

Newsletter

Office of Homeless Services

• MARCH 12, 2025

• ISSUE 10

• Written by: April Calvin, Director

Nashville's Fight for Housing for All: Reflecting on Yesterday, Reframing Today, and Researching Tomorrow

Nashville is a city that rises to challenges with resilience, compassion, and innovative solutions. This winter, the Metro Office of Homeless Services (OHS) achieved a remarkable milestone—successfully operating the city's overflow cold weather shelter for 45 nights. This was an unprecedented feat, made possible by the steadfast leadership of Mayor O'Connell, Metro Council, multiple Metro Departments and community partners.

As the season changes, so must our approach. OHS will compile an after-action report to assess successes and identify areas for improvement. Community input will be essential as we refine our strategies, ensuring that our collective efforts become even more effective for next winter.

Data-driven decision-making has been at the forefront of our work this year. By strengthening our data collection with the Metro Emergency Overflow Shelter and importing data from the Nashville Rescue Mission, we are now better positioned to make informed choices about funding allocations, housing initiatives, and community training opportunities. With spring upon us, housing remains a critical need for our unhoused neighbors. Be on the lookout for upcoming Request for Proposals (RFPs) aimed at expanding housing solutions.

At the same time, we are closely monitoring shifts in federal policy that present new challenges for an already underfunded system. Weekly meetings, sub-committee discussions, and scenario planning with our Lived Experience Leaders ensure that Nashville remains proactive in facing these changes head-on.



As Mayor O'Connell recently shared, ***"We must think defensively in these uncertain times,"***—we must also think boldly. Now more than ever, we must harness the power of creativity and collaboration. Next week, we welcome representatives from Austin, TX, to share insights on how they secured 1,200 units of Permanent Supportive Housing in just one year. Their expertise, coupled with Nashville's drive for solutions, will help shape our own ambitious housing strategies.

As we navigate the impact of federal changes to our technical advisors, Cloudburst, we are actively exploring independent contracts to sustain momentum and drive innovative solutions. Our partnerships with the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) will strengthen our messaging and advance our permanent housing solutions. These alliances, along with Nashville's commitment to innovation, are forging a path toward a future where every neighbor has a place to call home.

We know the challenges are great—but so is our resolve.

Together, we will continue to push boundaries, break barriers, and build a Nashville where safe, stable housing is a reality for all.

April Calvin

Building Bridges, Changing lives: Advancing Homelessness Solutions in Nashville

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• Written by: Demetris Chaney

Highlights from the Homelessness Planning Council Retreat

The Homelessness Planning Council Retreat was a resounding success! This retreat was not just a meeting—it was a powerful step forward in our shared mission to end homelessness in Nashville.

We gathered with key stakeholders—governance leaders, community partners, service providers, and most importantly, individuals with lived experience of homelessness to reexamine and reinforce the collaborative infrastructure that is critical to this work. Through thoughtful discussions and strategic planning, we identified ways to enhance data collection, analysis, and transparency, ensuring we are tracking our progress effectively and equipping our city with the tools needed to serve all populations experiencing homelessness. Together, we focused on:

- ✔ Strengthening governance, committees, and stakeholder roles to ensure inclusive decision-making.
- ✔ Outlining a plan to improve data collection, analysis, and presentation, ensuring our strategies are backed by clear, actionable insights.
- ✔ Establishing effective goals and metrics to evaluate and report on key homelessness initiatives.
- ✔ Mobilizing community partnerships and maximizing funding to enhance support services.
- ✔ Expanding the use of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to improve coordination across agencies.
- ✔ Developing a robust and transparent communications strategy to engage the broader community and strengthen collaboration.

Critical Time Intervention Training Certification: Strengthening Our Support Systems

Thank you to the 123 providers who attended this invaluable training opportunity with Dr. Carolyn Hanesworth, a nationally recognized expert in Critical Time Intervention (CTI). This training was designed for case managers, social workers, and all who support individuals through periods of transition. Investing in knowledge is investing in lives.



Homelessness Planning Council Retreat

This retreat reaffirmed what we already know: Nashville is stronger when we work together. Our city is committed to real solutions, not quick fixes—and through the dedication of our Homelessness Planning Council and our many partners, we are making tangible progress in ensuring housing, stability, and dignity for all. Let's keep moving forward, together.



Critical Time Intervention Training

Connecting, Uplifting, and Inspiring: Stories of Impact & Community Support

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Resource Fairs: Bridging the Gap for Our Unhoused Neighbors

Access to resources can change lives. That's why our Outreach Team hosts Resource Fairs across the city, ensuring our unhoused neighbors receive the support they need. These events connect individuals with vital services, from housing assistance to healthcare and employment opportunities. We invite you to join us in making a difference. For more information, contact our Outreach Manager, Joseph Parker, at Joseph.parker@nashville.gov or call 615-862-6992.



Southeast Community Resource Fair:

A heartfelt thank you to Council Lady Joy Styles and the Southeast Cluster for inviting us to the Southeast Community Resource Fair, an event dedicated to connecting residents with essential services. We are also grateful to Thurgood Marshall Middle School for hosting. This collaboration is what community is all about—coming together to uplift and empower. Watch the highlights here: [Watch Here.](#)

Johnnie's Journey: A Story of Hope and Progress

Johnnie is a Strobel House resident whose determination is lighting the path to a brighter future. Employed and currently in school, Johnnie's journey is one of resilience and hope. Hear her inspiring story in her own words:

[Watch Here.](#)

She knows each guest by name, and in return, they know hers. As one shelter guest shared, *"She saw I was having a rough time one evening and stopped what she was doing to talk to me. We need more human beings like her in this world."*

A local community member also shared, *"A shining example of love, compassion, hope, and hard work. She is an inspiration to me and an example of how to put the needs of people first! Thank you April and your fabulous team!"*

Director Calvin, your unwavering commitment is an inspiration. Thank you for advocating for Permanent Supportive Housing and for keeping our most vulnerable residents safe and warm. It is an honor to serve alongside you.

Honoring Director April Calvin: Leading by Example

True leadership is defined by action. Director April Calvin exemplifies this daily, dedicating herself to those we serve. For 45 nights, she has personally ensured the Metro Emergency Overflow Shelter remains a safe haven.



Community Partner Highlights and Ways to Connect

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Room In The Inn Connecting Churches

“For nearly forty years, Room In The Inn has partnered with congregations throughout our area to provide safe, warm shelter each year from November 1-March 31. Currently, over 100 congregations, spanning all traditions, serve small groups of guests by providing transportation to and from Room In The Inn’s campus, serving dinner and breakfast, and offering a safe, comfortable place to sleep. Room In The Inn’s Winter Shelter program is about much more than a bed for the night. It is about experiencing hospitality and forming relationships between people who might not otherwise meet. We need additional host congregations because people are turned away on a nightly basis. Members of our team are ready to answer your questions about how your congregation can get involved. Email shelter@roomintheinn.org for more information. The life you change may be your own!” -Room In The Inn



Thank you to Council Lady, Jennifer Gamble and District 3 for your unwavering support. A special thank you to our incredible staff, other dedicated Metro Departments, and community partners! Your support and collaboration ensured that countless individuals stayed safe and warm during this cold season. Thank you for standing with us in this mission! With gratitude, we recognize the efforts of:

- Office of Homeless Services
- Office of Emergency Management
- Mayor’s Office
- General Services
- WeGo
- MNPD
- Delta T
- Arch Angel
- Metro Water and Sewer
- Metro Council Members
- Metro Social Services
- Neighborhood Health
- Health Department
- MNPS

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