



Welcome to our community newsletter!

We are very excited to showcase some of the incredible work and resources within and beyond our Continuum of Care.

Please note that by featuring an organization or individual in our newsletter, the Homeless Alliance does not endorse any religious or political beliefs/stances of these individuals or organizations.

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HOMELESS ALLIANCE OF WNY IMPORTANT UPDATES



**Thank you to everyone who supported our
annual Homeless Alliance Luncheon.**

**We are pleased to announce the addition
of Jamie Dolan to our team. Jamie will
serve as RRH System Coordinator**

**We are pleased to announce the addition
of Nicole LaLonde to our team. Nicole will
serve as HMIS Training Coordinator**

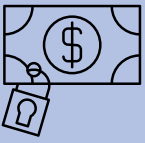
**This year marks the 20th Anniversary of
the Homeless Alliance. We plan to
celebrate this milestone in the upcoming
year! Stay Tuned...**



ONCE UPON A TIME...

HAWNY started as the Erie County Commission on Homelessness, created in 1992 by the Erie County Legislature to find ways to reduce homelessness in Erie County. By 2000, the Commission had departed from its government roots and incorporated as The Homeless Alliance of Western New York in 2005 to act as the lead agency for the Erie County CoC.





Federal Funding Freeze:



On January 28th, the OMB Memo Freezing Federal Funds was rescinded, however questions regarding FY2024 funding still remain.

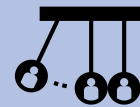
In the midst of this uncertainty, here is what we know and how you can help.

This money was lawfully allocated and is meant to support nearly 7,000 programs across the country—including over 30 agencies right here in Western New York that provide life-saving housing and services.

If this funding is pulled or delayed, the impact will be catastrophic



Additional Potential Impacts



- Over 2,000 individuals and families in WNY could lose their housing, forcing them back into homelessness.
- Agencies that rely on this funding to operate will need to shut down, leaving thousands without access to shelter/housing, case management, and critical resources.
- 100+ social workers and frontline staff who dedicate their lives to serving the most vulnerable will lose their jobs.
- Landlords who depend on HUD rental assistance will suddenly stop receiving payments, causing financial instability and even more evictions.
- The local economy will suffer as small businesses and service providers lose the income they rely on from these programs.



HOW YOU CAN HELP!



Reach out to your Congressional District and make your voice heard! 

Fill out the National Alliance Advocacy Form 

Share and post on social media

[Share](#)

Tell everyone you know to advocate for this cause

Supporting Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness

The Fastest-Growing Group of People Experiencing Homelessness

What We Know

The percentage of older adults in the United States is rapidly growing.

The population of older adults experiencing homelessness is rapidly growing. Older adults are the fastest-growing demographic experiencing homelessness. On a single night in 2023, there were 138,098 adults over the age of 55 experiencing homelessness in the United States. Nearly 1 in 4 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness were over the age of 55.



Housing is a Key Social Determinant of Health

Housing is an essential social determinant of health, significantly impacting an individual's well-being and overall health outcomes. For older adults, housing instability can have severe consequences, exacerbating age-related health conditions. While older adults are typically defined as individuals 65 and older, research shows that individuals experiencing homelessness often face chronic health issues similar to or higher than community-dwelling adults who are 15-20 years older. Because of this, adults experiencing homelessness are often considered "older adults" at age 50.



Link between Homelessness and Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD)

Research has identified associations between experiencing homelessness and ADRD. Experiencing homelessness has been identified as a risk factor for and a consequence of dementia. In other words, experiencing homelessness increases the risk of developing dementia, while the onset of dementia also increases the likelihood of experiencing homelessness.



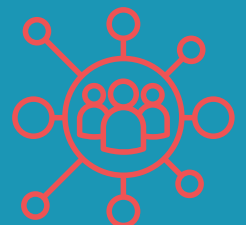
Unique Challenges for Older Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Older adults experiencing homelessness face unique challenges that often make it difficult to access stable housing and necessary healthcare. Service providers may encounter barriers when trying to connect older adults with resources, as many existing systems are not designed to accommodate the specific needs of this population. Older adults may face specific barriers such as mobility issues, cognitive impairments, and chronic health conditions that make it harder to navigate services. Limited transportation option and accessibility barriers can also make it difficult to access healthcare, food, and social support.



What Can Be Done in our Continuum of Care?

Building and strengthening partnerships with aging service providers and incorporating the perspectives of older adults with lived experience are key to addressing their unique needs within our communities. Make sure to stay up to date on resources and events aimed at supporting older adults by following our newsletter!



POINT IN TIME (PIT) COUNT 2025



What is it?

The Point-In-Time (PIT Count) is a count of individuals and families experiencing homelessness on a given night. HUD requires that CoCs conduct an annual count of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness.

Why is it important?

The Annual count helps raise community awareness to homelessness, aids in program and system planning, and allows for further local and federal funding. It can also help our community understand local characteristics and trends of homelessness.

The 2025 PIT Count

This year the Homeless Alliance partnered with community volunteers to conduct the count on January 29th and 30th. Participants were assigned routes across Erie, Niagara, Genesee, Orleans, and Wyoming County. The role of these volunteers was to conduct outreach, and complete surveys that can be used to quantify the number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness throughout our CoC.

Thank You!!

We want to thank everyone who volunteered to be apart of this year's PIT Count. We appreciate you taking the time to help us pull off the annual count. We hope that you and others will considering helping out again next year.

WYOMING COUNTY: OAK ORCHARD HEALTH CELEBRATES CREATION OF WARMING CENTER



On Friday January 17th, Oak Orchard Health CEO Karen Kinter (pictured above) Announced the Creation of a warming center in Wyoming County.

The original goal was for the warming center to be open on the day of the announcement. However, Kinter notes that they are unable to open the center due to an issue with incomplete paperwork that they were made aware of very recently.

Despite the set back, Karen Kinter hopes they are able to open the center soon especially in light of the recent harsh winter forecasts. She did not offer a specific date or estimate as to when the warming center would open.

This would be the third local warming center that Oak Orchard Health has it's hand in creating. They have authored similar projects including the recent warming center opened in Brockport.

During her remarks Karen Kinter discussed the need for the center citing housing shortages and community poverty statistics as a cause of homelessness in the rural community.

Also in attendance, was Independent living Director Rae Frank whose team has collaborated with Oak Orchard Health on this project. Frank also used local statistics to define the need for the warming center.



HMIS UPDATES



PIT Data Reminder

The annual Point in Time (PIT) Count was conducted on the night of Wednesday, January 29th this year. The HMIS team is working to submit this information to HUD. Please help us have a smooth submission process by:



Checking your HMIS PIT numbers for accuracy.



If contacted by the HMIS team, responding as soon as possible.

Questions? Contact Katey Soellers at soellers@wnyhomeless.org.

GET HMIS CERTIFIED

Use our self-paced courses to master the HMIS workflow for your HMIS project types and get a sharable certificate of completion. Each course contains targeted resources, by project type, to help you manage your organization's HMIS data quality.



HMIS WNY Certification Pathways

Each of these programs has been specially designed to support homeless services professionals working in the Western New York's (NY-508) HMIS.



Emergency Shelter (ES)



Street Outreach (SO)



Rapid Re-housing (RRH)



Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)



BUFFALO SNUG PROGRAM



The organization SNUG which stands for “Should Never Use Guns” is funded by the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services. SNUG is an evidence-based violence reduction program that works with community organizations, businesses, and residents to prevent and reduce shootings and killings.

SNUG’s model employs the use of outreach workers to work with individuals who are most likely to be involved with gun violence. SNUG works to defuse conflicts and provide support including mentorship and counseling. The organization often works with at risk youth in finding nonviolent ways to mitigate conflict.

SNUG provides direct support for victims of gun violence. This support can include financial assistance, case management, and counseling services. SNUG is involved in relocating individuals at risk of gun violence. The local organization has relocated individuals to various areas including as far as Mississippi and Florida.

Adrienna Garr is a cite social worker at SNUG Buffalo. She has worked for the organization for four years. Adrienne states, ‘the organization is able to assist clients (victims of gun violence) based on need and consideration for the organization’s budget.’ Adrienne says, SNUG has helped clients with groceries, ring cameras, rent, relocation costs, and more.

SNUG collaborates with the Buffalo Police to perform their work. SNUG is granted access to police incident reports as a means of identifying risk so that they can deploy their street outreach program to attempt to prevent additional acts of violence.

SNUG also collaborates with Buffalo Rising Against Violence (BRAVE). The organizations have met weekly for the last 4-5 years to discuss cases and services. This collaboration has helped to address needless violence in the Buffalo area

Location:  SNUG Buffalo is located in the Tri-Main Center 2495 Main St Suite 456, Buffalo, NY 14214

Contact:  SNUG Buffalo Phone number is 716-961-6947

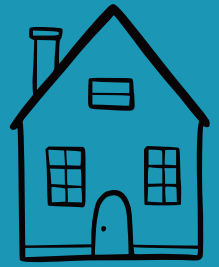
DID YOU KNOW?



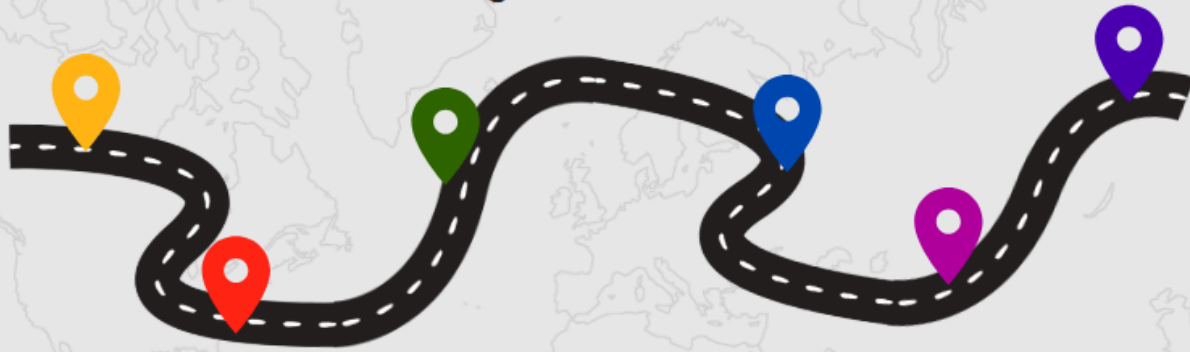
NYS (DCJS)
administers 14 SNUG
cites across the state



Niagara Falls SNUG Launched in January 2023. The Niagara office is located on 1702 Pine Ave. Niagara Falls, NY 14301. The Phone number is 716-205-8803



COORDINATED ENTRY TRANSFER REQUEST PROCESS



1

IDENTIFY

Agency staff identifies the need for a client transfer to another CoC funded program

2

DISCUSS

Agency Staff utilizes CE/Outreach Meeting to discuss the reason for a potential transfer and case conference possible solutions in lieu of program transfer

3

COMPLETE

If the issue is not resolved, the agency staff completes the Transfer Request Template Form, it must be reviewed and approved by the agency director

4

SUBMIT

1.) The agency submits the Transfer request form to CE@wnyhomeless.org
2.) The CE Lead (HAWNY) submits the transfer request template to the CE Transfer Committee Members for review

5

REVIEW

The CE Lead will review priority level 1 requests immediately. A decision will be made within a week. All other priority levels will be reviewed at the monthly Transfer Committee meeting.

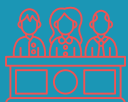
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RESOLVE

Once a decision is made, the CE lead will update the agency requesting transfer based on recommendations made by the CE Transfer Workgroup within 96 hours

The Graphic above details and overview of the Coordinated Entry Transfer process. The process applies only to a client/(s) currently housed within a NY-508 CoC funded program whom are being considered for transfer to another NY-508 CoC funded program.

Transfer Committee



The committee is composed of RRH and PSH providers, Erie County Mental Health team, outreach workers, and CE lead.

Important Tip



Document any client incidents and agency attempts to stabilize and support clients needs via services and/or client alternative measures.

Documents

[CLICK HERE](#)



[Transfer Plan Policies and Procedures](#)

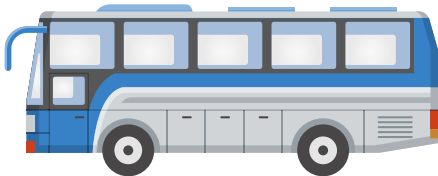
[Transfer Request Form](#)

Spotlight Resources

WINTER RIDE GUIDE

The NFTA Winter Guide is a helpful tool to use especially during snow storms.

Subscribe to Metro Alerts here so you are notified when there is an update to the schedule.



City Of Buffalo Food Pantry List



CE Office Hour

The Coordinated Entry Office Hour is a virtual meeting occurring on the 2nd Wednesday of every month. Bring all your CE questions



Code Blue Shelter



Buffalo Code Blue

586 Genesee Street,
Buffalo, 14204

Dulski Center, 129 Lewis ST,
Buffalo 14206

Niagara Code Blue

Niagara Gospel Mission 1317
Portage Rd, Niagara Falls,
NY, 14302



UPDATED POCKET GUIDE



The following pocket guides provide a handy list of housing resources within the NY-508 CoC



[ERIE COUNTY POCKET GUIDE](#)

[NIAGARA COUNTY POCKET GUIDE](#)

[GENESEE, ORLEANS, & WYOMING
POCKET GUIDE](#)



PEOPLE AGAINST
TRAFFICKING HUMANS

[CLICK HERE
TO LEARN
MORE](#)



PATH is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to end Human trafficking through education, prevention, and restoration

COORDINATED ENTRY POWERPOINT



The CE PowerPoint is a helpful guide to understanding the CE process including access points, prioritization, referrals etc.

Updates

Upcoming CoC Events



The next Coordinated Entry Virtual Office Hour is on March 12th at 11:00am



HAWNY MEETING
March 19th | 3 PM | Zoom
[Meeting Link](#)



HMIS Data Quality Training
will be held virtually on
March 20th at 10:00am



This 22,500 sq ft building on Sycamore street will serve as an access center for community services. It will also serve as a shelter for men experiencing homelessness.

The one stop service access center plans to include medical and dental clinics, a kitchen and dining area, a community room, space for counseling and other partner services, and 94 shelter beds and 80 seasonal code blue beds.

The access center also plans to include a "Refresh Spot" with showers, laundry, restroom facilities, and fresh clothes.

Additionally, Executive Director Samuel DiVincenzo says they are working with DMV, DSS, and Social Security to get satellite offices on site in the building.

Samuel DiVincenzo says the project will open in phases so that they can adapt to unforeseen challenges as needed. The first phase has an anticipated opening date of September 2025.

One of the aspirations for the project is to serve as a code blue shelter in 2025.

Interested in learning More? [Click Here](#)

THANKS FOR READING

CONTACT

Homeless Alliance of WNY
625 Delaware Ave, Suite #410
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-853-1101
wnyhomeless.org



SUBMIT FEEDBACK
HERE



FACEBOOK

X (TWITTER)

LINKEDIN



VETERAN'S ONE-STOP CENTER PRESENTS:

Women Warriors: An Event
Honoring Women Veteran's

When: Saturday March 8th
10am-1pm
Where: 100 Gelston st.
Buffalo, NY 14213

There will be Lunch, prizes,
resources, workshops and
more.

Register at Vocwny.org