU, but which helped build trust, serving as a roadmap for reaching more audacious goals. For example, in Chicago during resource analysis, it was discovered that not all partners were fully informed. As a result, the community provided cross-sector training for homeless and reentry partners. This allowed them to establish a new plan for collaboration that would help people exiting prisons. At other times, it resulted in administrative and programmatic changes that impacted critical processes that promised to improve overall system functioning while also supporting partnerships, and collaboration that are needed to impact the overall goals. For example, Seattle was able to unlock a billing process, easing pressure on providers who serve people who are unsheltered.

**Be aware that timing of local, state, and national partner efforts may not always line up and be prepared to push for solutions faster – or let some projects go.**

Cities, regions, states, and federal partners move at different speeds – so even when a barrier is identified and people want to move forward with it, there is work to make sure it can progress efficiently despite the different timeframes partners work within. Federal Team Leads worked with communities to understand how critical the issue was. In some instances, the community needed to move forward with their work and didn't want to slow down so they clarified specific timeframes federal response was needed, at other times communities opted to identify other key areas to focus on with federal partners that would get better traction. By escalating an issue with everyone, it could get attention quickly and ensure alignment across partners. For example, while Denver had been identified as an ALL INside community, they were going through a mayoral election. Understanding that ALL INside would be stronger with support from the Mayor, federal partners discussed Initiative to staff and worked with local partners committed to wait until a new Mayor was established before finalizing the MOU and matching the community with a Federal Team Lead. This meant Denver started later than some other communities but was able to have full local support when it did start.

A good part of the Initiative's success lies in effective project management at all levels to serve as "air traffic control" between committed partners as well as raise awareness among other philanthropic and national partners to support gaps that are raised.

Escalating issues and ensuring that they are attended to requires coordination and project management. For example, while communities may receive guidance clarifying that an activity is allowed and encouraged, implementing it fully involves assembling the right partners, planning activities, training on the guidance, and tracking progress to identify and resolve any challenges. In many instances, during ALL INside, convenings were arranged or trainings were developed as part of the process when it became clear that a set of partners needed information and support to carry out a process that was in place and approved. In the Phoenix Metro Area, for example, the Federal Team Lead worked with federal partners to SAMHSA TA to share information about trauma-informed care, which helped strengthen teams and provide a platform for the community think about what was possible as they engaged in strategies to address unsheltered homelessness.

**Understanding what communities already track and determining how to build onto that to evaluate incremental changes – quantitatively and qualitatively – benefits from people skilled with working in homelessness.**

Tracking metrics for a new Initiative without creating burden on the community at the detriment of meeting the core goals can be a challenge. ALL INside leveraged experts in the field of homelessness with experience in reporting and analysis to work with communities to establish metrics. Documenting impact can also benefit from strong project management since some measures may require special attention from the Federal Team Lead or other partners to track over time.

Generally, many of the actions that were implemented during the ALL INside Initiative are in various phases of implementation and the results from those actions are expected to be seen past the date that the Initiative ends. For this reason, follow-up after the Initiative ends will help federal partners fully understand the impact of the work and identify if there are any barriers that need attention.

## Outcomes

In many instances, ALL INside communities started their work by pulling at threads that helped untangle processes, problems, and issues that were proverbial stones in the shoe. For example, as earlier referenced, in Seattle helping figure out a billing issue meant that providers could once again focus on providing services to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness rather than getting stuck on paperwork. As relationships formed and the work took hold, bigger, more perplexing barriers emerged that required attention at every government

level. For example, in several communities, housing placements were stalled because programs throughout the system were stuck – they had tried everything they could and needed a waiver from HUD so they could access flexibilities they needed to house people more quickly. This took convenings, problem-solving conversations, and engagement with multiple partners to approach.

Regardless of the issue, when ALL INside local, regional, state, and federal partners came together, creative solutions emerged. While federal partners localized the support based on the needs of the community, the solutions can be generalized and will have ripple effects across the country. Often, the work within ALL INside created synergy with other technical assistance efforts and national conferences, providing a cross-pollination of information among communities and federal partners. At other times, the collective knowledge emerging from ALL INside communities contributed to best practices.

For example, USICH incorporated lessons from ALL INside as part of its Encampment Guidance<sup>3</sup>, which provides concrete strategies for addressing encampments. And federal exposure to the needs of communities helped break through in ways that memos and emails can't. Dialogues with ALL INside communities, for example, ALL INside helped the Social Security Office contemplate what it might look like to have representatives in the field bring services *to* people experiencing homelessness in the community, acknowledging the significant barriers they face. While much of the work started in the incubator of ALL INside, the ways partners are being impacted, and how solutions can be scaled up, is still being understood, and implemented.

## Community Activities

Below are highlights that showcase some of the work each ALL INside community did, and links to resources generated because of that work.

## Chicago

Through ALL INside, **Chicago** partnered with a Federal Team Lead from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to strengthen its efforts to reduce unsheltered homelessness in the city. The City's priorities focused on enhancing pathways to housing for formerly incarcerated individuals and reducing documentation requirements for housing for people experiencing homelessness.

The City successfully diverted individuals from public transportation sites into shelters, reflecting its commitment to improving safety for individuals. The City also effectively streamlined the **Project Based Voucher process**, establishing a workgroup to address bureaucratic hurdles and develop improvements in collaboration with the Chicago Housing Authority. Alongside these efforts, **a guide outlining housing documentation eligibility requirements** by funding source was created to elevate awareness, support process evaluation, and improve placements. Chicago also advanced training Initiatives in partnership with SAMHSA Technical Assistance to improve **access to documents and benefits through the Social Security Administration**. Cross-system training for Continuum of Care (CoC) and Reentry partners was launched to create a better understanding of where there were opportunities to improve housing outcomes for returning citizens.

Looking ahead, having already increased compensation for people with lived experience due the Initiative, Chicago plans to finalize a set of recommendations to **enhance the involvement of people with lived experience of homelessness**. The City also intends to use the inventory and system map of **housing for returning residents** that was developed during the Initiative to identify and fill gaps in the system.

“The Documentation Guide will have a lasting impact, far beyond this Initiative. During its creation, we surveyed organizations across the system to understand their eligibility requirements, uncovering and addressing inconsistencies even before the guide was complete. After its release, we trained users to ensure the guide is effectively utilized. The ultimate goal? Streamlining the application process so people can secure housing faster and move into their units without unnecessary delays.”

-Federal Team Lead

## Dallas

**Dallas** made significant strides in addressing homelessness through a collaborative approach in partnership with a Federal Team Lead from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The city focused on developing and coordinating plans across systems to improve local decision making and expanding capacity housing and services to ensure comprehensive support for those experiencing homelessness.

Dallas established a **homeless preference at the Dallas Public Housing Authority** that set aside vouchers each year while also reducing documentation barriers. Dallas also submitted **five waivers to HUD to establish regulatory flexibilities** that would improve access to housing and behavioral health services, including working with HUD on an approach in utilizing resources to **create behavioral health teams that are integrated into permanent, supportive housing**, laying the groundwork to bring in health care dollars in the future. To further improve access to housing, backlogs with documentation and access to benefits were addressed. An agreement was established between the state driver's license division and the Continuum of Care which helped **speed up the ID process** and the Continuum of Care (CoC). The community also enrolled in a Social Security Administration pilot program for **virtual appointments for Social Security Cards**, greatly reducing the barriers for people experiencing homelessness.

Looking ahead, Dallas is coordinating with partners to secure sustainable funding and pursue strategic policy and partnerships that will support the housing and services approaches demonstrated during ALL INside.

Before the Initiative launched, we had developed a solid plan to address unsheltered homelessness, with clear goals. ALL INside provided the “how” - guidance and thought partners to leverage federal policies and programs in tandem with our local efforts. It also created the momentum and focus needed to bring partners together to establish a local Public Housing Authority preference and submit HUD waivers to support housing placements. Without ALL INside, these efforts would have been a lot more challenging.

- Community Lead Agency Executive

## Denver

In **Denver**, a multifaceted approach was implemented to tackle homelessness and improve the quality of life for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Denver partnered with a Federal Team Lead from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The effort aimed to increase low-barrier shelters and supportive housing, ensuring that people had viable options. Health and behavioral health care access was also prioritized, with a focus on providing life-saving resources.

Denver conducted a successful **encampment resolution pilot**, which engaged key local partners and resulted in most participants moving off the streets into bridge housing. The community strengthened its partnership with the Denver Public Housing Authority, facilitating the issuance of waivers to **increase the use of vouchers and housing authority resources**. Lessons about how to submit waiver requests to HUD were summarized by the Federal Team Lead and shared with other communities to improve efficiencies. A summit among engaged partners helped improve understanding and communication to leverage HUD resources. Additionally, the City **expanded its collaboration with the VA**, setting a precedent for other federal partnerships. This partnership supported the launch of a **Command Center** model, which centralizes critical responses to urgent needs. Denver's commitment to fully utilizing federal funding sources underscores its dedication to addressing unsheltered homelessness comprehensively. Given that there are several other housing authorities in the region, Denver has identified an opportunity for the work to **extend to more partners and support process improvements to neighboring communities**.

“ALL Inside helped us focus on strategies to strengthen partnerships with the Continuum of Care and the Denver Public Housing Authority, bringing together partners that don't always connect on a regular basis. We made some great progress on strategies to increase the use of vouchers, and we want to continue this work. We want to take this solution to the fourteen Public Housing Authorities in our region. There are opportunities to bring even more partners to the table and scale up what worked with ongoing Federal support.”

-Continuum of Care leader, Denver

## Greater Phoenix Area

The **Greater Phoenix Area** engaged in efforts to address homelessness through coordinated messaging and aligned partnerships to address unsheltered homelessness in partnership with a Federal Team Lead from the Department of Health and Human Services.

A grant for a **three-year behavioral health and HIV outreach program** was secured, enhancing the community's ability to support people who were unsheltered, in addition to **addressing heat related deaths** by leveraging CDC expertise and promoting the use of cooling centers and other heat mitigation strategies. Phoenix also supported the state's participation in the first Housing Partnership and Services Accelerator cohort. Arizona was one of nine states invited by the Department of Health and Human Services to participate. By enhancing **real-time bed inventory for shelters** the region aimed to increase access to shelter while supporting swift transitions into available housing options. The area also focused on expanding wraparound services and engaged in peer-sharing Initiatives, which informed procedures and **guidelines on decommissioning encampments and securing individual property**, and creating safe outdoor spaces, integrating behavioral health care needs with a low-barrier framework. Training programs in trauma-informed care for service providers and Social Security Administration employees strengthened the community's capacity to respond to homelessness with empathy and efficiency.

The Greater Phoenix area is currently working on **aligning Medicaid demonstration implementation with the use of mainstream housing vouchers** to ensure access to health care and housing.

"ALL INSide empowered us to seize every opportunity to achieve the community's goals. With a strong core team, we framed the issues, clarified strategies, and prioritized tribal communities in the discussions. By leveraging federal resources, local partners worked with the State of Arizona to enroll in HUD and HHS's Housing and Services Partnership Accelerator, increasing access to housing and health care. They also teamed up with the State, the CDC, and federal agencies to combat heat-related deaths in Phoenix. More people, sharper focus – this approach strengthens community efforts!"

-Federal Team Lead

## Los Angeles

**Los Angeles** worked closely with federal partners to secure administrative flexibilities and streamline processes to connect people to housing and services faster in partnership with two Federal Team Leads from FEMA. Their work focused on facilitating new housing options, expediting application processes, and reducing documentation to save lives and make it easier for individuals to exit homelessness.

Collaboration was key for LA. The City focused on convening partners to address opportunities, challenges, and disconnects between federal, state, and local policies. LA improved **coordination of outreach efforts** to unsheltered individuals, ensuring alignment among a variety of service providers. They also focused on **increasing availability of interim housing or supportive housing** for people exiting homelessness and

finalized **HUD-related waivers** aimed at providing regulatory relief, creating efficiencies in the housing system including presumptive eligibility, which allows people to move into housing first, expediting the process. **These waivers have served as a template for many other communities seeking similar flexibilities.** The project secured additional vouchers and support for housing navigators, increasing the number of people exiting homelessness and leasing units. There were also critical collaborations with the VA to **expand housing for Veterans**, and round table **convenings to improve service delivery** which brought leaders and service providers together. One convening included the HUD field office and Regional HUD offices, another included the Social Security Office. To ensure that people experiencing homelessness, particularly those in encampments who are in flood-prone areas, are supported during disaster, the City also established a **disaster response framework**, which is something that other communities will be able to use so that when a disaster hits, there is a plan for everyone. LA is currently focused on advancing its priorities by continuing to collaborate with local, state, and federal partners to remove barriers and maximize resources, **including identifying resources and strategies to use project-based vouchers**, to facilitate housing development.

“ALL INside has helped us build stronger connections with federal entities that fund or regulate homeless related services. This year, we convened housing and services providers with the Social Security Administration, with HUD, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This helped us establish a shared understanding of what’s happening on the ground and deepen our collaborative efforts and address some of the challenges and disconnects between federal policies and local policies.”

-Los Angeles Public Official



## Seattle

**Seattle**, in partnership with a Federal Team Lead from the Department of Health and Human Services, prioritized increasing access to health and housing services. Seattle facilitated a representative to attend a national SAMHSA convening that included state health care leaders to support peer to peer engagement. The community assisted in **better implementation of the State Medicaid 1115 demonstration** by helping shape and elicit community input to **improve the utilization of the State Medicaid 1115 demonstration** through a few strategies, including **listening sessions** with the community in partnership with the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH).

To improve outcomes, the community delivered **a joint letter to the state** highlighting solutions that would increase both participation and success in the Medicaid billing process. A contractual change between the state and its third-party administrator that shares the responsibility for successful billings was proposed and realized, supporting local providers. Through ALL INside, there were also facilitated conversations between the Washington State Department of Commerce and Washington State Health Care authority to discuss and highlight future information system opportunities for improvement, paving the way for future efforts. Seattle also engaged stakeholders to identify needs and gaps between local Social Security Administration Offices and providers. ALL INside identified and shared processes to **streamline electronic communications between Social Security Administration Offices and high-volume providers**. Seattle also worked to eliminate barriers to ID access and processing times, including identifying ways to share data with housing authorities to increase voucher utilization and decrease lease up times.

Seattle, which faced significant leadership changes after launching ALL INside, is building new leadership to carry out the vision set forth by ALL INside and the larger efforts within the community to prevent and end homelessness.

We must keep working to leverage every resource to move people indoors, connect them with treatment, and provide access to housing. ALL INside helped us highlight were things were working - and explore gaps and ways to strengthen our approach. With limited funding at the local and state level, maximizing federal resources effectively and efficiently is key to meeting our goals.

-City Official, Seattle

## State of California

**The State of California** established an interdisciplinary “core team” made up of multiple state entities, to support the ALL INside Initiative and partner with a Federal Team lead from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The group included CA Housing and Community Development, Cal Interagency Council on Homelessness, Cal Vet, and CA department of Health Care Services. They aimed to strengthen outcomes through collaboration with state and local efforts to advance key priorities, such as improving housing services, leveraging federal resources effectively, and enhancing regulatory flexibilities. By focusing on overarching policy and program issues, the goal was to remove barriers that were preventing people from accessing as quickly as possible.

Through the Initiative, the State organized a virtual Housing First training called **“Putting Plans into Practice in California”** for housing developers, property managers, VA and non-VA case managers, Continuum of Care (CoC) entities and Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to ensure uniform understanding of Housing First within the context of California state regulations and the state Interagency Council on Homelessness.

In an additional effort to increase awareness and support adoption of best pest practices, the state drafted **a white paper on Aging Veterans and Older Adults**. Through their Housing and Community Development (HCD) Office, the State also sought a **“mega-waiver”** that would offer maximum flexibilities to improve housing opportunities for persons experiencing homelessness without Congress having to act to change the programs rules for HUD grants. The waivers would make it easier for Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) grantees to access units, extend the time that ESG rental assistance can be provided, address documentation issues, extend Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) rental and utility payments, and leverage funds for disasters.

**Housing First as Defined by CA Statute**

**Statute Timeline**

- 2016: Senate Bill 1380 (Mitchell)**
  - Defines Housing First and its requirements, including 11 core components
- 2021: Assembly Bill 1220 (Rivas)**
  - Expands Housing First implementation to state programs funding interim settings
- 2021: Senate Bill 197 (Committee on Budget)**
  - Provides requirements for specific programs funding recovery housing.

“Housing First” means the evidence-based model that uses housing as a tool, rather than a reward, for recovery and that centers on **providing or connecting [people experiencing homelessness] to permanent housing as quickly as possible**. Housing First providers offer services as needed and requested voluntarily and does not make housing contingent on participation in services.

(Welfare and Institutions (WIC) Section 8255(d)(1))

*Slide from California's Housing First Training*

The State partnered with the Department of Justice, Bureau of Prisons, and Department of Veterans Affairs to **connect incarcerated Veterans in, and exiting Federal prisons to benefits and services**, which included the coordinated outreach and dissemination of resource books to Veterans who will be re-entering communities in California. Through the Health and Human Services Substance Use and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), the State was able to update their **housing first and property management plan tool kit**, and the Department of Defense gave CalVet approval to use a records system to speed up enrollments for **Veterans in the state to obtain benefits, health care and services**.

Additionally, California coordinated public comment and provided feedback to FEMA about resources for people experiencing homelessness during disaster and is actively working to remove barriers, enhance regulatory flexibility, and coordinate the use of surplus properties for housing development to effectively support its vulnerable populations.

“We set ourselves up for success with a dedicated team of State partners to oversee and drive the implementation of ALL INside. By developing clear metrics, we created a workplan that aligned federal, state, and local roles on tough issues. Through ALL INside we secured approval to share data between the State and the VA, improving services to Veterans and connecting them to benefits. We also enhanced service delivery through Initiatives like the Housing First Training.”

-Leader from CA State Department

## Building on ALL INside

When this Initiative was envisioned, communities were implementing COVID-era resources and partnering to apply new strategies to bring health care and housing to people experiencing homelessness. By the time the Initiative was launched, the resources and strategies available to communities had already shifted – this is the nature of the homelessness response system. It is an intentional, cross-sector network of partners working to address the crisis of homelessness and establish new pathways forward for housing stability. This network relies on a diverse portfolio of public and private funding, committed leadership, public will, and alignment with social support systems that manage family, disability, education, employment, health and other domains.

That is why relationships, communication, and new ways of thinking, and intentional coordination were the engine for ALL INside. At every step of the way, people and their agencies supporting ALL INside engaged in listening and problem-solving together. And when a barrier arose, the Initiative supported convenings, conversations, and problem-solving to bring more people in who had decision making power together so that things didn't get stuck. This practice allowed people to get outside of their comfort zones and discover ways that their organization or agency and the existing resources could be leveraged to improve outcomes.

Having federal partners embedded in the communities was an important part of this process, especially since they had support at the agency's highest levels. It helped foster relationships and communication. It also helped create a hands-on way for communities and federal partners to translate federal policies and guidance while demonstrating the impact of policies once implemented in communities.

Even as the ALL INside Federal Team leads return to their roles within their organizations, there is an opportunity to build on the spirit of connection created by ALL INside by finding ways to ensure that there are touchpoints for communities supported by federal partners who are empowered to think across agencies and programs and reach out to decision makers within the federal government for help when barriers are encountered.

“A big part of the success is due to the relationships we established through ALL INside. It underscored the importance of long-term, intentional, ongoing collaboration across all partners. Having someone to connect with one-on-one proved invaluable – far better than navigating the into vast federal realm and wondering: ‘where do I even start?’”

-Federal Partner / Team Lead

To ensure that outcomes were tangible, ALL INside began with a data-driven assessment of potential communities, incorporating feedback from community members, including those with lived experience. Early conversations clarified challenges and how federal partners would provide support, resulting in Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with shared goals. Recognizing the challenges of access and evaluation across multiple systems, communities worked closely with federal partners. Together, they used available data to track impact, focusing on flexible and iterative approaches to system-level changes. In some instances, new data agreements or partnerships unlocked additional insights. Proactively defining strategies to track qualitative and quantitative outcomes while accommodating for the dynamic nature of this work proved essential for this large-scale Initiative. In addition to process and program changes that drove efficiencies designed to lead to better housing outcomes, ALL INside stimulated the development of resources that can be applied in communities across the country.

Additionally, the spirit of the Initiative can be carried forward so that the power of convening and communicating when barriers arise can remain in effect not just for ALL INside communities and federal partners, but communities across the country and among all federal agencies committed to preventing and ending homelessness.

The goal of this Initiative is not just to help the ALL INside communities. The goal of the Initiative is to help those places while learn so we can better serve all communities. Our deliberate work with one City, we hope, paves the path for others to follow suit”

-White House Domestic Policy Council Leader

## Resources

### [Guide on Streamlining the Waiver Process](#)

This guide is intended to be a basic overview of best practices when submitting HUD waiver requests by communities who wish to request regulatory or programmatic relief that will allow them to be more efficient and effective in service to the public.

### [Disaster Framework to Support People Experiencing Homelessness in Smaller Scale Localized Incidents](#)

This document serves to provides a disaster response framework for supporting people experiencing unsheltered homelessness during small-scale natural disasters, localized flooding, or extreme weather events because effective

responses need to be tailored to address the unique vulnerabilities of this underserved population. This framework specifically focuses on the importance of locally executed collaboration and partnerships, preparedness, and immediate response through temporary sheltering assistance.

### **[White Paper: Aging Veterans and Older Adults: Learnings and Recommendations for Inclusivity](#)**

The overall aim of this publication is to 1) lay out the current barriers facing aging veterans and older adults in the general population, with certain sections focusing solely on aging veterans, and 2) promote inclusivity in the general older adult system, as well as the homeless response system.

### **[Housing First Training: Putting Plans Into Practice in California | United States Interagency Council on Homelessness](#)**

In this 2-hour online training, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the state of California provide evidence, research, and data on "Housing First" and an overview of California's Housing First law.

### **[Participant Eligibility Requirements Documentation Guide \(Chicago\)](#)**

The purpose of this guide is to clarify documentation requirements by funding source to enable and encourage providers to eliminate unnecessary requests, easing administrative burden for both the applicants and staff members and improving performance in the homelessness system. While This guide has been designed for agencies and nonprofits in the city of Chicago. While in other jurisdictions several factors impact requirements differently than in Chicago, this guide can serve as an example for other communities.