

EMERGENCY SHELTER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Remote Meeting

Thursday, April 20, 2023
8:30 AM

AGENDA

1. Introductions

- a. Adam Harr, Executive Assistant is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Remote Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Time: Apr 20, 2023 08:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/82649820421?pwd=TmN0SEdxTWkwSXdCczVhbFZXZ3FJQT09>

Meeting ID: 826 4982 0421

Passcode: 411193

One tap mobile

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+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 689 278 1000 US

+1 719 359 4580 US

+1 253 205 0468 US

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 360 209 5623 US

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- b. Review and Approval of Minutes (5 Minutes)
- 2. **Monthly Shelter Bed Usage Statistics**
 - a. March, 2023 (20 Monutes)
- 3. **Updates on South Portland Hotel Closures (25 minutes)**
- 4. **Region I update – Jenny Stasio (10 minutes)**
- 5. **Cumberland County Service Hub Update – United Way (5 minutes)**
- 6. **Federal, State, and Local Legislation Update (Cullen Ryan, others) – (15 minutes)**
 - a. Bill Tracking
- 7. **Other Items, Updates, and Announcements – (10 Minutes)**

Next Meeting

May 18, 2023

Time: 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM

Location: Remote Meeting

If you should have any questions, please contact:

Aaron Geyer
Health & Human Services Department
Social Services Division
(207) 482-5131
aeg@portlandmaine.gov

Adam Harr
Health & Human Services Department
Social Services Division
(207) 482-5144
ash@portlandmaine.gov

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2023

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Anne-Marie Brown	UWSM	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Vickey Merrill	CHOM	Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Mike Guthrie	City of Portland	Ben Martineau	HVJ
Cullen Ryan	CHOM	Lauren Chan	City of Portland
Devon Stockmayer	Preble Street	Mike Merrill	VOA
Taylor Cray	Preble Street	Regina Philips	Portland City Council (District 3)
Jim Devine	HVJ	Terrence Miller	Preble Street
Scott Morrison	Resident	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
George Rheault	Resident		

Meeting Summary

The meeting started with approval of the 2024 City ESG budget. FEMA reimbursement will go away in mid-April which will prompt the State's ramping down using the hotels. The Homeless Services Center is set to open in the last two weeks of March, depending on when the certificate of occupancy is issued but will already be at capacity when it opens. We continue to see an

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

influx of single asylum seekers via California. The first day of the warming center served 65 during peak hours and 120 on the Saturday. Sean Yardley is the new chair of the Statewide Homeless council. With the start of the session, bill tracking is still being defined as they consolidate, with LR1357 an act to decriminalize homelessness one to follow.

Introductions

- Aaron moved to approve the minutes; Taylor seconded and the minutes were approved unopposed.
- Can we put the recorded meetings online?

ESG Budget

- ESAC sees this budget every year to approve the ESG allocation the City of Portland receives from HUD. The allocation hasn't been released and is assumed to be the same as last year: \$163,813. FY24's allocation ask is the same as FY23.
 - HMIS
 - Service work at FS
 - Homeless Prevention at OSS
 - RRH at OSS
- Aaron MOVED Recommend to approve the FY24 ESG budget as presented with the knowledge the budget would be adjusted proportionally based on the final allocation. Brian SECONDED. No DISCUSSION and the MOTION PASSED unanimously with none opposed.
- The City Council will take up HUD funding with recommendation

January, 2023 Statistics

- Available online: <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/b59b3e26-ce26-41de-8d4f-1b725efe08a3?cache=1800>

Update on Area Hotels and housing and shelter situation

- South Portland voted to extend Comfort Inn and Days Inn hotels through April at the request of the hotel owner.
 - Effort to consolidate into one hotel as the hotel owner wants to begin renovations at the Comfort Inn.
 - Anyone over the Days Inn would go to Howard Johnson as they were not under the same restriction.
- Unofficially, all hotels would go back to their regular use at the end of June.
- FEMA reimbursement will go away in mid-April which will prompt the State's ramping down using the hotels.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- The Homeless Services Center is set to open in the last two weeks of March, depending on when the certificate of occupancy is issued.
- Do we anticipate the influx of individuals from CA to remain and is there a plan?
 - There is not a plan and we continue to ask the State for support and to create a State Resettlement division.
 - The services asylum seekers and circumstantially homeless are vastly different.
 - This is shown on the shuttle rides such as going to MIRC and ILAP
- Is there going to be an effort to direct people in the hotels to the HSC?
 - The Days Inn is an extension of OSS and 60 of the 72 in the Days Inn will go to the HSC with the people staying at OSS proper.
- If someone is CTOd from OSS does that carry over to the HSC?
 - It likely it would.
 - The HSC will be full on night one.
 - There is a chance people won't go to the HSC since it is off the peninsula.
 - Will there not be amnesty?
 - Are capturing the number of people being turned away from OSS?
 - The purpose of ESAC is monitoring our shelter needs and we should track this number and discuss what we can do about it.
- How will people know if there is room at the shelter before heading out to Riverside?
 - There is an app that lets people know how many beds are available.
- It is impressive that the City and service providers have come together to make a comprehensive service center and that a project of this size is on track.
- There was a commitment for a shuttle service and bus service. What's going on with the HSC should be on the agenda.
 - The shuttle is part of the management plan will run directly from the HSC. The bus stop is across the street on Forest Ave. and the HOME Team will fill gas on an emergency basis and OSS will issue taxi vouchers as needed. We will have wrap around services on-site lowering the need for transportation to appointments.

Winter planning discussion - Group conversation (15 minutes)

- RFP for Winter Warming Center will need to be reported here.
- 1st day served 65 during peak hours and 120 on the Saturday.
 - Found three people sleeping outside.
- Thank you to the people that made sure people were safe during the cold snap.

Region I update – Jenny Stasio, others (10 minutes)

- Updates from HVJ
- State and federal updates
- ERA status and extension for another month or two

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Winter warming center Seeds of Hope and York County Shelter extended day space to the evenings.
- Portland Warming Center efforts.
- Statewide Homeless council: Sean Yardley is the new chair.
- 2 new MaineHousing RFPS winter warming center and an expansion of shelter capacity one time.
- Spike in fatal overdoses

Cumberland County Service Hub update - United Way (5 minutes)

- Remain in the hiring process.
- 3/9 Hubs have been piloting Coordinated Entry. Not rolling out the CE in Cumberland County until the Hub COorindat4d is up and running. Emil Mead from Hub 5 will support us.
 - Offering training
- Will expand CE access points when the Hub Coordinator comes on.

Federal, State, and Local Legislation update (Cullen Ryan, others) - (20 minutes)

- Federal
 - The debt ceiling will be a fight but likely will be resolved before default.
 - House wants to cap funding at 22 levels.
 - President Biden wants to end veteran's homelessness and a renter's bill of rights.
 - Continuous coverage requirement ending could jeopardize healthcare access.
 - Mental Health and SUD for people experiencing homelessness.
 - Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act.
 - Rule Change on VAWA helps some protections. Changes definition of domestic violence to include technological and financial abuse.
 - HOTMA streamlines section 8 and will see a final rule published.
 - Affirmatively furthering fair housing.
- State
 - \$30 million to expand affordable rental housing in Governor's budget.
 - Bill to supplement appropriations from the general fund to get proper government funds.
 - \$21 million for emergency housing relief: the warming centers and long term solution due February 24th.
 - LR1357 an act to decriminalize homelessness.
 - Can't arrest our way out of homelessness.
 - Working with the Speaker's office to draft some language on alternatives to incarceration for being arrested for daily living activities that would not be illegal if done in a private space.
 - HVJ doing outreach to the police academy to change policing from the start.
 - Student homelessness

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- MaineCare Rates
- Peer respite centers
- Peer support services
- Jill Duson has an act to support asylum seekers.
- Speaker has 9 housing bills.
 - LD2 has everything the Maine Homeless Policy recommended and put it into one bill.
- \$100 million general bond for housing.
- GA bills.
- 9 month time limit on TANF and 45 day residency and welfare work requirements will need education that poverty doesn't work on a time frame.
- Some GA bills will be helpful.
- Food insecurity bills.
- Things will come up quickly; advocacy will be needed.
- Bill tracking will be sent out on Friday afternoons.
 - Contact Vickey to be added to the list.

Other items, updates, and announcements – (10 minutes)

- Rollout of the HSC to be an active up front agenda item.
 - Danger is people thinking this will fix the problem when it is already at capacity.
- Next meeting is March 16, 2023.

Meeting adjourned approximately at 9:48 AM.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

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Mike Guthrie	City of Portland	Lauren Chan	City of Portland
Taylor Cray	Preble Street	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Jim Devine	HVJ	Leah Bruns	PHA
George Rheault	Resident	Bill Higgins	HA4All
Dan Coyne	UWSM	Jay Taylor	PHA
Ginny Dill	DHHS	Hannah Brier	United Way
Harrison Deah	City of Westbrook		

Meeting Summary

Minutes approval was postponed to the next meeting and the statistics were abridged to CTOs, Warming Center, and OSS intakes surrounding the increase in asylum seekers straining our shelter system. An expanded warming center was opened at King Middle School. MIRC has been running an overnight warming center at the salvation army for two weeks with up to 77 people overnight each night. Asylum seekers at OSS supplanting situational homelessness resources. The HSC will have a ribbon cutting on March 22, 2023 and open for guests on the 28th. The administration released the president's FY24 proposed budget and the congressional caucus on homelessness was reestablished. Portland Housing Authority contracted to create a centralized Section 8 Waiting list; please share with housing navigators.

Introductions

- Shelter statistics were received late and incomplete.
- Due to posting late, the approval of the minutes is curtailed to the next meeting.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

February, 2023 Statistics

- Available online: <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/deac7267-8e84-4795-b0c5-81c2c106ed13?cache=1800>
- Seeing a population shift to single asylum seekers at OSS.
 - 48 individuals from California.
- A warming center at King Middle School opened following the FS needing to have people sleep in chairs the 58 Chestnut warming center.

Updates and dialogue on the current shelter developing state of the emergency shelter system

- The HSC will have a ribbon cutting on March 22, 2023 and open for guests on the 28th.
- MIRC has been running an overnight warming center at the salvation army for two weeks wit up to 77 people overnight each night.
 - Many go to the YMCA during the day.
 - This is from the short term shelter funding.
- The First parish Church opened a successful warming center.
- South Portland enacted a homeless shelter zoning ordinance that may make their hotels no longer qualify as emergency shelter beyond April 30th.
 - Are any groups planning to open a shelter in South Portland; was this to accommodate a shelter proposal.
 - Bill will follow up on the ordinance.
 - South Portland granted a large \$15,000 of CDGB funds to Greater Portland Family Promise.
- Must lobby all communities to build affordable housing.

Region I update

- Lack of affordable housing.
- Asylum seekers at OSS supplanting situational homelessness resources.
- HVJ gave updates on the bill to decriminalize homelessness.
- Region 1 includes Cumberland and York counties.

Cumberland County Service Hub update - United Way

- Coordinated Entry
 - Two additional hubs are launching a full pilot.
 - Our hub will launch just the assessment piece.

Federal, State, and Local Legislation update (Cullen Ryan, others)

- Federal
 - FY24 President's Budget Request was released
 - Sets administration's priorities and not the actual budget.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Includes children's, support for workers, housing affordability etc.
 - 73.3 billion (1 billion more than current fiscal year); will expand assistance to an additional 50,000 households.
- Reestablishing congressional caucus on homelessness.
- State
 - There are many bills.
 - The bill tracking sheet is color coded.
 - LD1050 an act for a waiver on presumptive eligibility for work authorization.
 - Allow asylum seekers during the 6-month wait after applying for work authorization.
 - Public hearing coming p for advocacy.
 - An Act regarding housing stability workers.
 - Provide funding for staff working with people finding housing and stability, keeping it beyond placement.
 - HVJ is working with Speaker Talbot Ross An act to decriminalize homelessness.
 - Still an LR; likely a second session bill.
 - LD2 may shift to potential Housing First Bill to pay for 24/7 services for the creation of new housing first projects with money going to a DHHS housing first fund. Unspent funds would transfer to MaineHousing to build bricks and mortar projects.
 - LD1074 \$100 million Affordable Housing Bond
 - HVJ did advocacy around bills.

Other items, updates, and announcements

- The Section 8 Central Waiting List
 - Portland Housing Authority contracted to create a centralized Section 8 Waiting list.
 - People get kicked off the waiting list for a variety
 - <https://www.affordablehousing.com/mainecwl> provides instruction on navigating the waitlist and what advocacy is needed when removed.
 - Please share with outreach workers so information is up to date in the centralized waitlist.
 - Tell PHA you want to be back on the list; they may be able to get their original place.
 - The developer is in Florida.
 - Can the waitlist be further explained and tracked as an agenda item?
- PHA has 50 new HCV vouchers and 27 mainstream vouchers.
 - Must send letters.
 - Have only received 4 responses so far of the 27 sent out.
 - Not having critical documents and not responding to mail are the biggest barriers.
 - Apply for a reasonable accommodation or an appeal if denied.
- Bill is going to Capitol Hill visits; send info to him that he can share with the delegation.
- Can we focus on solutions based on the data?

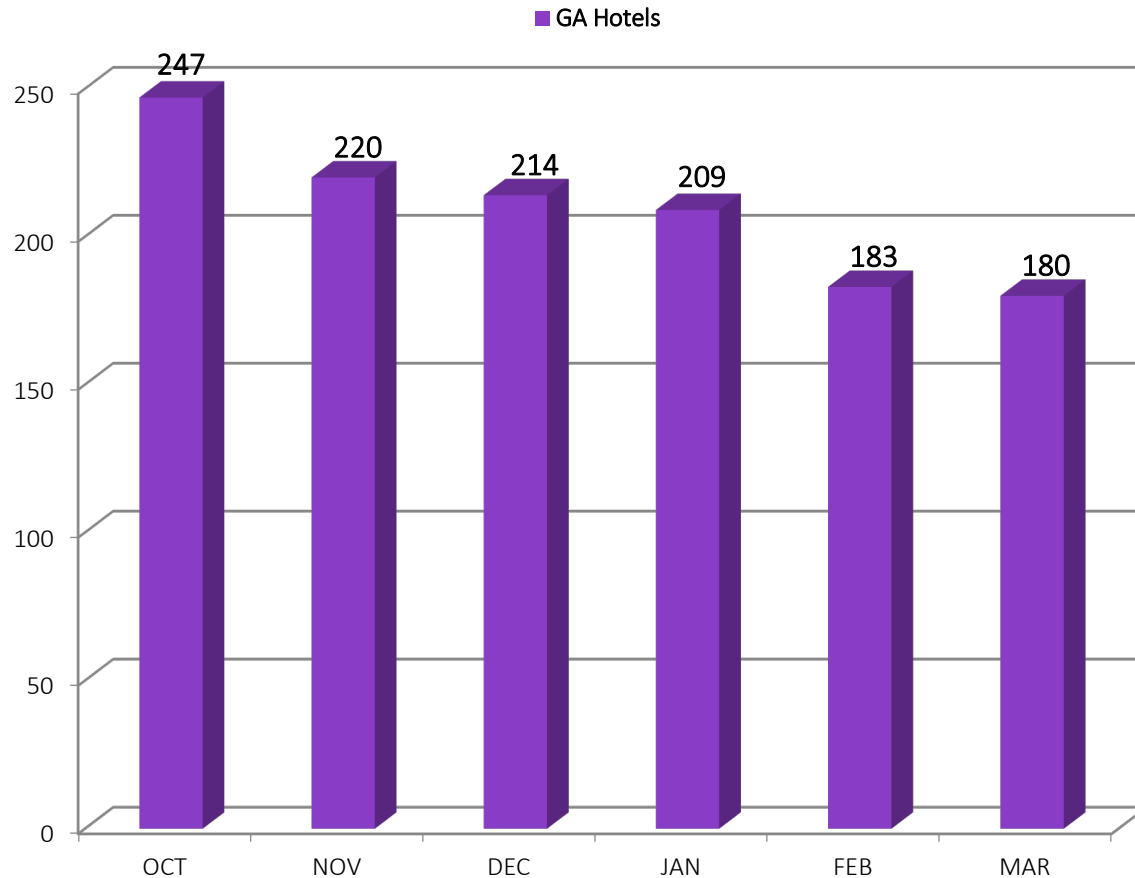
PORTLAND HOMELESS SHELTERS

Average Total Number of Individuals Residing in Shelters* per Night:

	March 2022	March 2023
ADOLESCENTS	16 Individuals	22 Individuals
FAMILIES	79 Individuals 32 Average Families	247 Individuals 84 Average Families
ADULTS	275 Individuals	308 Individuals
Total	396 Individuals	577 Individuals

*GA hotels are on the next slide.

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE MARCH, 2023 General Assistance Hotels



	Month*	Total
Unduplicated GA Hotels	180	3,174

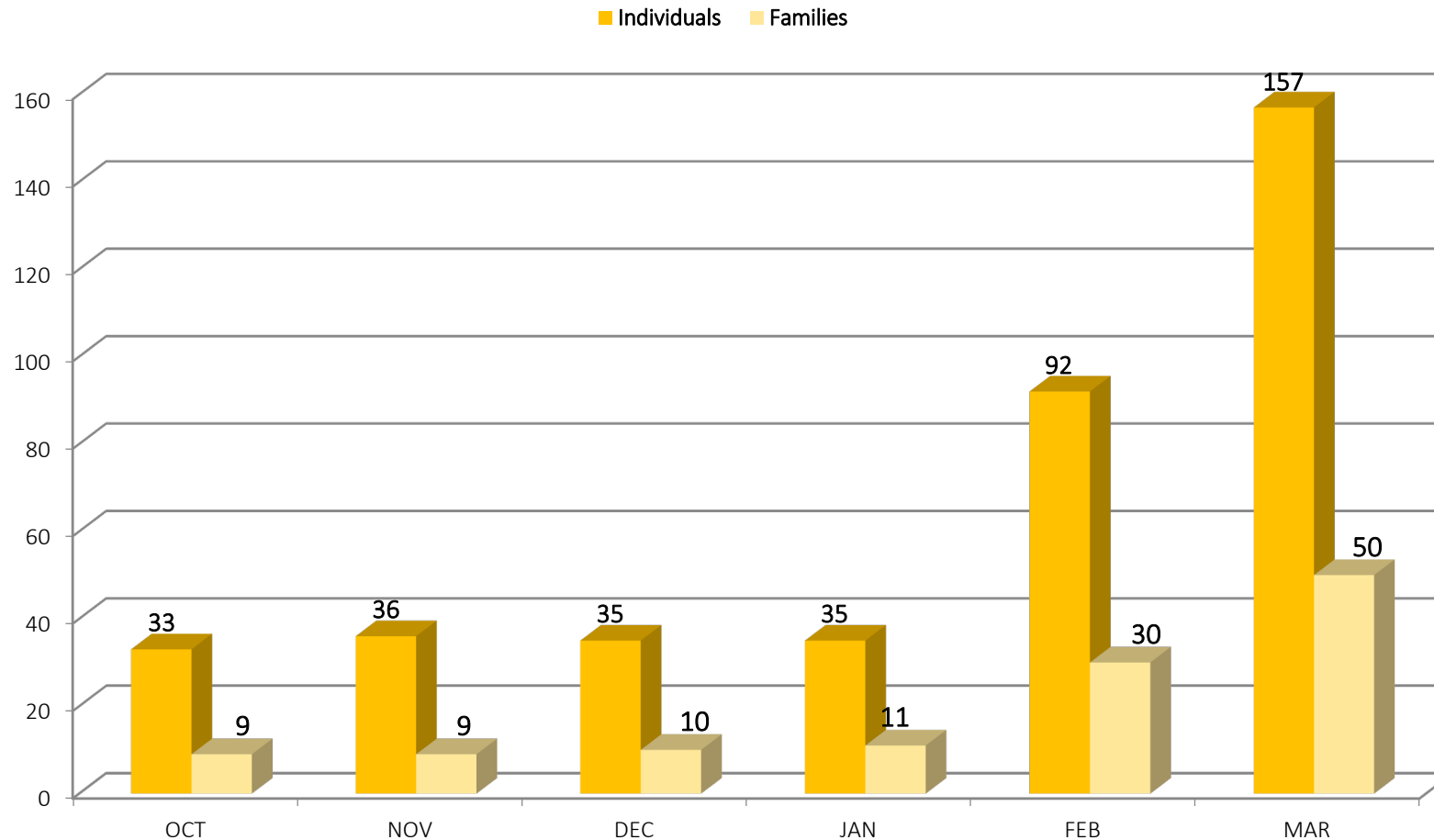
Total Unduplicated GA Hotels are the cases granted General Assistance hotel rooms from June, 2020 through the end of the month being reported.

Portland GA no longer makes McKinney Vento referrals as of the May 5, 2022 policy change.

*Started referral partnership with South Portland Schools in December, 2020.

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE MARCH, 2023 WARMING CENTER STATISTICS BY MONTH

Monthly Average Includes WC at King Middle school.



Date	Families	Individuals
1	50	155
2	52	166
3	51	155
4	46	148
5	45	140
6	39	128
7	40	125
8	41	131
9	46	146
10	48	150
11*	48	150
12	45	141
13	51	157
14	51	157
15	50	153
16	50	148
17	48	145
18	48	149
19	47	146
20	51	164
21	50	166
22	56	175
23	54	174
24	55	176
25	54	172
26	54	169
27	55	174
28	54	174
29	54	174
30	55	175
31	55	185

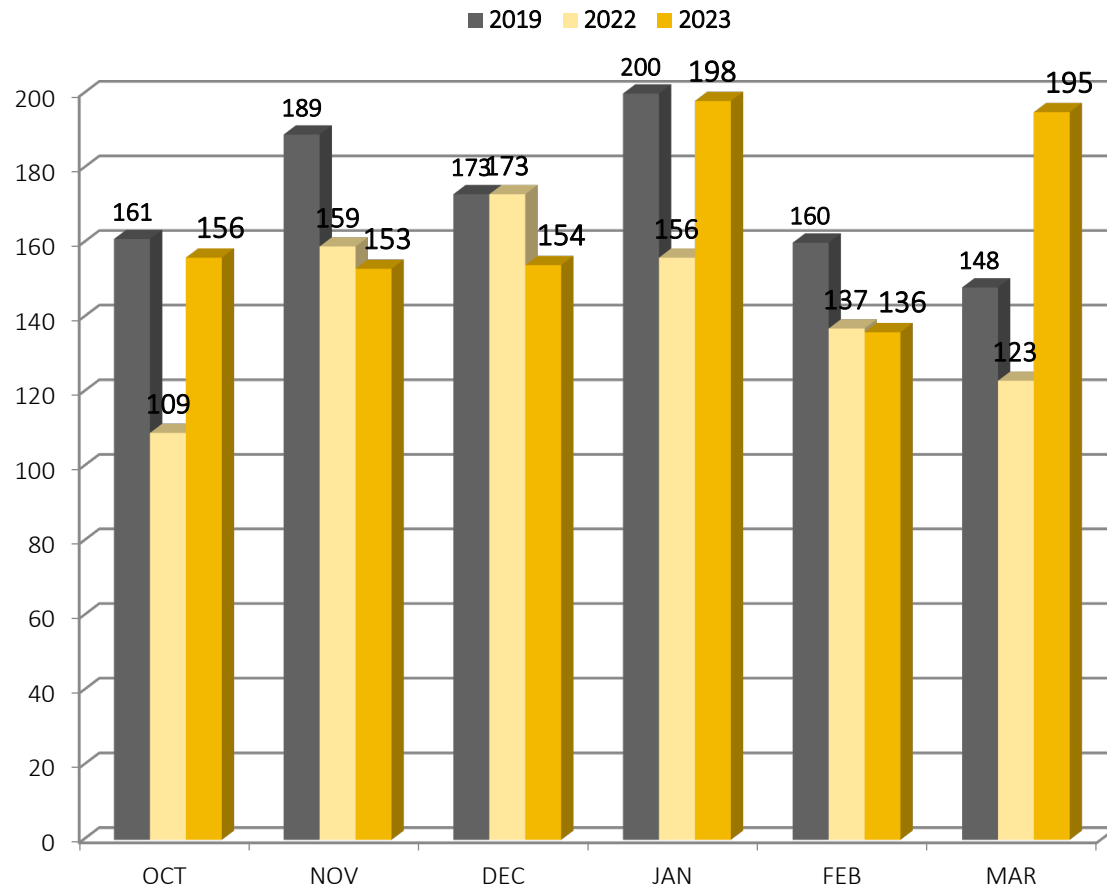
OXFORD STREET SHELTER

MARCH, 2023

Intakes by Residency

MAINE TOWN						OUT-OF-STATE						OUT-OF-COUNTRY	
Acton	1					AZ	2	NJ	2				
Auburn	2					CA	50	NY	6				
Biddeford	1					CO	1	PA	1				
Bridgton	1					DC	1	TX	1				
Gorham	1					FL	5	VA	1				
Houston	1					IL	1						
Lewiston	1					IN	1						
South Portland	1					KY	1						
Westbrook	2					LA	6						
Windham	2					MA	2						
						MS	8						
						NC	1						
MAINE TOWN:	13	OUT-OF-STATE:	90	OUT-OF-COUNTRY:		PORTLAND:	11	Unknown:	1	TOTAL:	115		

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE MARCH, 2023 SHELTER INTAKES BY MONTH

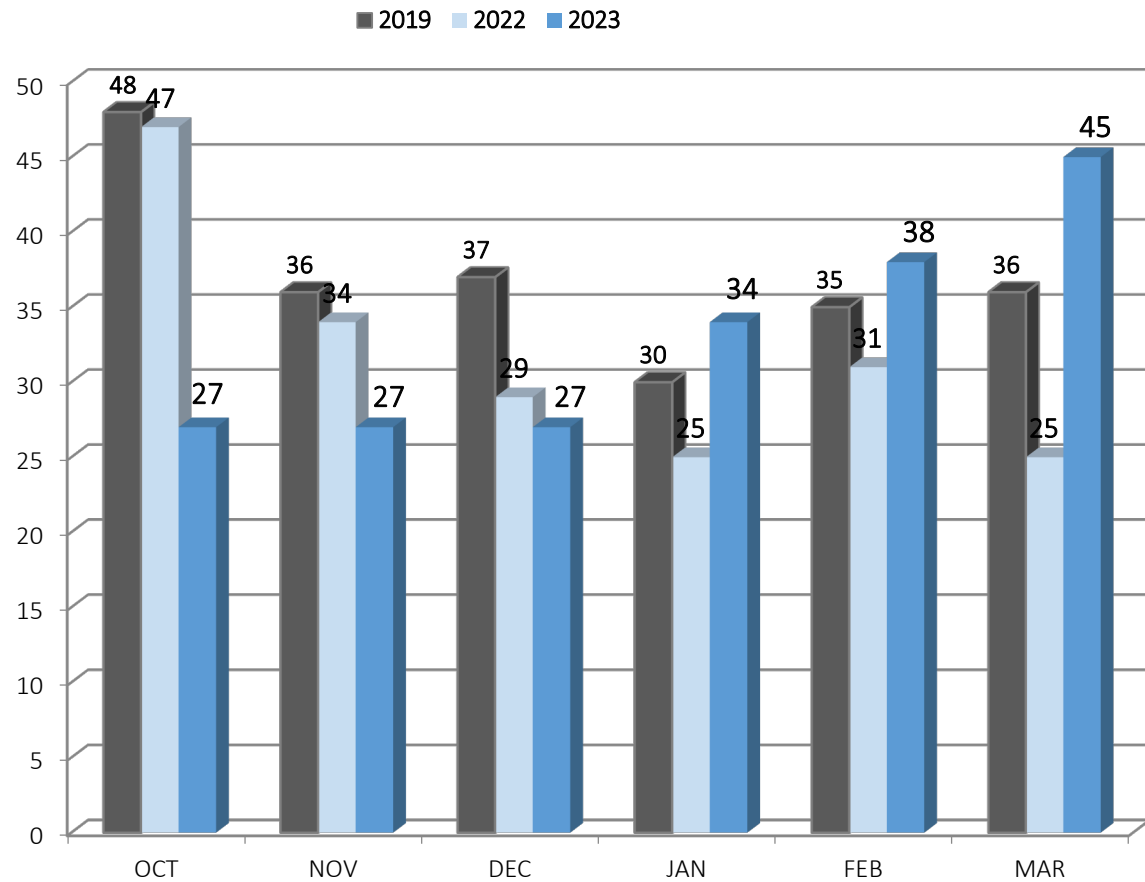


*NOTE: this and the next two slides compare the current year, last year, and the last year before the pandemic.

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	INTAKES	Pre-COVID Bed Capacity	Current Bed Capacity
Through These Doors	11/21	16	16+ at shelter and hotel overflow
Family Shelter	11/32	146	146
Joe Kreisler	6	24	24
Milestone	13	41	34
Oxford Street (Men)	84	154 at OSS, 75 at PSRC overflow	154 at OSS, 149 at contracted hotel
Oxford Street (Women)	31		
Florence House	25	25 at Shelter, 15 at Safe Haven	25 at Shelter, 15 at Safe Haven
Elena's Way	14	NA	40
TOTAL	195/226	496	474+

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE MARCH, 2023 HOUSING PLACEMENTS BY MONTH



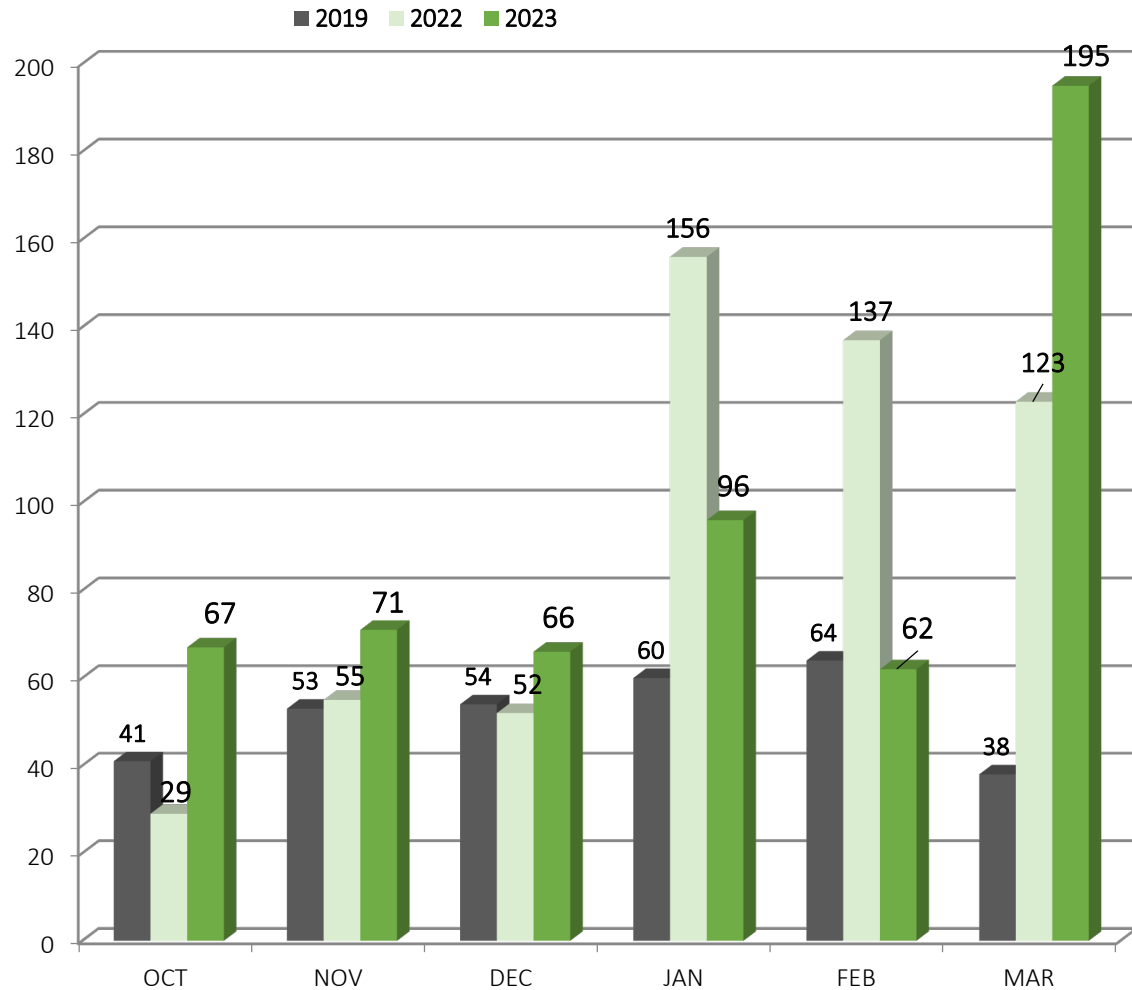
*Starting October, 2013, Oxford Street Shelter shifted prioritization of housing placements to their 30 longest-term stayers.

	TOTAL HOUSING PLACEMENTS	BED NIGHTS	TEMPORARY	PERMANENT
Through These Doors	5/9	300	1/2	4/7
Family Shelter	8/29	4,053		8/29
Joe Kreisler	8	486		8
Milestone	2	88		2
Oxford Street (Men)	21	4,751		21
Oxford Street (Women)	1	20		1
Florence House	0			
Elena's Way	0			
TOTAL	45/70	9,698	1/2	44/68

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE

MARCH, 2023

1st TIME HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS (BASED ON SELF-REPORTING)



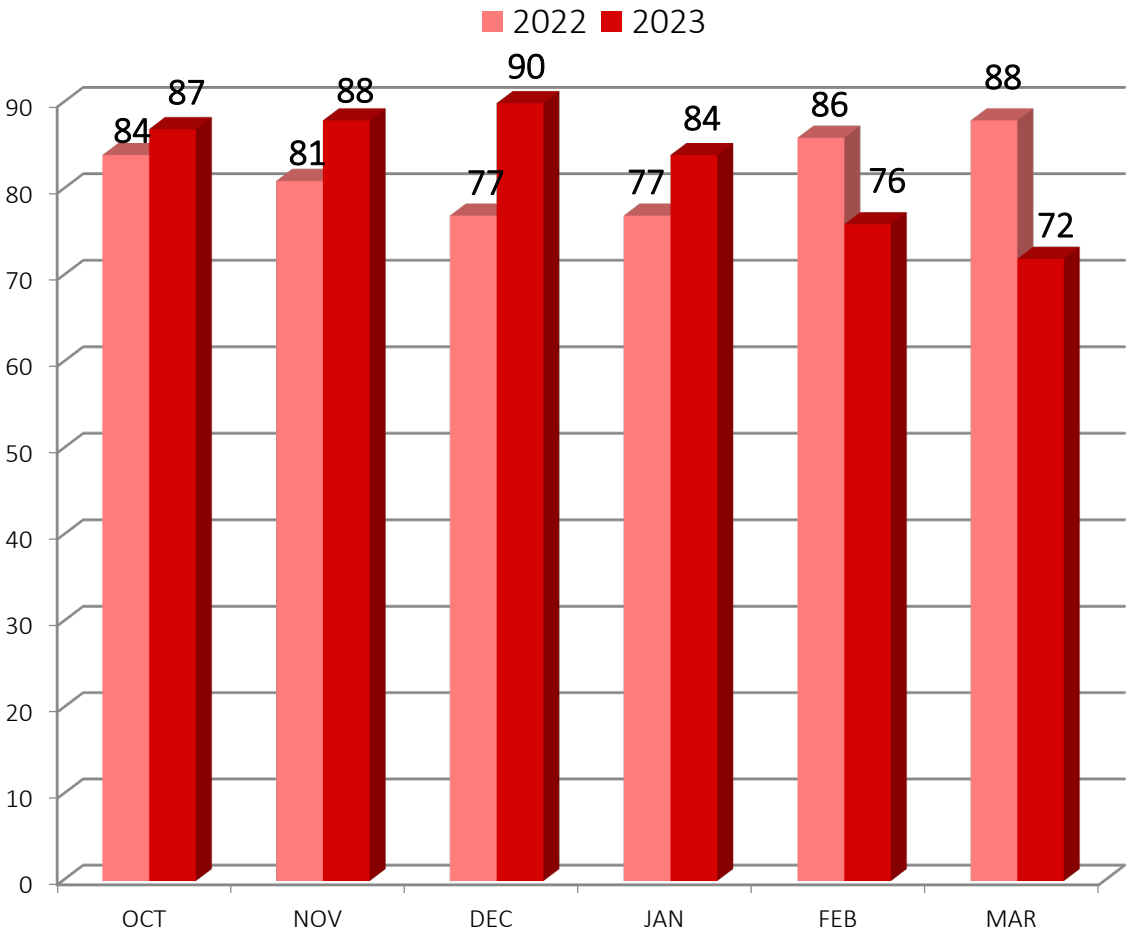
1 ST TIME HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS	All Intakes	1 st Time Homeless Intakes	% of the Shelter's Intakes	% of All Intake	% of Portland First Time Homeless Intakes
Through These Doors	11/21	0			
Family Shelter	11/32	8/23	73%	4%	8%
Joe Kreisler	6	5	83%	3%	5%
Milestone	13	3	23%	2%	3%
Oxford Street (Men)	84	57	68%	29%	58%
Oxford Street (Women)	31	22	71%	11%	22%
Florence House	25	3	12%	2%	3%
Elena's Way	14	0			
TOTAL	195/226	98/113		50%	100%

PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE

MARCH, 2023

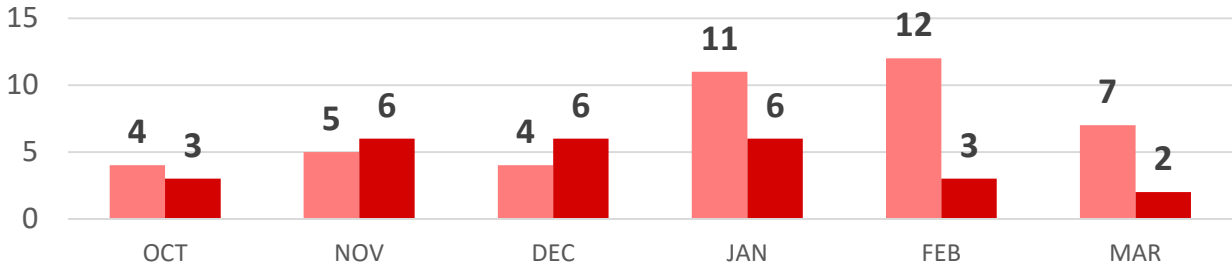
CTOs FROM SHELTER

Total Current CTOs



CTO STATISTICS	CTOs in the Month	Medical Restrictions in Month	Current CTOs
Family Shelter	0		0
Joe Kreisler	0		3
Milestone	0		20
Oxford Street Shelter	2		48
Florence House	0		0
Elena’s Way	0	0	1
TOTAL	2		72

CTOs Issued in the Month



PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE

MARCH, 2023

HOUSING PLACEMENTS BY TYPE

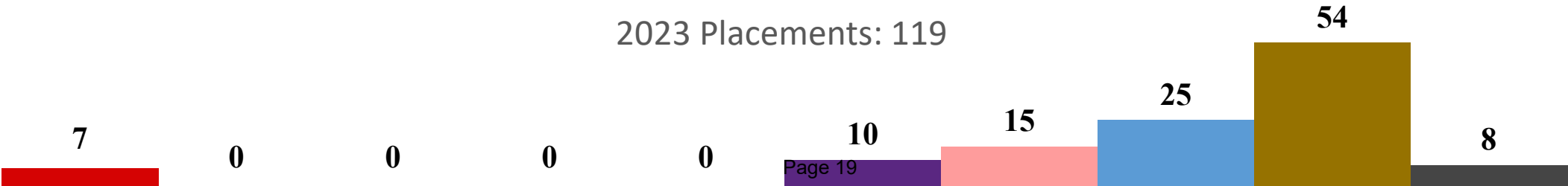
	S+C	BRAP	Recovery Home	Public Housing	STEP	Family Reunification	Sect. 8/HCV	OTHER*	GA	No Subsidy
Through These Doors						1	2	1		1
Family Shelter									8	
Joe Kreisler						1	1		5	1
Milestone								2		
Oxford Street (Men)	3					2	3		12	1
Oxford Street (Women)									1	
Florence House										
Elena’s Way										
TOTAL	3					3	5	11	21	2

*RRH

Distribution of Placements in the Month: 45



2023 Placements: 119

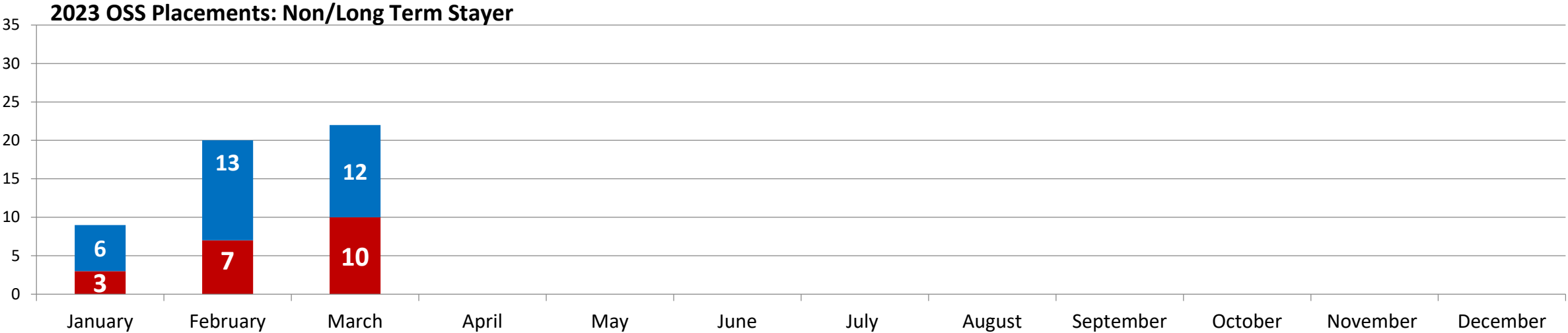
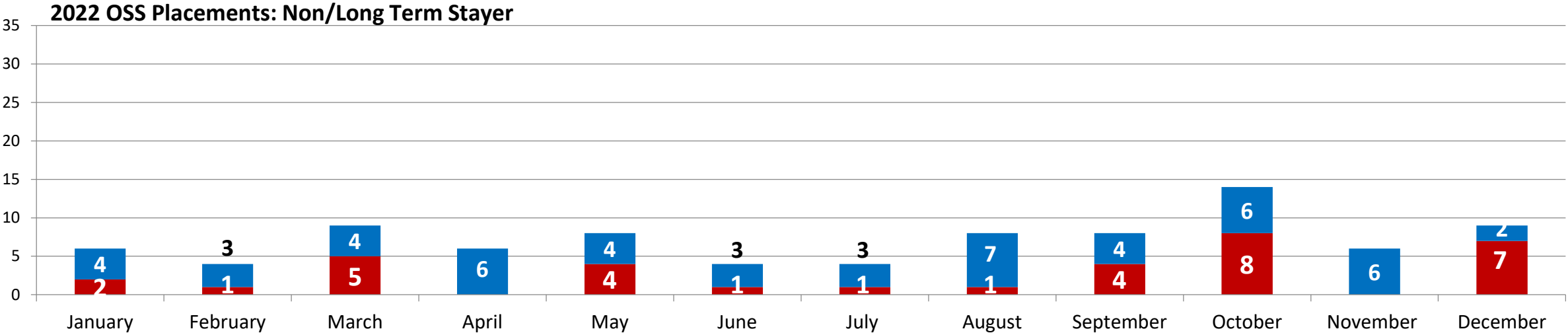
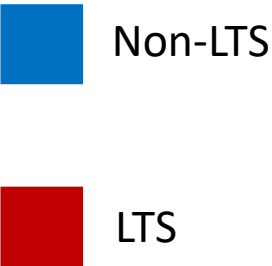


PORTLAND, CITY-WIDE MARCH, 2023 SHELTER COUNT BY NIGHT

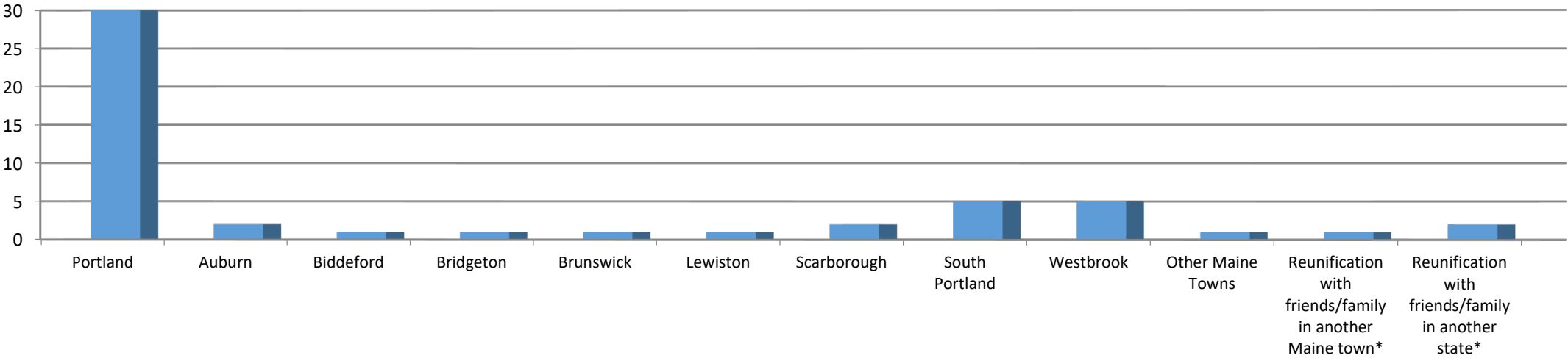
On March: 23
610 individuals
(including families)
were utilizing shelter services in
Portland

Calendar Day	Through These Doors	Family Shelter	Florence House	Joe Kreisler	Milestone	OSS Beds	FS WC	Elena's Way	Total Bed Nights
1	19	72	38	23	36	217	155	19	579
2	19	72	39	26	34	216	166	21	593
3	19	72	37	25	36	213	155	22	579
4	18	72	36	22	35	206	148	21	558
5	14	72	36	21	39	208	140	20	550
6	13	74	37	22	34	214	128	21	543
7	16	74	37	24	38	219	125	22	555
8	16	77	36	25	38	216	131	22	561
9	16	74	37	20	34	214	146	19	560
10	15	74	34	20	36	214	150	24	567
11	15	74	34	18	38	210	150	22	561
12	17	74	34	19	39	209	141	23	556
13	17	74	37	21	38	214	157	25	583
14	16	69	38	21	31	209	157	26	567
15	17	69	39	24	38	215	153	26	581
16	17	69	41	24	37	219	148	25	580
17	15	69	39	21	36	207	145	24	556
18	15	69	36	18	35	198	149	26	546
19	14	69	39	23	36	204	146	25	556
20	20	69	38	25	36	211	164	32	595
21	20	69	38	25	37	209	166	28	592
22	20	77	25	21	37	205	175	31	591
23	20	77	37	23	39	208	174	32	610
24	20	71	36	20	34	205	176	29	591
25	18	73	37	19	36	202	172	34	591
26	18	73	39	19	38	202	169	32	590
27	18	73	41	21	37	197	174	32	593
28	19	73	26	20	36	207	174	34	589
29	18	73	35	18	38	209	174	29	594
30	18	73	37	20	39	208	175	31	601
31	19	73	39	19	30	208	185	29	602
Total	536	2,243	1,132	667	1,125	6,493	4,868	806	17,870
Avg/night	17	72	37	22	36	209	157	26	576
Highest	20	77	41	26	39	219	185	34	610
Lowest	13	69	25	18	30	197	125	19	543

OXFORD STREET SHELTER & COMMUNITY OVERFLOW HOUSING PLACEMENT DATA



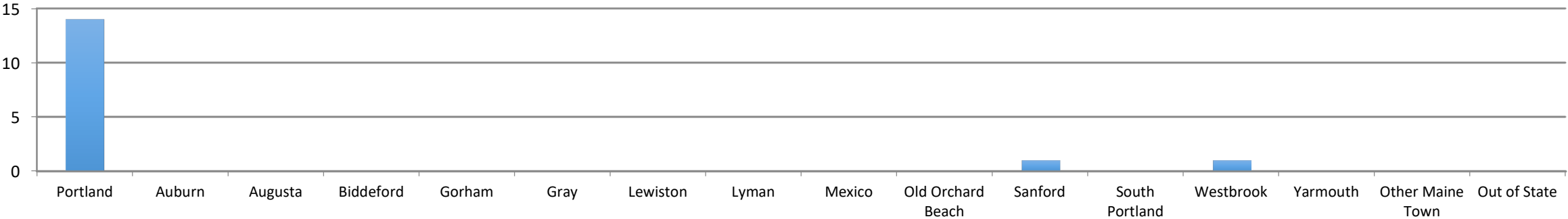
OXFORD STREET SHELTER & COMMUNITY OVERFLOW PERMANENT AND TRANSITIONAL 2023 HOUSING PLACEMENT DATA



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	%
TOTAL HOUSING PLACEMENTS	10	20	22										52	100%
Portland	6	7	17										30	57.7%
Auburn	1	1											2	3.8%
Biddeford			1										1	1.9%
Bridgeton	1												1	1.9%
Brunswick	1												1	1.9%
Lewiston		1											1	1.9%
Sanford		2											2	3.8%
South Portland	1	2	2										5	9.6%
Westbrook		5	1										5	9.6%
Other Maine Towns		1											1	1.9%
Reunification with friends/family in another Maine town*			1										1	1.9%
Reunification with friends/family in another state*		1	1										2	3.8%

FAMILY SHELTER PERMANENT AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLACEMENT DATA

2023



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	100%
TOTAL HOUSING PLACEMENTS	4	4	8										16	
Portland	4	3	7										7	87.5%
Auburn														0.0%
Augusta														0.0%
Biddeford														0.0%
Gorham														0.0%
Gray														0.0%
Lewiston														0.0%
Lyman														0.0%
Mexico														0.0%
Old Orchard Beach														0.0%
Sanford		1											1	6.3%
South Portland														0.0%
Westbrook		1											1	6.3%
Yarmouth														0.0%
Other Maine Town														0.0%
Out of State														0.0%

USEFUL LINKS

- Maine Legislature Homepage: <http://legislature.maine.gov/>
- Sign up to Testify and/or submit testimony here: <https://www.mainelegislature.org/testimony/>

Common Acronyms: AFA = Appropriations and Financial Affairs. HHS = Health and Human Services. OTP = Ought to Pass. OTP-AM = Ought to Pass as Amended. ONTP = Ought Not to Pass.

Color code: **Orange font = Budget bill;** **Black font = Homelessness related bill;** **Blue font = Service related;** **Green font = Housing/Rental Assistance related;** **Purple font = General Assistance & Safety Net related bills;** **Pink font = Food security related bills;** **highlighted in yellow = passed the House and/or Senate;** **highlighted in green = signed by the Governor and will become Public Law;** **highlighted in red = the bill is now dead.**

HOMELESSNESS BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LR 1357	Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross	An Act to Decriminalize Homelessness		

SERVICE BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 302	Rep. Colleen Madigan	An Act to Ensure Sufficient Rates for Behavioral Health Services	Referred to HHS Committee	This bill would direct DHHS to increase the rates for Chapter 101: MaineCare Benefits Manual, Chapter III, Section 65, Behavioral Health Services, for medication management, home and community-based treatment, multi-systemic therapy and functional family therapy and Section 17, Allowances for Community Support Services, for assertive community treatment.
LD 1050	Sen. Eric Brakey	An Act to Request a Federal Waiver for Presumptive Work Eligibility for Asylum Seekers	Public Hearing 3/21, and Work Session 3/22 in front of the Labor and Housing Committee. Voted OTP-AM	This resolve directs the Commissioner of Labor to request a waiver from the US Department of Homeland Security, Citizenship and Immigration Services to allow an asylum seeker who has applied for asylum and has not been denied, eligibility to work in the State for the 6-month period immediately after applying for asylum while awaiting a final determination and for the time period while an asylum seeker's work permit has expired and is pending renewal.
LR 459	Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross	An Act Regarding Housing Stability Workers		
LR 1023	Sen. Jill Duson	An Act to Establish State-funded Service Contracts to Support Asylum Seekers		
LR 1024	Sen. Jill Duson	An Act to Establish State Support for Asylum Seekers		

HOUSING/RENTAL ASSISTANCE BILLS

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 2	Speaker Rachel Talbot Ross	An Act to Address Maine's Housing Crisis	Public Hearing 4/4, Work Session 4/5 at	This bill establishes the Housing First Program within the Department of Health and Human Services to facilitate the

				9AM in front of the Housing Committee (Cross Building Rm 216)	delivery of stabilization and support services to residents of properties established or developed to provide permanent housing to persons who have been chronically homeless and to fund technical assistance, administered by the Maine State Housing Authority, for the development of housing consistent with the program. The program is funded from the real estate transfer tax by depositing half of the funds that would otherwise be deposited into the General Fund into the Housing First Fund created by the bill.
★	LD 1074	Sen. Matthea Daughtry	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Fund New Affordable Housing for Low-Income Households	Referred to AFA Committee	\$100,000,000 bond issue to build new affordable housing for low-income households.
	LR 2154	Sen. Craig Hickman	An Act to Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue to Construct Affordable Housing		
★	LD 654	Sen. Matthew Pouliot	Resolve, Directing the Finance Authority of Maine to Establish a Pilot Program to Encourage the Development of Affordable Accessory Dwelling Units	Public Hearing 4/11 at 1:30pm in front of the Housing Committee	This resolve directs the Finance Authority of Maine to establish a 2-year pilot program to encourage the development of accessory dwelling units in the State. The program must buy down interest rates to levels below market rates for up to 100 community bank loans for accessory dwelling units until the program ends.
★	LR 1001	Rep. Marc Malon	An Act to Promote Affordable Housing by Clarifying Statewide Land Use Laws		
★	LD 226	Rep. Rebecca Millett	An Act to Address Maine’s Affordable Housing Crisis	Public Hearing 4/14 at 9:01am in front of the Housing Committee	This bill provides one-time funds to MaineHousing in the amount of \$100,000,000 in fiscal year 2023-24 and in fiscal year 2024-25 (only these FYs) to increase affordable housing stock in the State.
	LD 724	Sen. Cameron Reny	An Act to Expand Workforce Housing in Rural Maine by Funding the Maine State Housing Authority's Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program	Public Hearing 4/14 at 9am in front of the Housing Committee	This bill provides one-time funds in the amount of \$10M each years in fiscal year 2023-24 and fiscal year 2024-25 only to the Rural Affordable Rental Housing Program within the Maine State Housing Authority for the development of smaller affordable rental housing projects.
★	LD 1293	Rep. Drew Gattine	An Act to End Chronic Homelessness by Creating the Housing First Fund	Referred to the Housing Committee	This bill establishes the Housing First Program within the Department of Health and Human Services to facilitate the delivery of stabilization and support services to residents of properties established or developed to provide permanent housing to persons who have been chronically homeless and to fund technical assistance, administered by the Maine State Housing Authority, for the development of housing consistent with the program. The program is funded from the real estate transfer tax by depositing half of the funds that would otherwise be deposited into the General Fund into the Housing First Fund created by the bill.
GENERAL ASSISTANCE & SAFETY NET BILLS					

Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 182	Sen. Eric Brakey	An Act to Create a 9-month Time Limit on General Assistance Benefits for Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents	Referred to HHS Committee	This bill limits to a maximum of 275 days every 5 years the general assistance benefits a person who does not have any dependents and who is capable of working may receive.
LD 183	Sen. Eric Brakey	An Act to Incorporate Time Limits on the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program into Municipal General Assistance Programs	Referred to HHS Committee	This bill provides that a person who has exhausted the 60-month lifetime limit on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program benefits is ineligible to receive municipal general assistance program benefits, with some exceptions.
LD 668	Rep. Randall Greenwood	An Act to Protect Maine Taxpayers by Requiring a Person to Be a United States Citizen to Receive General Assistance Benefits and to Ensure Municipal Compliance with Federal Immigration Laws		This bill requires a person to be a citizen of the United States in order to receive general assistance benefits. This bill provides that a municipality is ineligible to receive general purpose aid for local schools, municipal general assistance and state-municipal revenue sharing if that municipality prohibits or restricts, formally or informally, the exchange of information with federal immigration authorities or any other federal, state or local government entity regarding the immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual or the maintenance of such information.
LD 1426	Rep. Kristi Mathieson	An Act to Secure Housing for the Most Vulnerable Maine Residents by Amending the Laws Governing Municipal General Assistance	Referred to HHS Committee	This bill: 1. Requires an overseer, no later than the 120th day following appointment or election, to complete training on the requirements of the municipal general assistance program; 2. Replaces, for determining the maximum level of assistance, the fair market value determination with setting the assistance at the equivalent amount of rental assistance provided for tenant-based housing choice vouchers under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 except that the benefit level may not be less than the difference between the applicant's income and 110% of the area's fair market rent; 3. Provides that if general assistance is being used to pay rent for an applicant whose rent is subject to a lease an overseer may redetermine the applicant's eligibility annually; 4. Increases from 70% to 90% the amount of state reimbursement for the costs of general assistance incurred by a municipality and each Indian tribe; 5. Directs the Department of Health and Human Services to reimburse each municipality for 5% of the direct costs of paying benefits incurred through its general assistance program; 6. Directs the Department of Health and Human Services to establish and provide overseers with access to a statewide database for tracking applicants for the general assistance program and expenses relating to the program; and

				7. Requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide assistance to municipalities with regard to processing applications for the general assistance program and directs the department to establish a hotline that is available 24 hours per day in order to provide consistent, accurate advice to overseers. It also requires the department to respond to requests for assistance within 24 hours
LR 674	Rep. Michele Meyer	An Act to Amend the General Assistance Program Laws		
FOOD SECURITY BILLS				
Bill #	Sponsor	Title	Status & Committee	Notes
LD 568	Rep. Matthew Pouliot	An Act to Provide Funding for the State Fund to Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives	Senate READ and ACCEPTED the Committee Report & Adopted Committee Amendment A. Second Reading forthcoming.	This bill provides ongoing General Fund appropriations of \$600,000 to the Fund To Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives within the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The bill also removes the \$50,000 limit on matching contributions from the fund criteria.

Federal Legislation Update

BUDGET & FUNDING-RELATED ITEMS - Updates

Debt ceiling & Proposed Federal Budget Cuts – No New Update – UPDATE: Pre NLIHC, U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on the Budget Chair Jodey Arrington (R-TX) released a [list](#) of potential federal spending cuts, totaling almost \$1.3 trillion. The list was released the day after President Biden delivered his State of the Union address, in which the President repeatedly pledged to fight against any Republican attempt to make dramatic spending cuts a condition for raising the debt ceiling.

➡ **President Biden's FY 24 Budget – New** President Biden unveiled a topline summary of his FY 24 budget request on Thursday, 3/9. The budget makes important investments in a range of areas, including in children, supports for workers, housing affordability, education, and core government functions. The President's budget priorities, which sets the blueprint for the FY 24 appropriations and budget process. The President's budget request calls for increased funding for affordable housing using two approaches:

Regular Appropriations process proposal: Through the regular appropriations process, the president's budget calls for:

- Funding HUD programs at \$73.3 billion, or approximately \$1.1 billion – or 1.6% – more than the FY23-enacted level.
- \$32.7 billion to renew all existing housing vouchers and to expand assistance to an additional 50,000 households through increased funding and another 130,000 households through program reserves, among other things.

Mandatory Spending Proposal: If enacted the mandatory spending proposal would provide substantial federal investments in affordable homes and increase the availability of housing assistance to families with the greatest needs. The president's request calls for significant investments to address the housing needs of extremely low-income households. It would, among other things, expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and project-based rental assistance (\$7.5 billion). It would also:

- Provide \$3 billion in new resources for eviction prevention.
- Expand access to rental assistance by providing \$9 billion to ensure universal coverage to all youth aging out of foster care and \$13 billion to serve extremely low-income veterans.
- Address the capital needs of the most distressed public housing properties nationwide (\$7.5 billion).
- Expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and project-based rental assistance (\$7.5 billion).

➡ **Senate Appropriations Committee Begins work on FY 24 budget process – New** – The Senate Committee on Appropriations, led by Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) and Ranking Member Susan Collins (R-ME), held its first full committee meeting on 3/2 to begin planning a path towards a fiscal year (FY) 2024 budget agreement.

Anticipated Budget Resolution & FY 24 Budget – No New Update – Per CBPP, House Republicans are expected to release an annual budget resolution that calls for large health care cuts, and Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) marketplace coverage are likely to be prime targets. House Republican leaders are calling for cutting the deficit and making the Trump tax cuts permanent, while saying they will shield certain areas of the budget (Medicare, Social Security, and military spending) from cuts. To do all these things at once, it is highly likely they will propose cuts in health programs that provide coverage to millions of people. And per NLIHC, there are reports suggesting that House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) has committed to slashing federal spending by capping FY 24 appropriations at FY 22 levels.

➡ **Senate & House Dear Colleague Letters Re. FY 24 funding for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants – New** – Bipartisan "Dear Colleague" letters are circulating in the Senate and House calling for \$3.8 billion in the FY 24 budget for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program, which includes the Continuum of Care (CoC) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG). Senator King has signed on to the Senate letter (which is addressed to Senator Collins as the Senate Appropriations T-HUD Ranking Member), and Congresswoman Pingree and Congressman Golden have both signed on to the House letter.

Biden calls for ending Veteran Homelessness in State of the Union Address – No New Update – President Biden delivered the State of the Union address before a joint session of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate on February 7. President Biden called for increased investments in quality and affordable housing and additional resources to end veteran homelessness.

Biden Administration Releases Blueprint for a Renters Bill of Rights – No New Update – On 1/25, the Administration announced new actions to protect renters and promote rental affordability, as well as a [Blueprint](#) for a Renters Bill of Rights. Among the new actions the White House announced are:

- The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) will launch a public process to examine proposed renter protections and anti-rent gouging measures for new federally-backed mortgages.
- The administration will hold quarterly meetings with renters and advocates to continue the conversation on renter protections, and will launch a Resident-Centered Housing Challenge, a call to action to housing providers and other stakeholders to commit to renter protections.
- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) will collect information to identify unfair practices that prevent tenants from accessing or staying in housing, informing each agency's enforcement actions. This is the first time the FTC has acted on renter protections.
- The CFPB will issue guidance and coordinate with the FTC on enforcement to ensure accurate credit reporting.

- HUD will publish a notice of proposed rulemaking to implement the 30-day-notice requirement enacted by Congress through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020.

President Biden’s National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health – No new update – On 9/27 the Biden Administration announced its [plan to end hunger](#) in the US by 2030. Under the Plan, SNAP eligibility would be expanded, children would get better access to free meals, and summer benefits would be extended to more school-aged children. These changes would require congressional approval.

BILLS – Updates

➡ **Farm Bill & SNAP Reauthorization – New** – Per CBPP: As Congress works through federal budget proposals and prepares [to reauthorize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) in the pending farm bill](#), some prominent proposals from House Republicans would harm SNAP participants by taking food away from people who can’t show every month that they meet or are exempt from new work requirements. One bill, from House Agriculture Committee member Dusty Johnson and more than 20 other House Republicans, [would dramatically expand SNAP’s already harsh work requirements](#), putting more than 10 million people – including millions of children – in states nationwide at risk of losing at least some of their food benefits. That includes about 6 million people who would potentially be newly subject to the time limit and at risk of losing SNAP, and about [4 million children who live in families that could have their SNAP benefits reduced](#), harming the entire household.

➡ **S 24 / HR 516 Fighting Homelessness Through Services and Housing Act – New** – Introduced by Senator Feinstein in the Senate and Congressman Lieu in the House, this bill would authorize a grant program within the Health Resources and Services Administration for housing programs that offer comprehensive services and intensive case management for homeless individuals and families. The program would include five-year implementation grants to assist such entities in carrying out activities and paying capital building costs associated with the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families.

➡ **S 680 DASH Act – New** – Reintroduced by Senator Wyden on 3/7, the [DASH Act](#) would make a generational investment to house all people experiencing homelessness, tackle the housing affordability crisis, and expand homeownership opportunities for young people by creating a new down payment tax credit for first-time homebuyers. The DASH Act would make stable, safe and decent housing available for all by:

- Housing everyone experiencing homelessness within five years, and prioritizing children and families for placement, by issuing them a Housing Choice Voucher, because young children are heavily impacted by housing instability, and because housing is a chief determinant of health;
- Expanding health, child care, financial and nutrition services for families and individuals to stay on a path to unassisted housing stability, because the climb out of housing poverty is nearly impossible to complete alone;
- Greatly increasing the production of deeply affordable housing for families exiting homelessness and for low-income households by investing in effective, efficient existing programs and reforming the tax code to strengthen the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) to weather the economic fallout from the pandemic, as well as establish a Renter’s Tax Credit and Middle-Income Housing Tax Credit (MIHTC);
- Investing in homeownership in underserved communities and for low income Americans with new tax credits and down payment assistance, including a down payment tax credit for first-time homebuyers; and
- Incentivizing environmentally-friendly development strategies and land use policies.
- Permanent authorization of appropriations for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act grants.

End to Medicaid “Continuous Coverage” Requirement – No New Update – Per NLIHC, Medicaid’s “continuous coverage” requirement, which prevents states from disenrolling anyone from Medicaid even if their income or household size has changed, will end on March 31. This change could threaten healthcare access for people with low incomes and people experiencing homelessness.

HR 773 Homelessness and Behavioral Health Care Coordination Act– No New Update – On 2/2 Rep. Madeleine Dean reintroduced HR 773, the Homelessness and Behavioral Health Care Coordination Act, co-sponsored by Rep. Sylvia Garcia. This bill would help people experiencing homelessness and behavioral health issues, including substance use disorder, access critical supportive services by authorizing a grant program within HUD to help state and local governments, tribal entities, public housing agencies, and Continuums of Care better coordinate services for behavioral health, including substance use disorder and homelessness.

S 255 Asylum Seekers Work Authorization Act of 2023 – No New Update – On 2/3 Senators Collins and Sinema reintroduced the Asylum Seekers Work Authorization Act of 2023, which would make asylum seekers eligible to receive work authorizations starting 30 days after filing an asylum application. Senator King is an original co-sponsor. On 3/1, Congresswoman Chellie Pingree reintroduced the Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act in the House.

HR 9587 Tenants’ Right to organize Act – No new update – On 12/19 Rep. Andy Levin introduced the Tenant’s Right to Organize Act. Per NLIHC, the bill would “protect the organizing rights of tenants with Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) and tenants living in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties. Currently, only public housing tenants have a legally recognized right to organize. In extending the right to organize to HCV and LIHTC tenants, the bill recognizes that all tenants have the right to decent, safe, stable, and sanitary housing.”

RULES/Other Federal Items of Note

Congressional Caucus on Homelessness – New – Representatives Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Nanette Diaz Barragán (D-CA), Cori Bush (D-MO), and Sylvia Garcia (D-TX) [announced](#) the reestablishment of the Congressional Caucus on Homelessness on 2/28. The caucus will provide a dedicated forum for members of Congress to work toward the common goal of ending homelessness in the U.S.

HUD Releases Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022: Overview of Applicability to HUD Programs – No New Update – On 2/4 HUD published a [notice in the Federal Register](#) providing interim guidance to HUD’s covered housing providers on implementing VAWA 2022. The notice includes a 60-day notice-and-comment period so that the public can comment. The deadline for comments is March 6, 2023. VAWA’s housing protections for survivors include but are not limited to:

- Prohibition Against Denial of Admission and Eviction: Survivors cannot be denied or evicted from CoC- or ESG-assisted rental assistance projects solely due to their status as survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. This includes reasons related to the violence that they have experienced, such as bad rental or credit history and criminal history.
- Lease Addendum: Units receiving CoC or ESG rental assistance must have leases or rental agreements that incorporate VAWA protections including prohibition of denial or eviction, lease bifurcation, and emergency transfers.
- Change to Category 4 McKinney-Vento Homeless Definition: VAWA 2022 changes the Category 4 definition of homelessness to the following: Any individual or family who
 - (i) is experiencing trauma or lack of safety related to, or fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous, traumatic, or life-threatening conditions related to the violence against the individual or a family member in the individual’s or family’s current housing situation, including where the health and safety of children are jeopardized;
 - (ii) Has no other safe residence; and
 - (iii) Lacks the resources to obtain other safe permanent housing.
- Changes to VAWA’s Definition of “Domestic Violence”: VAWA 2022 expands the definition of “domestic violence” to include “technological abuse” and “economic abuse” as forms of domestic violence

State Update: The First regular Session of the 131st Legislature convened on Wednesday, 12/7/22, and per statute will adjourn on 6/21/23. Cloture occurred at 4pm on 12/30. **Please see the Bill Tracking document for specific bills.**