Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

GOAL 1: Reduce Inflow. *By strengthening and targeting prevention and diversion, we seek to reduce the number of people and families flowing into the homeless system of care.*

Objective 1: Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness through prevention and diversion.

Strategy 1A: Increase prevention and diversion resources and services.

Action Steps Completed:

- Identify sub-populations associated with diversion and prevention funding.
- Identify additional funding sources for homeless prevention with a focus on sub-populations.
- Identify and utilize strategies for reunification with family members or support systems.
- Provide regular training for all homelessness partners in problem-solving techniques and motivational interviewing to promote prevention and diversion.

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Identify additional funding sources for diversion with a focus on sub-populations.
- Implement mediation strategies with landlords to keep renters housed.
- Identify a cohort of staff (from healthcare, schools, human services, and other partner agencies) who focus on problem-solving with people before they enter the homeless system of care. Working on the app that will be accessible by the community
- Provide one-time financial assistance to keep individuals or families housed.
- Support legal assistance to prevent eviction.

Action Steps Pending:

- Develop early interventions for those experiencing severe mental illness, behavioral health and substance use that put them at risk of homelessness.

Strategy 1B: Reduce homelessness for those exiting institutions.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Create discharge planning for post incarceration individuals.
- Create discharge planning for foster youth exiting the care system and a tangible, resource-based action plan to support youth transitioning into adulthood.
- Create discharge planning for those exiting acute inpatient hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Strategy 1C: Utilize data across systems to identify themes and trends for homelessness and those at-risk of homelessness.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Perform a study on causes of homelessness in Kern County.
- Develop and utilize data across all collaborative sub-committees to inform decision making, identify barriers and measure outcome.
- Use data systems (e.g., GIS, HMIS) to assess geographic areas of the county to ensure outreach coverage and to identify areas with a high number of encampments.

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

Objective 1: Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness through prevention and diversion.

Strategy 1D: Ensure that homeless and formerly homeless people are represented throughout the system to support lived experience perspective in resource development, planning, and advisement of service provision.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Stakeholders to hire peer support and/or individuals with lived experience.
- Create and implement a plan to embed people with lived experience across levels of the Continuum of Care.
- Utilize and implement guidance provided by the Lived Experience Advisory and Youth Action boards.

STRATEGY 1E: Educate the public on what services exist for those at risk of homelessness.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Develop and implement community-wide engagement and education campaign. Support the effort by establishing a position with BKRHC to facilitate this task.
- Participate in the planning process to support new housing resources and development.
- Ensure businesses, neighborhoods, faith-based organizations, and other community groups are aware of resources in the community that prevent and address homelessness.
- Add regularly updated information on resources, educational information, progress towards Strategic Plan goals, and other relevant information to the BKRHC website that can be accessed by the public.

STRATEGY 1F: Improve economic security and workforce development programs that target those who are at-risk of homelessness.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Create partnerships with prevention providers and employment assistance programs.
- Create more jobs for people who are at risk of homelessness.
- Link more people at risk of homelessness through income vulnerability to social service programs.
- Increase resources for reliable transportation across Kern.
- Implement community resources to support financial literacy.

Measurements:

- Decrease first-time homelessness by **15% by 2029 (3% Reduction Per Year).**
  Source SPM Measure 5.2 10/1 - 9/30
  - 2024 Baseline SPM Measure 5.2: 2,199
  - 2025 Update SPM Measure 5.2: 2,065
  - Outcome: 6.09% Decrease

- Increase the number of households served by prevention activities by **10%** by **2029 (2% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source APR Q5a (Persons Served) 1/1 - 12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 519

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

Objective 1: Reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness through prevention and diversion.

- 2025 Update: 865
- Outcome: 66.67% Increase

- Increase the number of households served by diversion (one time only) activities by **25%** by **2029 (5% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source APR Q4a 1/1-12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 34
  - 2025 Update: 149
  - Outcome: 338.24% Increase

OBJECTIVE 2: Increase timely, equitable access to Coordinated Entry System (CES).

STRATEGY 2A: Expand outreach services throughout Kern County.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Increase outreach staff throughout the county.
- Address skill set for outreach staff with enhanced training. Ensure training includes cultural sensitivity modules.
- Engage in targeted outreach for underserved groups to ensure equitable outreach. Utilize feedback from Lived Experience Advisory and Youth Action boards to improve access.
- Identify and implement strategies to increase penetration for underserved groups, utilizing strategies that may include campaigns, resources, and targeted outreach to those groups.

STRATEGY 2B: Improve system navigation of CES for clients.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Reduce wait and response times within the CES system.
- Create additional fully staffed access points.
- Educate the public on 211 and homeless service providers
- Increase training for front line/data entry staff on quality data entry

Action Steps Pending:

- Utilize the Homelessness Prevention/Diversion sub-committee to routinely examine and refine these processes to eliminate barriers.
- Increase numbers of highly qualified case managers (including case coordinators, care coordinators, housing navigators, and others in similar case management roles) throughout the COC and CES to support client navigation and reduce case management-to-client ratio.
- Ensure all staff across all agencies that engage the CES receive bi-annual training on “screening in” clients, triaging to appropriate resources, trauma informed care, and motivational interviewing.

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

Measurements:

- Increase the number of connections to services in underserved geographic areas by people who are experiencing homelessness by **10%** by **2029 (2% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source CES Data Assessment 1/1 - 12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 474
  - 2025 Update: 479
  - Outcome: 1.05% Increase

- Increase the percentage of people exited from street outreach directly into temporary destinations by **7%** by **2029 (1.4% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source APR Q23c 1/1 - 12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 141
  - 2025 Update: 542
  - Outcome: 284.40% Increase

- Increase the percentage of people exited from street outreach directly into permanent destinations by **10%** by **2029 (2% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source APR Q23c 1/1-12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 84
  - 2025 Update: 192
  - Outcome: 128.57% Increase

GOAL 2: Strengthen Support. *With better outreach, improved access to physical and behavioral health supports, more housing options and increased coordination across providers, the Plan seeks to get better help, faster, and to more people.*

OBJECTIVE 3: Use data across the system to measure inflow, access to service, and outflow to measure program success and achievements.

STRATEGY 3A: Develop and implement a plan to expand HMIS license access and sustainability for HMIS programming.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Create a budget and funding plan for HMIS.
- Acquire sustainable and renewable funding for expanded HMIS and HMIS licenses.
- Secure funding for ongoing HMIS training and support to providers and system overall.

STRATEGY 3B: Develop a data dashboard for HMIS to demonstrate key metrics for homeless goals.

Action Steps Completed:

- HMIS operator develops internal dashboards for HMIS users.

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- HMIS operator shares data with BKRHC to publish on website.
- Planning and Performance committee to review HMIS data on a regular basis to ensure regulatory

requirements are being met.

STRATEGY 3C: Complete a full assessment of utilization of the HMIS system and user activity.

Action Steps Completed:

- HMIS operator will offer quarterly training to HMIS users.

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Create data standards for internal HMIS service providers.
- Provide regular reporting of data standards and reporting to organizations utilizing HMIS.

STRATEGY 3D: Utilize data to make equity informed decisions and develop solutions to support equitable access for services and resources.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Establish data reporting on equity measures to be used across sub-committees, in planning and performance, and in the allocation of resources.
- Added 2026: Update the data quality reports to include a data quality threshold percentage

Measurements:

- Achieve a minimum of **90**% participation in HMIS by all homeless service providers in the CoC by **12/31/2024**. *Source: CoC membership roster (October) compared to HMIS Active User (February)*
    - 2024 Baseline: 47 member agencies, 28 Agencies participating in HMIS. 59.57% participation
    - 2025 Update: 59 member agencies, 30 agencies participating in HMIS. 50.85% participation
    - Outcome: 9.57% Reduction

- Public-facing data dashboard is established by **7/31/2024.**
    - 2025 Update: The Bakersfield-Kern Regional Homeless Collaborative (BKRHC) will advance the development of a **public-facing** dashboard to support this objective, which focuses on using data to measure system inflow, access to services, and outflow to housing. The dashboard is anticipated to be launched in Quarter 4 of 2026. BKRHC will collaborate with the HMIS operator to publish validated, system-level data on these key metrics through a publicly accessible platform on its website, enhancing transparency and accessibility for stakeholders and the broader community. The Planning and Performance Committee will provide ongoing oversight of data review processes to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and alignment with system performance goals. This effort will strengthen data-driven decision-making and support a more coordinated, accountable, and outcomes-focused homeless response system.
    - Outcome: Recommend extending measurement to 12/31/2026

- Internal-facing data dashboard is established by **12/31/2024.**

- 2025 Update: This measurement provides a snapshot of program performance and client outcomes using HMIS data, helping us track progress toward key goals. It highlights trends over time and identifies areas where services are effective or may need improvement. Overall, it supports data-driven decision-making and continuous program refinement.The dashboard is live, but is still being reviewed by agencies for accuracy. Training is ongoing.
- Outcome: Recommend extending measurement to 12/31/2026

- Achieve and maintain a **90%** threshold for data quality of HMIS users **12/31/2025**.
  - 2025 Update: Data Quality reports are issued to agencies monthly to review and clean up data quality issues. They are not currently calculating a data quality threshold percentage, therefore this measurement could not be calculated. A new action Item has been developed to update the Data Quality reports to include a threshold percentage.
  - Outcome: Recommend extending measurement to 12/31/2026

OBJECTIVE 4: Increase access to supportive services.

STRATEGY 4A: Ensure that wraparound and case management services are available for all housing and shelter options.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Complete an assessment of case management standards and staff-to-client ratios throughout the system, including outreach and after-care services.
- Increase outreach, housing, and after-care case management to mirror the level of need of the client.

Action Steps Pending:

- Expand partnerships with healthcare systems to capitalize on funding streams (e.g., Cal-AIM, HHIP).

STRATEGY 4B: Increase the capacity and training for crisis response to behavioral and physical health care needs.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Coordinate with medical teams to ensure outreach includes medical and crisis-response staff.
- Increase the number and type of beds available for substance use treatment.

Action Steps Pending:

- Increase the number of mobile crisis teams and expand their hours, to support individuals experiencing severe mental health and substance use crises.
- Ensure follow-up supportive services are provided to prevent relapses.
- Implement strategies for motivating clients to receive services (e.g., recovery and housing-based peer ambassadors / specialists to support outreach; motivational interviewing; collaboration with Behavioral Health services to support clients to accessing services).
- Increase training to inform available resources, referral systems, and interventions including crisis response to the public and homeless providers.

STRATEGY 4C: Enhance support for homeless specialty sub-populations.

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

Action Steps Completed:

- Establish and improve data points to track and measure the number of people with mild-moderate and severe mental health issues experiencing homelessness.

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Strategize and collaborate on services that are provided to those with a Care Court Plan.

Action Steps Pending:

- Identify sub-populations that don't have access to needed services (e.g., youth, seniors, individuals with severe mental health and substance use needs, families, individuals with assistance with daily living needs) to develop resources.

STRATEGY 4D: Improve economic security, healthcare, and behavioral health care access for those who are homeless.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Ensure that all homeless clients have medical insurance coverage and have access to primary health and dental care.
- Ensure that behavioral health services (mental health and substance abuse treatment services) are readily available to eligible homeless people.

Action Steps Pending:

- Increase the amount of income received from public benefits for which they are eligible.
- Increase the amount of employment income earned.

Measurements:

- Interdisciplinary teams available at housing, shelter and CES access locations by **12/31/2026.**
    - 2025 Update: After a random sample of 16 agencies receiving funding through BKRHC, it was determined that the majority of programs provide interdisciplinary teams either directly through program services or through partnerships with other community-based organizations that provide core supportive services. Many of these interdisciplinary teams include on-site case management that connects clients to services such as mental health services, medical check-ups and services, applying for public benefits and insurance, and other services (care for companion animals where applicable) as identified.

      Out of 155 programs listed as receiving funding, the following 16 programs/agencies were tested for the sample data: CAPK - Veteran Supportive Services, Casa Esperanza Transitional Home - Project Stay, Clinica Sierra Vista - HMV Support Services, CAPK - HHAP 4 Oasis, CAPK - M Street Navigation Center, Flood - Arvin Navigation Center, Department of Human Services - Building and Leading Youths to Self-Sufficiency, Housing Authority - 6th Street, Housing Authority - Milestone,

Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services - HAT, Kern County Network for Children – Self Sufficiency Project Case Management HHAP1, Mercy House - Brundage Lane Navigation Center, The Mission of Kern County - Women's Graduate Shelter, The Open Door Network - Milestone, The Open Door Network - Emergency Homeless Shelter, and Women's Center High Desert - ESG Shelter State 618-2023.

- **10%** increase in homeless individuals enrolled in Medi-Cal by **12/31/2026 (5% Increase Per Year)**. *Source HMIS Adhoc report 1/1-12/31*
    - 2024 Baseline: 3,031
    - 2025 Update: 3,326
    - Outcome: 9.7% Increase

- Establish baseline data to show the % of homeless people with severe mental illness by **12/31/2024**. *Source Point-in-Time Count (PIT)*
    - 2024 Baseline: 325
    - 2025 Update: 245
    - Outcome: 24.6% Decrease

- Increase by **10%** the number of substance use disorder beds, including sober living beds to inpatient detox beds by **12/31/2026 (5% Increase Per Year).** *Source: KernBHRS Listing*
    - 2025 Data:
        - 131 Substance Use Disorder Beds
        - 519 Sober Living Environment Bed
        - 40 Beds Transitional Sober Environment Beds

- Achieve an average case management ratio of **1:25** clients per case manager by **2029.**
    - 2025 Data: Based on a sample of 16 agencies that receive funding through BKRHC, the majority operate at a 1:25 client-to-case-manager ratio. Organizations that do not operate at a 1:25 client-to-case-manager ratio typically offer minimal case management services, such as housing management and referrals to outside resources when applicable. Other agencies reported that, due to funding decreases that led to staff layoffs, some are operating at higher caseloads and have a temporary client-to-case-manager ratio that is higher.

      Out of 155 programs listed as receiving funding, the following 16 programs/agencies were tested for the sample data: CAPK - Veteran Supportive Services, Casa Esperanza Transitional Home - Project Stay, Clinica Sierra Vista - HMV Support Services, CAPK - HHAP 4 Oasis, CAPK - M Street Navigation Center, Flood - Arvin Navigation Center, Department of Human Services - Building and Leading Youths to Self-Sufficiency, Housing Authority - 6th Street, Housing Authority - Milestone, Kern Behavioral Health and Recovery Services - HAT, Kern County Network for Children – Self Sufficiency Project Case Management HHAP1, Mercy House - Brundage Lane Navigation Center, The Mission of Kern County - Women's Graduate Shelter, The Open Door Network - Milestone, The Open Door Network - Emergency Homeless Shelter, and Women's Center High Desert - ESG Shelter State 618-2023.

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

OBJECTIVE 5: Improve emergency shelter options to increase access to quality emergency shelter beds.

STRATEGY 5A: Support resources for innovative plans that address the needs of specialty homeless sub-populations.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Develop plans for interim, non-congregate, medical respite, detox, skilled nursing, and alternative models for the following subpopulations: youth, seniors, families with children, and those with intensive needs.
- Use data to ensure bed capacity meets the need for people coming into emergency shelter.
- Analyze data to evaluate the utilization of emergency shelter to ensure equitable access.

Action Steps Pending:

- Secure funding for additional emergency shelter models to be implemented and advocate for greater funding flexibility to support emergency shelters.
- Advocate for stable state and federal funding for emergency shelters.

STRATEGY 5B: Strengthen referral and discharge between service providers to prevent unsheltered homelessness.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Create a task force to review and monitor referral and discharge policies by service providers.

Action Steps Pending:

- Create a task force to review and monitor referral and discharge policies by service providers.

STRATEGY 5C: Better prepare emergency shelter clients to achieve housing stability.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

Action Steps Pending:

- Perform a service gap analysis.
- Establish a standard of best practices that service providers can follow.

STRATEGY 5D: Develop disaster contingency plan for sheltered and unsheltered individuals.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Create and utilize emergency plans for extreme weather, public health emergencies, and other disaster

Action Steps Pending:

- Create and utilize emergency plans for extreme weather, public health emergencies, and other disaster related events.

Measurements:

- Decrease unsheltered homelessness by **15% by 2029 (3% Decrease Per Year).**
  Source: Point-in-Time County (PIT)

- 2024 Baseline: 1663
- 2025 Update: 1398
- Outcome: 15.94% Decrease

- Increase the percentage of people exited from emergency shelter into permanent destinations by **15%** by **2029 (3% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source: APR Q23C 1/1 to 12/31
  - 2024 Baseline: 396
  - 2025 Update: 470
  - Outcome: 18.69% Increase

OBJECTIVE 6: Increase the inventory and access to interim, transitional, and bridge housing.

STRATEGY 6A: Increase advocacy, funding, resources, and services for interim, transitional, and bridge housing.

Action Steps Completed:

- Secure funding for additional interim, transitional, and bridge housing.
- Advocate for flexible and sustainable local, state and federal funding for interim, transitional, and bridge housing.

Action Steps Pending:

- Develop recommendations for the appropriate level of supportive services, including case management, for interim, transitional, and bridge housing.
- Support development and implementation of countywide shared housing matching system.

STRATEGY 6B: Utilize data to identify and prioritize the needs for specialty sub-populations to have equitable access to interim, bridge and transitional housing options.

Action Steps Completed:

Action Steps Pending:

- Perform a service gap analysis for interim, transitional, and bridge housing options available throughout the county.
- Analyze data to evaluate the utilization of interim, transitional and bridge housing to ensure equitable access to these housing resources.
- Use data to ensure bed capacity meets the need for people needing and utilizing interim, transitional and bridge housing.

Measurements:

- Increase number of RRH units by **10%** by **2028 (2.5% Increase Per Year).**
  Source: Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)
  - 2024 Baseline: 451
  - 2025 Update: 176
  - Outcome: 61% Decrease

- Increase number of interim, transitional, and bridge housing by **10%** by **2029 (2% Increase Per Year)**.
  Source: Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)
  - 2024 Baseline: 207
  - 2025 Update: 280
  - Outcome: 35% Increase

GOAL 3: Increase Outflow. *The Strategic Plan calls for a significant investment in affordable housing and related*

supportive services so that more people and families experiencing homelessness can exit the homeless system of care to permanent and stable housing options.

OBJECTIVE 7: Increase the inventory and access to affordable, permanent housing.
STRATEGY 7A: Encourage and support local efforts to increase affordable housing.
Action Steps Completed: Action Steps Pending: Action Steps Pending: ● Complete an evaluation of how much permanent housing is needed based on the current year Point In Time count or other relevant, available data. ● Repurpose existing housing for the expansion of affordable housing. ● Develop additional low-income housing. ● Implement shared housing models. ● Coordinate with jobs programs and educational programs to increase family incomes so they don't have to rely on voucher assistance to move on.
STRATEGY 7B: Increase the number of Rapid Re-Housing beds.
Action Steps Completed: Action Steps Pending: Action Steps Pending: ● Obtain new funding for Rapid Rehousing. ● Increase the number of landlords participating in Rapid Re-Housing.
STRATEGY 7C: Coordinate and incentivize developers to increase affordable housing.
Action Steps Completed: Action Steps Pending: Action Steps Pending: ● BKRHC to develop a summary of affordable housing needs that we can supply to developers who want to develop regional approaches to affordable housing for their projects. ● Encourage and support local government's efforts to expand affordable housing. ● Evaluate the feasibility and next steps for immediate development of rent-controlled apartment buildings, multi-family housing units, and in-law units, as well as non-traditional options such as repurposed motels/hotels and/or Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). ● Eliminate barriers that impede construction, repurposing, or rehabilitation of additional, affordable permanent housing.
STRATEGY 7D: Increase landlord engagement to create more available units.
Action Steps Completed: Action Steps Pending: Action Steps Pending: ● Develop partnerships with landlords and enhance landlord incentive program.

- Increase landlord enrollment into Padmission through a targeted marketing program.
- Develop funding and create a program for a landlord risk-mitigation incentive.
- Added 2026: Add a filed in HMIS to track and report shared housing placements

Measurements:

- Increase number of PSH units by **400** units annually by **2028 (100 Units Per Year)**.
  Source: Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)
  - 2024 Baseline: 1560
  - 2025 Update: 1706
  - Outcome: 146 Unit Increase

- Establish at least **240** new shared housing units by **2029 (80 Units Per Year)**.
  - 2025 Update: There is currently no way to track shared housing units in our current HMIS system. If clients choose to use their housing resources in a shared housing location, they are entered into the program as separate households and tracked individually. A new action Item has been developed to add a field to HMIS to allow for shared housing identification and reporting.
  - Outcome: Baseline will be established in 2026

- Increase number of units affordable to extremely low-income (ELI) households across the County by **1800** annually by **2029 (360 Units Annually).**
  Source: TCAC program award listings
  - 2024 Baseline: TCAC 18 Units
  - 2025 Update: TCAC 25 Units

  Note: Other funding sources to build affordable housing serving do not restrict the units to the ELI population. It is likely that ELI families live in these units, but the numbers cannot be confirmed.

- Reduce Evictions by **15%** by **2029 (3% Reduction Per Year).**
  - 2024 Baseline: TBD
  - 2025 Update: TBD

  Note: Public Records Requests were submitted to the Kern County Superior Court for this data. The information was not available at the time of the update completion.

OBJECTIVE 8: Reduce recidivism for those exiting into permanent housing.

STRATEGY 8A: Enhance availability of after-care case management programs.

Action Steps Completed:

- Evaluate trends to understand the factors influencing recidivism.

Action Steps Ongoing:

- Identify sub-populations currently receiving AC CM and those in need of AC CM.
- Increase availability and ensure the aftercare services mirror the level of need of the client.
- Improve case management ratios for after-care case management.
- Increase the connections to necessary supportive services and resources that will assist in maintaining housing.

Strategic Action Plan Annual Update 2026

Action Steps Pending:

Measurements:

- Decrease returns to homelessness to **13% by 2029 (2.6% Reduction Per Year).**
  Source SPM Measure 2a and 2b 10/1-9/30
    - 2024 Baseline: 18.82%
    - 2025 Update: 18.97%
    - Update: .08% Increase