

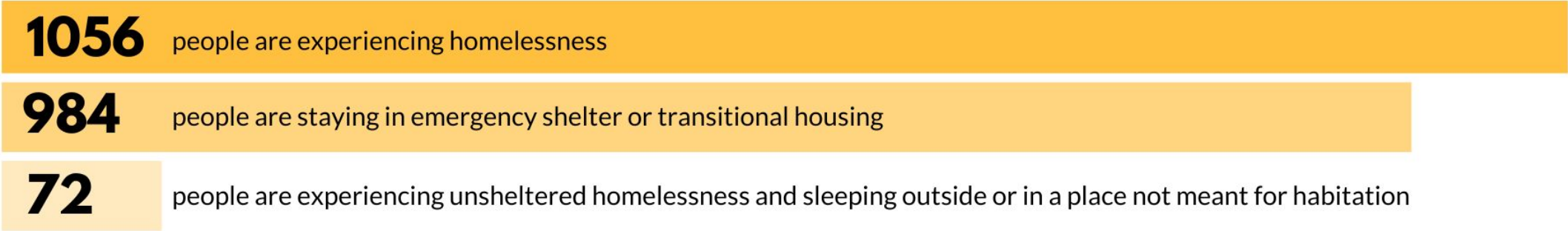
# Cook County Continuum of Care

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ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS IN SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY

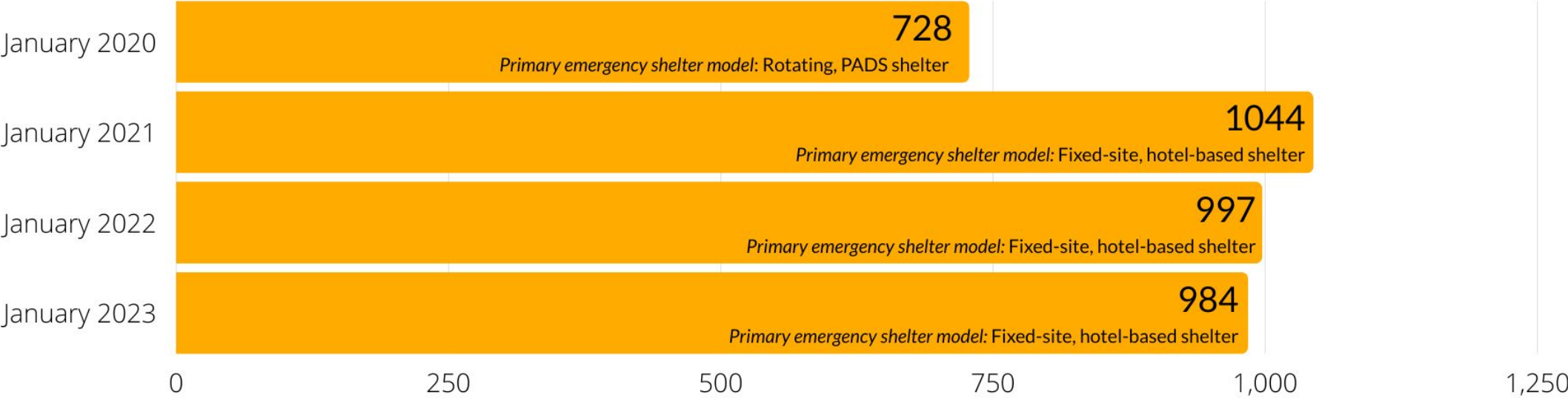


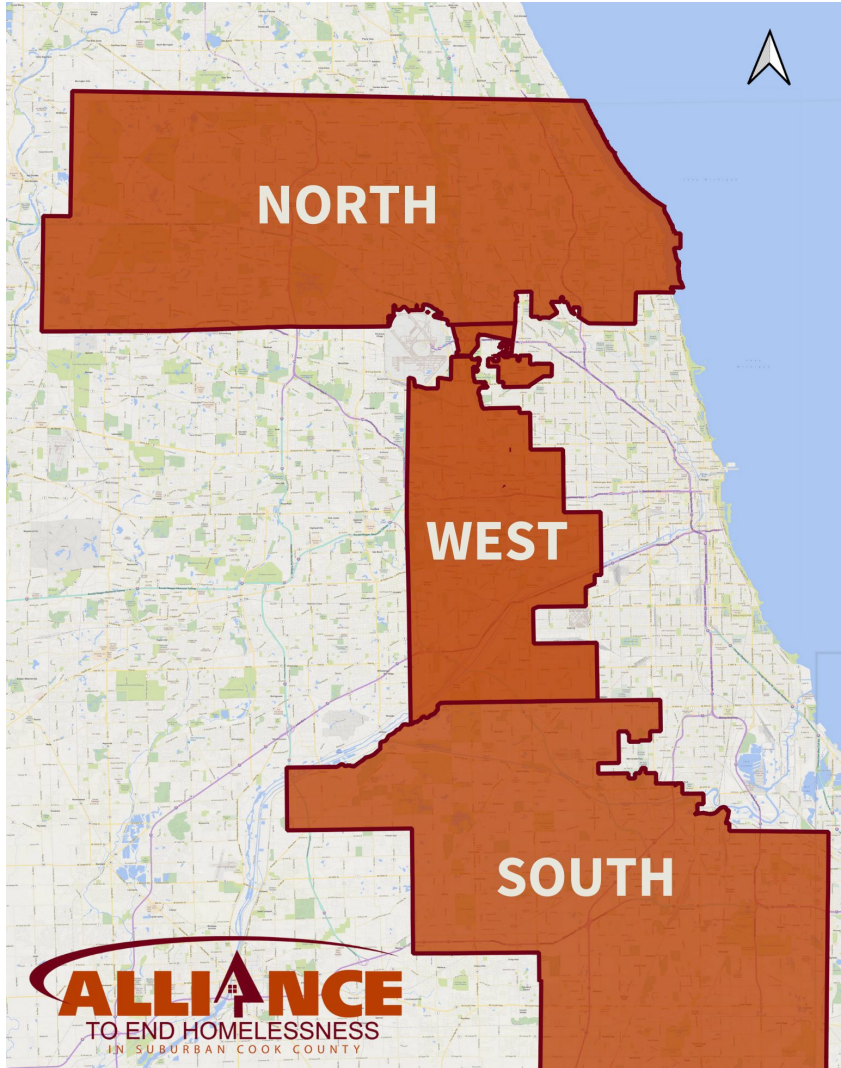
# On any given night in suburban Cook County...



Source: 2023 Sheltered and Unsheltered Point In Time Count

## Sheltered Homelessness: 2020 - 2023 Comparison



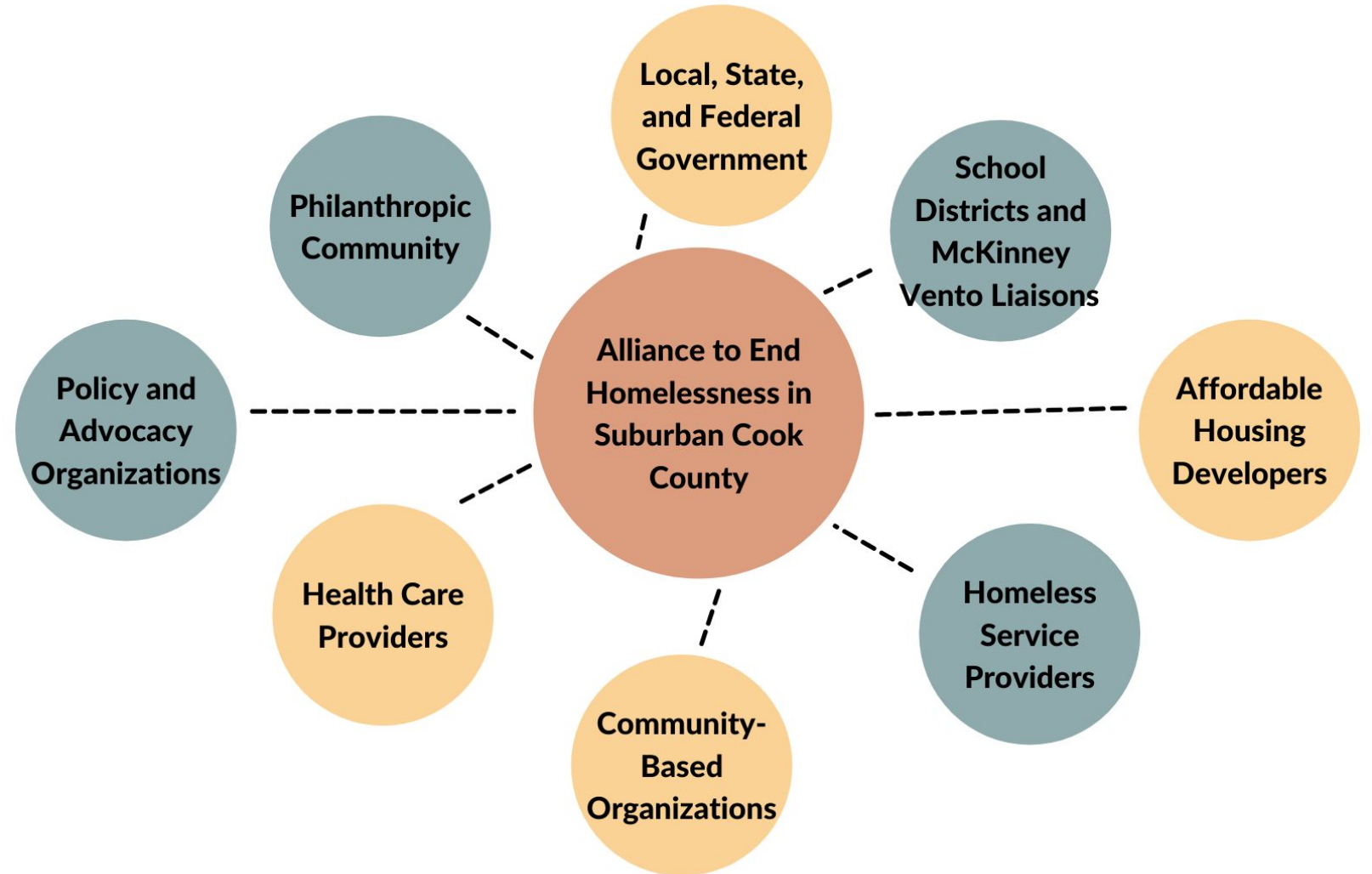


# Our mission is to end homelessness in suburban Cook County.

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WE BELIEVE THIS IS POSSIBLE THROUGH CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION, DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING, AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO HOUSING.

The Alliance leads the **Cook County Continuum of Care**, a diverse network of partners working together to develop, fund, and implement solutions to end homelessness.



# Continuum of Care (CoC) Planning

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- Coordinates the annual application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for homeless assistance grants
- Awarded approximately \$24 million annually from HUD to support forty housing programs for people experiencing homelessness across suburban Cook County
- Partners with local and state government to inform the allocation of available resources to serve people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness
- Advocates for budget and legislative policy solutions to remove barriers to housing for people experiencing homelessness and at-risk of homelessness



# Coordinated Entry

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- Operate a regional system to standardize and expedite how people experiencing homelessness and housing instability connect to housing resources
- Allows our region to better target available resources to the people who need them the most and connect people to the right program based on their preferences and level of need
- Front door to homelessness services:
  - Call Center: 877-426-6515
  - Street outreach and emergency shelter
  - Online: [myentrypoint.org](https://myentrypoint.org)



# Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

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- Lead agency for the suburban Cook County and DuPage County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- HMIS is a secure, online database that allows organizations to collect client-level, system-wide information on the services they provide to people experiencing homelessness and housing instability
- Use data to measure performance and inform data-driven decision-making for agencies, CoC, government entities, and philanthropic community



# Our Homelessness Response System

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Prevent homelessness whenever possible, provide crisis housing whenever needed, and prioritize permanent housing



# HUD Definitions of Homelessness

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- **Literal homelessness:** Individual or family with a primary nighttime residence in a place not meant for habitation (car, park, abandoned building) **or** living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing
- **Chronic homelessness:** Individual or family who is literally homeless (unsheltered or staying in shelter), **and** who has a chronic disabling condition, **and** has been experiencing homelessness for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years for a combined 12 months
- **Imminent risk of homelessness:** Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence within 14 days, **and** no subsequent residence has been identified, **and** the individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing
- **Fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence:** Individual or family that is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, **and** has no other residence, **and** lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing

# Types of Housing Interventions

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- Prevention
- Diversion
- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelter
- Rapid Re-Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing

# Homelessness Prevention

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- **Population:** Imminent risk of homelessness (i.e. within two weeks)
- **Entry Point:** Call Center (877-426-6515)
- **Actions:**
  - Standardized assessment questions to determine imminent risk of homelessness and housing needs
  - Referral to one of 15 Homelessness Prevention portal agencies across suburban Cook County that process applications for Homelessness Prevention assistance
  - Household works directly with portal agency to determine which source of funding best meets needs, completes application, and submits required documentation
  - Homeless Prevention assistance sent directly to landlord

# Homelessness Diversion

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- **Population:** Anticipate experiencing literal homelessness in 1 to 2 days
- **Entry Point:** Call Center (877-426-6515)
- **Actions:**
  - Standardized assessment questions to determine housing crisis and needs
  - Referral to one of 9 agencies across suburban Cook County that provide diversion services
  - Household works directly with agency to have a housing-focused, problem-solving conversation to identify alternatives to entering shelter, when possible

# Street Outreach

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- **Population:** Literal homelessness (in a place not meant for habitation like a car, park, or abandoned building)
- **Entry Point:** Street Outreach staff
- **Actions:**
  - Street Outreach staff are employed by homeless service provider agencies located across suburban Cook County. They canvass their regions and build relationships with community partners (libraries, Forest Preserve, emergency room, etc.) to identify and work with people experiencing unsheltered homelessness
  - Outreach and Lived Experience Engagement Manager at the Alliance strengthens the collective efforts of Street Outreach staff across the region by coordinating efforts, building partnerships, and providing support through evidence-based best practices and policies
  - Street Outreach staff build trust and provide basic need items with individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness
  - Street Outreach staff connect individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness with available shelter and/or other housing interventions

# Emergency Shelter

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- **Population:** Literal homelessness
- **Entry Point:** Street Outreach staff and Diversion staff
- **Actions:**
  - Not all housing crises will be able to be resolved through a diversion intervention and some households will need emergency shelter
  - There are different types of emergency shelter:
    - *Transitional housing:* population-specific housing for individuals fleeing domestic violence and young adults (18 – 24)
    - *Hotel-based crisis housing:* Private hotel rooms paid for by agencies, primarily with temporary pandemic funding
    - *Congregate shelter:* Rotating or single-site spaces (primarily places of worship) that provide a meal and overnight shelter
    - *Medical respite:* Partnership with hospitals for individuals exiting emergency rooms with no housing options and in need of follow-up medical care

# Rapid Re-Housing

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- **Population:** Literal homelessness
- **Entry Point:** Street Outreach or Emergency Shelter
- **Actions:**
  - Housing assessment completed and prioritized for housing
  - Agency and household identify a unit
  - Lease is in household's name
  - Rental assistance for up to 24 months
  - Case management services provide progressive engagement for household to gain resources needed to sustain their housing costs going forward

# Permanent Supportive Housing

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- **Population:** Chronic homelessness (experiencing homelessness for 12+ months and has disabling condition)
- **Entry Point:** Street Outreach or Emergency Shelter
- **Actions:**
  - Housing assessment completed and household added to By-Name-List to be prioritized for housing
  - Agency and household identify a unit based on household needs and preferences
  - Lease is in agency's name
  - On-going rental assistance (no time limit)
  - Intensive case management services to assist with housing stability



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