

# Monthly Report: February 2021



Moving forward, we will present this report in two sections. Section A will contain new information while Section B will focus on updates of standing sections that you will see repeated in the monthly reports. This way, you will continue to find consistent messaging throughout this report without having to go back to older reports.

## **Section A:**

### **Continuum of Care Awards Announced**

Nashville received a total of \$6.1 million, which is up from \$3.9 million last year, and signifies an increase of more than 55%. This increase is a consequence of the community's work to apply for as many HUD grant opportunities as possible over the past few years including a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant. The YHDP grant was a two-year grant, which has expired. To ensure ongoing services for youth homelessness, any recurring costs from that grant were included in this year's CoC funding allocation and will be renewable in the future.

Source: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/awards/>

<b>Organization Name</b>	<b>Project or Award Name</b>	<b>FY2020 Amount</b>
The Next Door, Inc.	The Next Door Freedom Recovery Community Program 2019 Renewal	\$110,274
Metropolitan Social Services	Metro Social Services: HMIS Expansion FY2019 Renewal	\$141,508
Urban Housing Solutions, Inc.	UHS Homeless Recovery Application 2019	\$619,066
The Mary Parrish Center	The Mary Parrish Center Transitional Housing Program Renewal Project FY2019	\$23,688
MDHA	MDHA Shelter Plus Care Consolidated Renewal 2019	\$2,126,740
Campus for Human Development	Omega COC 2019 Room In The Inn	\$43,544
Safe Haven Family Shelter	Safe Haven RRH Consolidated 2019	\$238,704
Safe Haven Family Shelter	Nashville CE Collaboration 2019	\$128,000
The Salvation Army, a Georgia Corporation	The Salvation Army Joint TH/RRH 2019	\$223,292
The Mary Parrish Center	Renewal The Mary Parrish Center Joint TH and PH-RRH FY2019	\$220,264
The Mary Parrish Center	Renewal The Mary Parrish Center SSO-CE FY2019	\$103,120
The Mary Parrish Center	Renewal The Mary Parrish Center RRH FY2019	\$85,746
Oasis Center, Inc.	YHDP Rapid-Rehousing Project for Young Adults	\$1,184,771
Oasis Center, Inc.	YHDP Diversion Project for Youth and Young Adults	\$639,000
The Salvation Army, a Georgia Corporation	LIF Nav Rapid Rehousing 2019 Reallocation request	\$60,505
MDHA	TN-504 CoC Planning Project Application 2020	\$167,243
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$6,115,465</b>

## **Personal Stories**

*Submitted by Raven Lintu from The Contributor:*

Park Bench is a 66-year-old woman who appears frail but has carried such strength that could never be measured. She looks after her son who lives with some developmental disabilities. After the loss of her husband, she and her son have gone through eviction and numerous traumas caused by the experiences of homelessness. They struggled to find a safe place to stay during the nights and found a park bench in a park off of Charlotte Avenue. They stayed on this bench through the sweltering, humid nights of summer and the cold nights at the beginning of winter.

During this time, she helped her son apply for disability. She and her son were the first ones who participated in The Contributor's Rapid Re-Housing program to obtain permanent housing. They now live in a quaint duplex in East Nashville away from the elements and in safety. Through donations, the duplex is furnished, and she can now focus on her needs as well. She says she has hope now and few worries. Her son has also recently been approved for disability and the family can breathe.

Every time The Contributor case managers meet with them, they both share how grateful they are for the Rapid Re-Housing program and how grateful they are in general. Her son recently shared with the case managers that he wakes up every day with the first thought of "where am I?" but then gets to remind himself he is safe and warm.

## **Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force**

Mayor John Cooper created an Affordable Housing Task Force and followed up on the Homelessness Planning Council's suggestion to add Dr. Beth Shinn to represent housing needs for people experiencing homelessness. Council members Freddie O'Connell, Sandra Sepulveda, and Erin Evans sent the letter on behalf of the Homelessness Planning Council to request that Dr. Shinn is added to the Task Force to ensure that homelessness is part of the affordable housing discussion in Nashville.

The Mayor tasked the group to create actional items around policy, access, financing, and land use. For more information visit: the Mayor's [Website that announced the Affordable Housing Task Force](#). Past meetings can be reviewed on [Metro's You Tube Channel](#).

## **Vaccine Distribution**

Homelessness is falling under congregate living, which is in Phase 3 of the current state plan to vaccinate people. However, during last week's winter weather, the Metro Health Department had so many cancellations that it rushed to ensure 500 doses of COVID-19 Vaccines did not go to waste by offering them to guests and staff at Nashville Rescue Mission and Room In The Inn. Read this [Tennessean article](#) about it. The Homelessness Planning Council sent a letter to the Tennessee Commissioner of Health advocating to prioritize people experiencing homelessness and the providers serving them.

## Metro Cold Weather Overflow Sheltering

Shout out to all service providers and volunteers across the city for making sure that people experiencing homelessness had a place to stay and were provided with warm materials and food.

The following summary represents the Metro Social Services herculean task to ensure the cold weather overflow shelter was extended into a 24/7 operation.

Metro Social Services opens a cold weather overflow shelter as part of Nashville's Cold Weather Community response when temperatures are predicted to reach 28 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

Metro usually runs its cold weather overflow shelters from 7pm to 7am, but due to the winter weather moved to a 24-hour operation from Saturday, 2/13, 7 pm to Thursday, 2/18, 9 am. The cold weather overflow shelter reopened on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 7 pm each night.

Many of the MSS staff pulled double shifts. MSS staff not only operated the cold weather overflow shelter but also kept the three COVID response shelters at the Fairgrounds (social distancing, PUI, and COVID+ shelters) and the COVID response shelter at the Municipal Auditorium open. Temporary staff called out during the winter weather because they could not reach the shelters, leaving MSS with a **barebones staff of 14 people to run all five shelters for 10 days**. MSS leadership is grateful for the continued dedication of their staff and for the support from other departments, especially police who helped transport people to and from the shelter shifts.

Metro Social Services has run cold weather overflow shelters every night between February 11 and February 21, running it on a 24/7 basis for six days during this time.

**In total, Metro provided 1,484 shelter beds, plus 41 dog stays. Of those shelter beds, 505 were occupied during day hours 7 am to 7 pm from Sunday through Thursday.**

Detailed numbers for the winter weather spell:

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Beds Provided:</b>	<b>Dog Stays:</b>	<b>Day time usage:</b>
11-Feb	87	4	
12-Feb	91	4	
13-Feb	102	4	
14-Feb	135	5	60
15-Feb	166	5	90
16-Feb	194	4	105
17-Feb	217	5	145
18-Feb	208	4	105
19-Feb	154	4	
20-Feb	130	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>505</b>

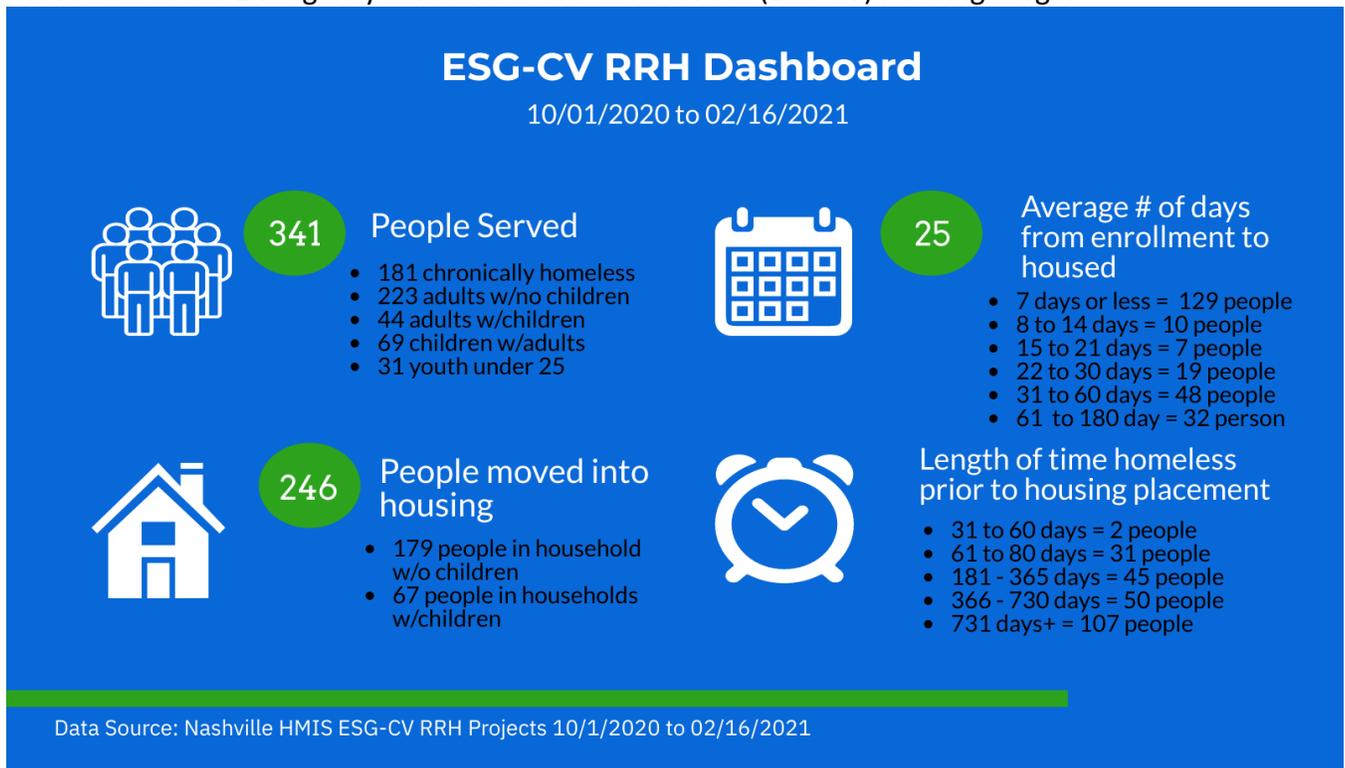
## Sustainability Efforts

With assistance from Heather Dillashaw of ICF (our technical assistance provider from the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), we are working closely with MDHA to look at all the voucher programs to create a referral priority to each rental subsidy. Ongoing rent subsidies include:

- Up to 18 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) per month
- An additional 100 Section 8 vouchers for 2021
- Shelter Plus Care vouchers
- Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers
- Downtown Permanent Supportive Housing: 81 units

## Emergency Solutions Grant & Housing Search

The Rapid Re-Housing programs are being implemented. Please see the most recent slide that shows the results of the Emergency Solutions Grant-Coronavirus (ESG-CV) Housing Surge.



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Additional housing searches continue. We need to identify a total of 400 permanent housing units and would like most of those to be with traditional landlords.

## **Section B:**

### **ESG-CV grants**

Nashville has received a total of \$10 million in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding as part of its CARES dollars to address COVID-19 (ESG-CV grants). These funds are designated to respond to homelessness. They are one-time funds and are exponentially higher than the usual annual ESG allocations, which was \$450,000 for 2020. In addition to the \$10 million, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provided Nashville with free technical assistance and has assigned Heather Dillashaw of ICF (icf.com) as our local consultant to use the COVID-19 allocations to improve our Housing Crisis Resolution System.

The goal is to house 400+ families with Rapid Re-Housing funds. Nonprofit partners have applied for the ESG-CV grants, which are managed locally by MDHA. The grants will pay up to one year in rent assistance to individuals and some families. Rapid Re-Housing is a program that also pays for support services once people obtained housing. The goal is to increase income for people, so they can maintain their housing long-term. In addition, Metro, MDHA, and ICF are working with community partners to develop a process that will link people with ongoing rent subsidies whenever possible.

Approximately a dozen partner agencies are also coordinating their housing searches to ensure our community has housing available for people. As part of that process, our community is focusing on utilizing motels as efficiency housing. Landlords, including motels, must be willing to enter one-year leases with options for renewal. **Any landlord or motel/hotel owners willing to receive more information can contact Deon Trotter at [deon.trotter@nashville.gov](mailto:deon.trotter@nashville.gov).**

### **Move-in Assistance**

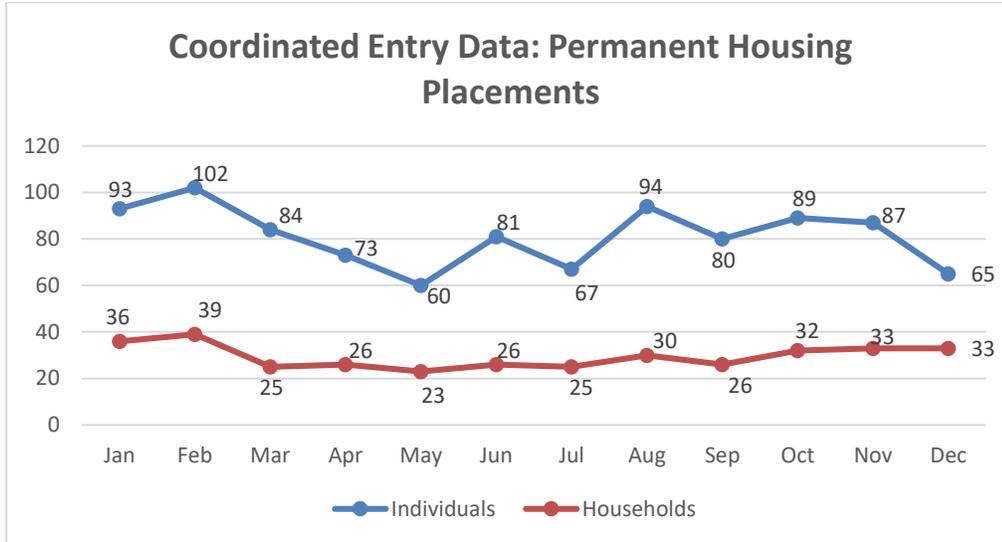
The Metro Homeless Impact Division (MHID) assists with move-in costs including security and utility deposits, first month rent, and some arrears. The sources for these move-in costs are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars through a partnership with the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency (MDHA), Metro dollars out of the General Fund, and a *How's Nashville* community donation fund managed by MHID.

Only trained housing navigators can apply for move-in costs on behalf of their clients. MHID provides monthly housing navigator trainings to partner agencies that have full-time staff who provide outreach, case management or other social service assistance. Payments are made directly to landlords and utility companies.

In January 2021, a total of 19 clients received move-in cost assistance utilizing one of the funds available through MHID. The total monthly move-in assistance was \$15,340.00. The average assistance provided was \$807.37 per household.

## **Housing Placement Rate**

Due to the HMIS vendor experiencing a glitch in its reporting system, we are unable to present updated numbers for January (AND December). We will do so in our March report. The following is the old report we shared with you last month:



## **HMIS Report**

HMIS information is available online at <https://hmisnashville.weebly.com/>

Moving forward, the Homeless Impact Division's HMIS Team is creating a separate HMIS report. We believe it is imperative that the Homelessness Planning Council understands what data we are collecting, what data HMIS is capable of collecting, and where we are in the data collection process. Please review the separate report. By doing so, you will familiarize yourself with the current state of the data quality and data completeness of HMIS.

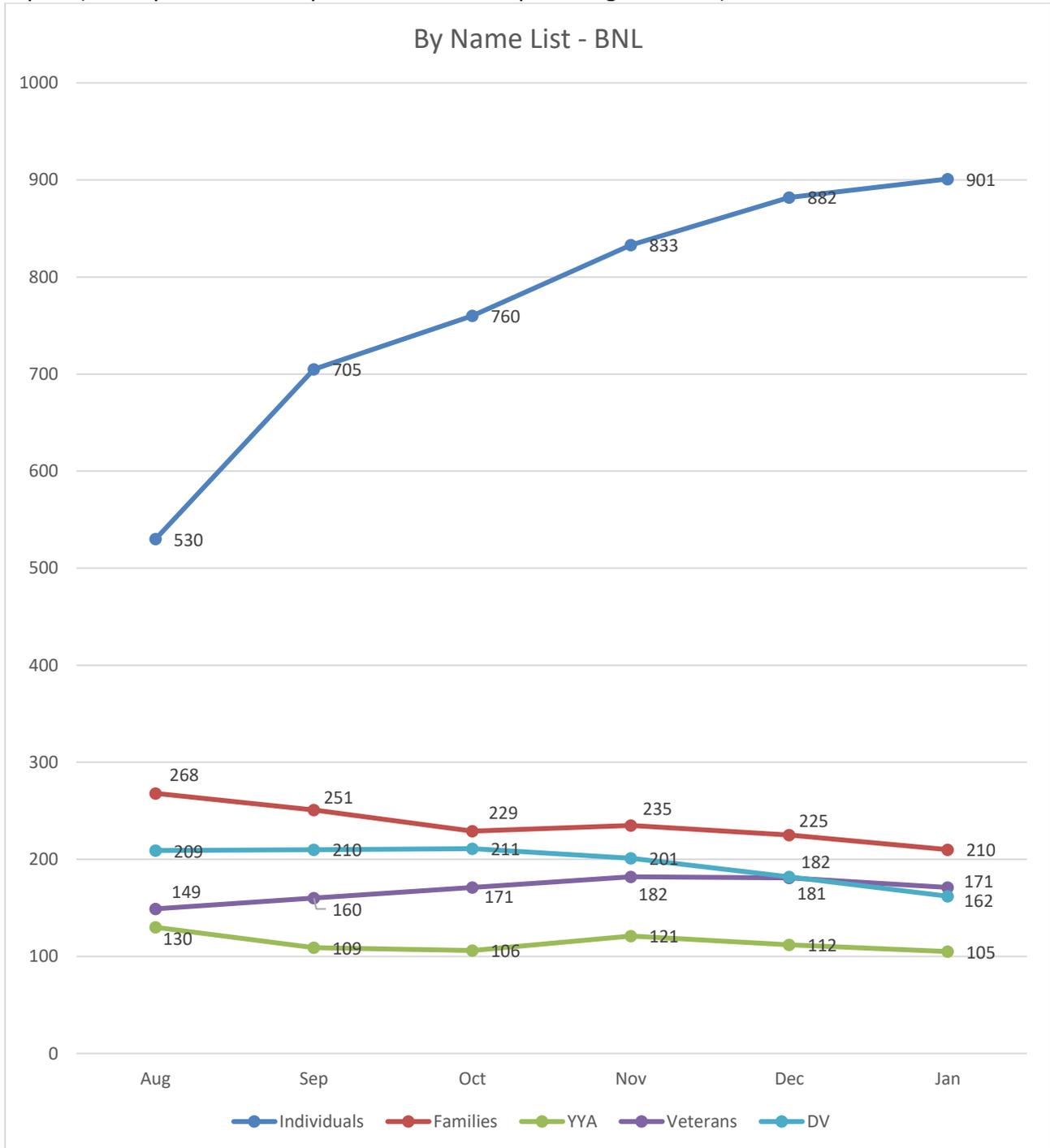
The quality of data depends on improving the following:

1. Having an adequately staffed HMIS Lead Team. At present, we have 2 FTE and a temporary worker. Continuums of Care of comparable size have 4-5 FTEs.
2. Continue to train HMIS end users. Our team is discovering a lot of data entry mistakes that need to be corrected ASAP to ensure we can provide accurate reports.
3. Continue our partnership with Nashville Rescue Mission to include their emergency shelter data in HMIS. The Homeless Impact Division is ready to receive that data.

Under the guidance of our stellar HMIS team our community has been able to significantly improve the functionality of HMIS. With this year's ability to safely share data among participating partners, Nashville is on the right track, but not quite there yet when it comes to producing an unduplicated annualized number of people experiencing homelessness.

## By Name Lists

While the Homeless Impact Division is keeping track of four By Name Lists (BNLs) for Veterans, Youth and Young Adults, Families with minor children, and Individuals, we are currently most confident in the quality of the BNLs for Veterans and the Youth and Young Adults. The Homeless Impact Division team is working with Domestic Violence (DV) providers on their BNL. We will keep including them in this report (thank you to the Mary Parrish Center for providing that data).



The following BNLs provide more detailed information of the different populations: Youth and Young Adults (YYA), Individuals, Veterans, Families, and Domestic Violence (DV)/Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

Moving forward, we plan to include six months of data in these regular reports.

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
<b>YYA BNL</b>							
How many YYA are on the BNL at the end of the month?	127	130	109	106	121	112	105
How many YYA were housed?	11	9	19	11	9	27	28
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	104 days	144 days	124 days	113 days	94 days	125 days	146 days
How many new YYA were added to the BNL?	18	18	14	20	16	23	25
How many previously housed YYA were added to the BNL?	0	1	1	2	2	1	0
How many previously inactive YYA were added to the BNL?	3	3	7	4	5	6	5
What was the total BNL inflow?	21	22	22	26	23	30	30

<b>Individual BNL</b>							
How many individuals on the BNL at the end of the month?	603	530	705	760	833	882	901
How many individuals were housed?	22	13	19	53	48	97	145
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	214 days	215 days	253 days	154 days	214 days	186 days	218 days
What was the total BNL inflow?	49	86	241	179	132	205	204

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
<b>Veterans BNL</b>							
How many Veterans are on the BNL at the end of the month?	146	149	160	171	182	181	171
How many Veterans were housed?	22	9	6	28	19	13	24
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	247 days	149 days	225 days	166 days	228 days	198 days	298 days
How many Veterans met the chronic definition?	47	37	30	32	40	44	46
How many have experienced long-term homelessness?	22	21	18	18	22	23	38
How many Veterans were exited from HMIS due to inactivity, housing, or death?	35	7	12	40	26	13	13
What was the total BNL inflow?	16	20	30	45	36	29	31

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
<b>Family BNL</b>							
How many families are on the BNL at the end of the month?	254	268	251	229	235	225	210
How many families were housed?	30	16	43	34	30	40	28
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	164	243 days	213 days	105 days	97 days	128 days	119 days
How many new families were added to the BNL?	49	38	52	42	27	34	36
How many previously housed families were added to the BNL?	3	2	4	1	0	5	2

How many previously inactive families were added to the BNL?  
 What was the total family BNL inflow?

5	9	10	6	6	3	2
57	49	66	69	33	41	40

**DV BNL**

How many DV/IPV Survivor households are on the BNL at the end of the month?  
 How many DV/IPV survivor households were housed?  
 What was the average length of time from identification to housing?  
 How many DV/IPV survivors met the chronic definition?  
 How many DV/IPV survivors on the DV-CE BNL are active on the High-Risk Intervention Panel (HRIP)?  
 How many DV/IPV survivors were exited from HMIS due to inactivity, housing, or death?  
 What was the total # of assessments completed?  
 What was the total BNL inflow?

	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
How many DV/IPV Survivor households are on the BNL at the end of the month?	213	209	210	211	201	182	162
How many DV/IPV survivor households were housed?	21	28	25	27	21	37	19
What was the average length of time from identification to housing?	139 Days	132 Days	116 Days	100 Days	133 Days	176 days	132 days
How many DV/IPV survivors met the chronic definition?	33	33	35	40	34	30	31
How many DV/IPV survivors on the DV-CE BNL are active on the High-Risk Intervention Panel (HRIP)?	24	21	21	20	16	15	14
How many DV/IPV survivors were exited from HMIS due to inactivity, housing, or death?	22	12	15	10	15	23	12
What was the total # of assessments completed?	47	37	43	41	28	28	28
What was the total BNL inflow?	46	35	42	40	27	28	27

**Responding to Concerns**

The Homeless Impact Division receives complaints and concerns about people living outdoors. In January, our outreach specialists followed up on 54 requests with an average of 33 hours until the outreach specialist was able to make first contact with the person experiencing homelessness.

## **Cold Weather Plan**

Metro has started coordinating a Cold Weather Community Response Plan in 2013. Each year, community providers including Room In The Inn, Nashville Rescue Mission, Launch Pad, Open Table Nashville, and Metro departments have come together to develop a communitywide plan that outlines the processes to access available shelter beds during extremely cold weather from Nov. 1-March 31.

The Metro Cold Weather Overflow Shelter opens overnight when temperatures are predicted to reach 28 degrees Fahrenheit\* or below. This year, 250-300 winter shelter beds are accessible to people from 7 pm to 7 am each time temperatures reach 28 degrees Fahrenheit or below. The location of Metro's cold weather overflow shelter is at the Fairgrounds in a separate building that is adjacent to the existing Social Distancing and the COVID+/Isolation shelters. All three shelter operations that are run by Metro at the Fairgrounds are in separate buildings to limit anyone's potential exposure to COVID.

Based on input from the community providers, the Office of Emergency Management monitors the temperatures each day what temperatures are predicted as the low for the next night using the National Weather Service (for zip code 37203). Metro announces to providers the day prior to the opening of a shelter. Therefore, Metro opens a shelter based on temperature forecast from the day prior rather than actual temperature the day of the event.

Cold Weather nights for this season:

**11/30:** 54 people, 1 dog  
**12/1:** 69 people, 3 dogs  
**12/14:** 67 people, 1 dog  
**12/17:** 73 people, 1 dog  
**12/24:** 87 people, 1 dog  
**12/25:** 110 people, 3 dogs  
**1/9:** 57 people, 6 dogs  
**1/10:** 77 people, 3 dogs  
**1/11:** 91 people, 4 dogs  
**1/12:** 83 people, 3 dogs  
**1/22:** 64 people, 3 dogs  
**1/27:** 81 people, 4 dogs  
**1/28:** 87 people, 4 dogs  
**2/1:** 81 people, 4 dogs  
**2/2:** 81 people, 5 dogs  
**2/7:** 76 people, 5 dogs  
**2/11:** 87 people, 4 dogs  
**2/12:** 91 people, 4 dogs  
**2/13:** 102 people, 4 dogs  
**2/14:** 135 people, 5 dogs (60 people stayed during the day)  
**2/15:** 166 people, 5 dogs (90 people stayed during the day)  
**2/16:** 194 people, 4 dogs (105 people stayed during the day)  
**2/17:** 217 people, 5 dogs (145 people stayed during the day)  
**2/18:** 208 people, 4 dogs (105 people stayed during the day)

**2/19:** 154 people, 4 dogs

**2/20:** 130 people, 2 dogs

Summary: The cold weather overflow shelter has been open for 26 nights this season, providing 2,722 beds, 92 dog stays, and 505 day beds during the 6 days that it was kept open 24/7 during the February winter storm.

For detailed information, please visit [www.coldweathernashville.com](http://www.coldweathernashville.com).

*\*This temperature was determined by community providers and was increased from 25 degrees Fahrenheit a few years ago. The main argument to settle at 28 degrees Fahrenheit was that outreach workers and canvassers determined that this seems to be the threshold temperature most people who are offered a ride to shelters are taking volunteers up on that offer.*

*This report includes some highlights from October and November 2020. If you would like additional information and/or have questions regarding building an effective Housing Crisis Resolution System to address homelessness in Nashville-Davidson County, please email Judith Tackett, the director of the Homeless Impact Division, at [judith.tackett@nashville.gov](mailto:judith.tackett@nashville.gov)*

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## **Glossary**

**By Name List (BNL)** - A real-time up, up-to-date list of all people experiencing homelessness, which can be filtered by categories and shared across agencies. In essence, this provides a regular census of how many people have been identified as experiencing homelessness in Nashville. Our community is working on these lists constantly. We do not feel we have the capacity quite yet to produce quality lists for all populations.

**Collaborative Applicant** - The organization that is designated by the CoC to collect and submit the CoC Registration, CoC Consolidated Application, and apply for CoC planning funds on behalf of the CoC during the CoC Program Competition. More information is available at [hudexchange.info](http://hudexchange.info).

**Continuum of Care (CoC)** - A regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for individuals, families, and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness. A CoC creates a collaborative community effort that provides a strategic systems approach that focuses on connecting people to housing and services to end their homelessness.

**Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)** - A program to assist individuals and families quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis or homelessness. ESG provides grants by formula to states, metropolitan cities, urban counties, and U.S. Territories to support homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Rapid Re-Housing.

**Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** - a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. It is used as a tool to evaluate people's needs and assist them more effectively, avoiding duplication of services. To make HMIS functional and effective, our community recently took the first steps to allow agencies to share data within HMIS.

**Homelessness Planning Council** – a 25-member board that serves as the Continuum of Care's governance board. It was created in July 2018 to unify our community's efforts to build an effective Housing Crisis Resolution System (HCRS). The

board's official name is the Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care Homelessness Planning Council and it is anchored within Metro government through BL2018-1199. Members consist of 8 mayoral appointees, 3 Council members appointed by the Vice Mayor, and 14 board members elected by the Continuum of Care general membership.

**Housing Crisis Resolution System (HCRS)** – A community system that includes all types of programs from prevention/diversion, emergency and temporary interventions to permanent housing solutions. An effective Housing Crisis Resolution System focuses on identifying people in a housing crisis as early as possible and connects them with housing and needed supports as quickly as possible. In Davidson County, the current goal is to house people in an average of 90 days or less.

**Point In Time (PIT) Count** – A one-night count conducted within the last 10 days of January of people meeting the Literal Homelessness definition. The PIT Count should be used as part of a data set including data from HMIS, the local school system, and other data sources to provide a full picture of homelessness in a community.

**Rapid Re-Housing** - provides short-term rental assistance and services. The goals are to help people obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and stay housed. It is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety) and the resources and services provided are typically tailored to the needs of the person.

**VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool)** – is a triage tool in form of a self-reported survey to determine risk and prioritization when providing assistance to homeless and at-risk of homeless individuals, families, and youth. It allows to determine the appropriate housing intervention based on vulnerability determinants.

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## Appendix A: Anti-Racism Pledge

### Nashville Continuum of Care, Equity and Diversity Committee

ANTI-RACISM PLEDGE (i.e. “Here’s how I’m going to show up.”)

As the Nashville-Davidson County Continuum of Care (CoC) Homelessness Planning Council, we take the following pledge to dismantle racism:

We define racism as racial prejudice plus the misuse of power by systems and institutions (misuse can be intentional or unintentional). We are mindful of the racial inequities across housing, economic mobility, health care, criminal justice, and other systems. These all contribute to racial inequities in homelessness. For example, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are overrepresented in the population of people experiencing homelessness. Implicit (i.e. subconscious) biases of service providers can result in fewer housing opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Cognizant of institutional and structural racism as well as the daily realities of all forms of bias, prejudice and bigotry in our own life, our family, our circles of friends, our co-workers and the society in which we live, with conviction and hope:

We pledge to stay mindful of the power and privilege that we bring into every space that we enter and conversation that we have.

We pledge to actively and intentionally practice antiracism when participating on the CoC Homelessness Planning Council, representing this council and the CoC in the community, and in talking about homelessness and housing issues in Nashville. While the realities of racism are much larger than us and this council, the decisions we make day-to-day as professionals can literally either open or close doors for people. We have an opportunity to learn and make different choices about how we interact with colleagues and clients, which can in turn directly impact access to and experiences of housing and services, as well as health and economic outcomes of members of our community.

We pledge to use the knowledge we obtain and differing perspectives to which we are exposed to view each choice we make in our professional and personal lives as an opportunity to move towards racial justice or away from it. And we pledge to move towards it.

We pledge to educate ourselves individually on racial justice issues. We pledge to share what We learn in our own communities: with our family, our partner, our children, our friends, our co-workers and those we encounter on a daily basis, even if and especially when this means challenging people around us in the process. We pledge to have difficult conversations and endure uncomfortable interactions in order to deepen our own understanding through this sharing as well as give others the opportunity to come along with us so that we can move together towards justice. We pledge to choose being uncomfortable so that others can be safe.

We pledge to cultivate a life that encourages us to be confronted, accurately and often, with how racial injustice and inequity show up in our society.

We pledge to ally with others who commit to dismantling institutionalized racism in the wider community.

We pledge to remember and honor intersectionality: that all aspects of an individual's social and political identity, including their gender, race, class, sexuality, physical and mental abilities, cultures of origin and current cultural context, contribute to a person's experience and treatment, and that any combination of these aspects creates a unique lived experience. We will consider the intersection of these identities in thinking about how systems advantage or disadvantage people based on marginalized social identities and understanding that individuals' identities will impact how they experience racism.

We take this pledge, fully aware that the struggle to eliminate racism will not end with a mere pledge but calls for an ongoing transformation within each of us and the institutions and structures of our society.

We pledge to reflect internally and continue ongoing introspection to identify internal racial bias; to rebuke the use of racist language and behavior towards others; to root out such racism in our daily lives and in our encounters with persons we know and with strangers we do not know; and to expand our consciousness to be more aware and sensitive to our individual use of overt and subtle expressions of racism and racial stereotypes.

We recognize that no matter the level of our efforts to end racism, we will inevitably make mistakes in how we encounter this transformation. We therefore pledge to move forward with humility and compassion about the experiences of others, with vulnerability and sincerity about our own experiences, and with understanding of disparities that exist between our lived realities. We will remember that correction and accountability are vital to this process and commit to listening to others completely, to being challenged both privately and in group settings about our individual beliefs, and to take necessary time to consider the thoughts others offer us without reacting defensively.

We pledge to actively support practices and policies that prominently, openly and enthusiastically promote racial equity in homelessness and housing; and to actively support and devote our time to the CoC Homelessness Planning Council, as well as other groups and organizations, working to eradicate racism from our society.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*The term intersectionality was coined by Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989

*This pledge has been adapted by members of the Nashville-Davidson CoC from the YWCA USA Stand Against Racism Pledge, which was adapted from the Pledge to Eliminate Racism in My Life, YWCA Bergen County which is an adaptation of the Pledge to Heal Racism in My Life, Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, April 10, 2006*