

# Executive Summary

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In Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025), the Supportive Housing Services Measure continued to expand Multnomah County's homeless services system, serving thousands of people with housing, shelter, eviction prevention, street outreach and other services.

The first few years of implementing this measure were defined by rapid growth. Multnomah County launched dozens of new programs, expanded our pool of contracted providers, and began significant systemwide improvements, all toward the goal of delivering more and better services to our community.

Four years into implementing the measure, that time of rapid growth is behind us. We are now entering a new phase focused on sustaining that previous growth as much as possible and ensuring the long-term success of these programs.

However, we're also facing new challenges that complicate our ability to sustain the impacts we made early on. Collections for the SHS taxes are beginning to come in much lower than anticipated, meaning that Multnomah County has had to grapple with significant funding gaps in both FY 2025 and FY 2026 for our homeless services programs. While we've been able to use unspent carryover dollars from previous years to fill some gaps, by the end of FY 2026, we will not have any remaining SHS carryover dollars to spend.

On top of the SHS funding shortfall, we are now also experiencing constraints from both the state and federal governments, which in previous years provided a significant portion of funding for homeless services locally. And while County general fund dollars have helped sustain some of our programming, that funding is also facing shortfalls that might not make those types of investments possible in the future. This new funding landscape has already led to incredibly difficult decisions, especially during the County's FY 2026 budget process in spring 2025.

However, even in this difficult landscape, in FY 2025 the Homeless Services Department made significant progress on the goals of the measure. The department was able to exceed most of its SHS annual work plan goals that were created in collaboration with Metro, including our goals for housing placements, homelessness prevention, and retention rates for permanent supportive housing. Additionally, we hit major milestones in improving our system overall and are starting to see the positive impacts of the racial equity focus of this work.

## Year Four Successes

### Housing

In year four, Multnomah County and its providers helped thousands of people leave homelessness for housing with support from the SHS measure. In FY 2025, a total of 2,599<sup>1</sup> people left homelessness for permanent housing thanks to the measure. Of those placements, 1,085 were in permanent supportive housing, the type of housing that's most effective for ending chronic homelessness. Another 1,420 people were supported with rapid rehousing, and the remaining 237 were placed through "housing only" or "housing with services" programs.

These housing outcomes are well above our SHS annual work plan goals for housing placements across housing types, and marked an increase over our FY 2024 outcomes. However, some of that increase might be explained by more accurate outcomes tracking for SHS programs, which is described in more detail in **Housing & Services**.

New placements into housing just tell part of the story. Since many of the SHS-funded housing programs last longer than a year, many additional people are being sustained in housing long-term. In FY 2025, a total of 7,255 people were in housing thanks to the support of SHS-funded programs. This includes not just people newly placed this year, but also people who accessed housing in a previous year and are still housed with the support of an SHS program. Compared to the total from FY 2024, that's an increase of nearly 2,500 people stably housed in SHS programs in Multnomah County.

### Eviction Prevention

This year, the SHS measure also supported 2,416 people from 1,099 households with eviction prevention services. Homelessness prevention, a type of emergency rent assistance that keeps people housed in the face of eviction, helps reduce "inflow" into homelessness, key to our overall progress in this crisis. These prevention outcomes far exceeded our annual work plan goal of providing prevention services to 800 people from 600 households.

For years, these prevention programs were able to serve many thousands of people thanks to federal COVID-19 emergency funding. However, with that funding running out — and new funding reductions for these types of programs from the state of Oregon — SHS funding is key for sustaining this work in our community.

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<sup>1</sup> Unduplicated

## **Permanent Supportive Housing Expansion**

These outcomes are possible because of the significant systemwide growth allowed for by the SHS measure. Since July 1, 2021, the Homeless Services Department has developed and added 1,541 new and fully operational supportive housing units in Multnomah County with SHS dollars. These units represent 69% of our 10-year goal to add 2,235 supportive housing units in our county.

In FY 2025 alone, we opened 244 new units of permanent supportive housing in our community. While this is a sign of progress, it fell short of our goal to bring 401 new supportive housing units online. However, this was in part due to construction delays for five PSH projects that will now open in FY 2026. It was also affected by a deliberate decision to hit pause on 200 new units of permanent supportive housing as the department began to grapple with significant funding gaps for both FY 2025 and FY 2026. Funding for those units are included in the FY 2026 department budget, and those projects are slated to begin this current fiscal year.

## **Shelter**

This year, the SHS measure helped Multnomah County provide more safe, 24/7 shelter to people experiencing homelessness. SHS funding allowed Multnomah County to open 270 new shelter units this year, 160 of which were in partnership with the City of Portland. That's on top of the 1,606 shelter units whose sustained operations were supported with SHS funding. Those units are a sizable portion of the more than 3,600 total shelter units in our community that are funded by Multnomah County and/or the City of Portland.

Those new and sustained shelter units include a mix of village-style shelters, motel shelters and congregate shelters, providing a place for people to stay both day and night, with access to services like housing supports that can make a shelter stay the first step to long-term stability.

SHS funding also allowed for the opening of a new day center that's providing people with respite from the elements and connections with long-term services. The Marie Equi Center, which opened in October 2024 in southeast Portland, is the first of its kind in our community. It offers culturally specific services to members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community in alignment with recommendations from an HSD-funded LGBTQIA2s+ Housing Collaborative policy paper published in 2024.

## System Improvements

In FY 2025, the SHS measure also facilitated major improvements to our overall homeless services system.

This included significant steps toward data improvement. In April 2025, the department launched a [brand new data dashboard](#), which is based on Multnomah County's "by-name" list of people experiencing homelessness. It provides monthly snapshots of who is experiencing homelessness in our community and what services they're accessing. It also shows "inflow" and "outflow" metrics that, for the first time, show both how many people are becoming newly homeless and how many people are leaving homelessness on a monthly basis.

The data dashboard launch was a major milestone for tracking how well our system is performing, identifying areas for improvement and educating the public on the work of our homeless services system. The data improvement work that led up to the dashboard launch was made possible because of SHS investments.

More data improvements are coming in the future thanks to the SHS measure. This includes implementing a new Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). In early FY 2026, Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties announced that they had procured a new software tool that will make the creation of a new HMIS possible. The new system will greatly improve our data not just in Multnomah County, but across the entire metro area — and again, this is possible thanks to investments from the SHS measure.

Another major milestone this year was the launch of a newly updated coordinated access tool, called the Multnomah Services and Screening Tool (MSST). In FY 2025, this tool replaced the former coordinated access tool used in our community, the Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). The new tool is much more trauma-informed than the original tool. And while the launch of the new tool itself doesn't increase the availability of housing programs in our community, the MSST tool includes "housing problem solving" as part of the assessment, supporting people in accessing housing resources that might be available to them. As outlined in **County Infrastructure**, evaluations done by the HSD data team in FY 2025 are showing this tool is receiving positive feedback, both from the providers who administer the tool and from the participants who are being assessed with it.

## **Equity and Provider Capacity**

In FY 2025, the Homeless Services Department continued to make progress toward building a homelessness response system that addresses the fact that racism and gender discrimination can lead to worse housing outcomes for marginalized groups. There continues to be a disproportionately high population of Black, Indigenous and other people of color who are experiencing homelessness in our community as a result of past discriminatory housing policies and continued systemic racism. Strategies we've employed to address this include expanding our partnerships with culturally specific providers while also supporting culturally responsive capacity across our entire system of care.

In FY 2025, SHS funding supported new and emerging providers, especially those offering culturally specific services. Bringing on additional providers helps us not only expand our services overall, but also ensures that we're able to provide more robust culturally responsive services to our community. We also continued to work with providers to ensure they submit equity workplans. When taken together, these provider-level plans help actualize our systemwide equity goals."

We're seeing improved racial equity outcomes, marking meaningful progress toward reducing and eliminating racial disparities in permanent housing placements and in homelessness more generally. Multnomah County's SHS programming has been successful in housing Black, Hispanic or Latine, and Indigenous people at higher rates than their representation in the overall homeless population. Additionally, the share of chronically homeless people identifying as BIPOC slightly decreased between FY 2023 and FY 2025.

However, there continue to be disparities for people of certain demographics and certain service types. For instance, in Q2 of FY 2025, Homeless Response Action Plan (HRAP) data indicated that Black, African American or African communities were underrepresented in the people accessing shelter.

The department and the County's Homelessness Response System (HRS) engaged in deliberate work this year to identify better ways to serve Black, African American or African communities with shelter programs. This work included engagement with providers serving Black, African American or African communities, advisory bodies and community members. Based on findings from those engagements, we were excited to support proposals from two of our culturally specific providers serving this community to pivot their contracted services to more culturally informed sheltering and support models. New shelter models will launch in FY 2026 in order to better serve communities of color in shelter.