



*Partnering to End  
Chronic Homelessness  
in Guilford County,  
High Point, and  
Greensboro*

*Executive Summary*

*Prepared by  
The Guilford County/High Point/Greensboro  
Task Force on Ending Homelessness*

## Executive Summary

On January 24, 2007, over 1,200 persons were homeless in Guilford County, sleeping on the streets or in temporary shelters. Over 200 of those persons had been homeless more than a year, some for as long as twenty years. The majority of people who become homeless in Guilford County are assisted by a full “Continuum of Care” which moves them from emergency shelter through transitional housing to permanent housing. Last year, 243 people moved from transitional living facilities into permanent housing situations.

But some homeless persons are unable to successfully move through our current system to stable housing. For these individuals, homelessness has become a chronic condition. Most long-term, chronically homeless individuals are disabled by mental or physical illness or substance addictions, and utilize large amounts of public and private crisis care services, including emergency rooms, mental health facilities, police time, jails, and shelters, without achieving a positive outcome.

This plan is targeted toward helping these chronically homeless persons in our community achieve stability in housing. Helping these individuals achieve stability will decrease their usage of existing resources and make those resources more available to assist other community members, including other, non-chronic, homeless persons. Our plan builds on evidence-based practices that are proving successful in cities such as New York, Denver, San Francisco, Portland, Asheville, and Raleigh, and many other communities.

The plan focuses on two major strategic areas: (1) *Housing*, and (2) *Prevention and Supportive Services*. The major objectives and recommended strategies to achieve them are as follows.

**Housing Objective:** *Provide a variety of supportive housing for chronically homeless persons, targeting the least restrictive model under which the client can be successful and enabling the client to move within the levels as indicated by their circumstances.*

**Strategy 1:** Develop a Housing First model to be used with other housing models to meet the individual needs of chronically homeless persons.

**Strategy 2:** Increase the supply of permanent housing for chronically homeless persons.

**Strategy 3:** Address regulatory issues and community perceptions that inhibit the location and potential supply of permanent housing opportunities.

**Strategy 4:** Increase funding resources for permanent supportive housing.

**Prevention And Supportive Services Objective:** *Provide prevention and supportive services to prevent persons from becoming chronically homeless and to enable those who are chronically homeless to move to and remain in a stable housing situation and maximize their self-sufficiency.*

**Strategy 1:** Ensure that every person being discharged from jail, hospitals, mental health care, or foster care has a discharge plan that leads to stable housing and supports a community policy of “zero tolerance” for discharge to homelessness.

**Strategy 2:** As a precondition for the success of other strategies to target chronic homelessness, develop a task force to enhance mental health and substance abuse services in Guilford County.

**Strategy 3:** Increase coordination between mainstream supportive services and providers of housing.

**Strategy 4:** Provide training and resources to providers for development of Treatment and Housing teams to wrap services around permanent supportive housing, building on the successful model used to assist persons displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

**Strategy 5:** Increase resources for supportive services.

**Strategy 6:** Provide training and technical assistance to housing and service providers to build capacity and usage of best practices.

**Strategy 7:** Provide training and technical assistance in obtaining benefits chronically homeless individuals are entitled to receive, including Social Security disability and other benefits, to ensure that they are obtained at the maximum entitlement level without lengthy delays.

**Strategy 8:** Create a centralized 24 hour Resource System with direct links to housing, health, mental health, and legal services.

**Strategy 9:** Establish a day center in High Point and a day center in Greensboro that have linkages to the Central Resource System.

**Strategy 10:** Increase coordination of services between mainstream job training employment and education programs, supportive employment agencies, homeless services agencies, and homeless clients.

This Task Force believes that implementing these evidence-based practices in our community will ultimately enable us to end chronic homelessness and reduce all homelessness within Guilford County.