



# Salt Lake County Human Services, Homelessness, and Criminal Justice Reform Action Plan

## We have arrived at a unique time

in which Governor Cox, key legislators, the business community, Salt Lake County, Salt Lake City and other cities in Salt Lake County are investing more directly in solutions to help homelessness, which is different than in previous years. Within this momentum, we're collectively moving forward with **PURPOSE + PARTNERSHIP + URGENCY**.

## To achieve the shared vision

that homelessness is brief, rare, and non-recurring, it is essential that the systems connected with homelessness intersect and are functional. These complex systems include:

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE, HOUSING AND TEMPORARY SHELTER, AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND WORKFORCE.**

A weakness in any one element of the system as a whole, leads to a loss of efficiency and effectiveness.

## Salt Lake County has

**MAPPED THE GAPS IN THE SYSTEM, IDENTIFIED BARRIERS, AND ANALYZED THE COST**

of necessary additional investment. These are in alignment with the state's homelessness strategic plan and the Coordinated Homeless Services Plan signed by Governor Cox, Mayor Mendenhall, and Mayor Wilson in the Fall of 2023.



## Our Goals

### **Bolster System Access**

Create an efficient system to access housing, behavioral health, employment, and other needed services to reduce the number of people living on our streets, and develop clear, successful pathways to housing and additional opportunities for people experiencing homelessness.

### **Increase Collaboration/Efficiency = Reduce Costs**

Increase collaboration and systemic efficiency to realize cost savings and improved client outcomes.

### **Require Criminal Accountability**

Hold people accountable for criminal acts and prevent people from further penetrating the criminal justice system.

### **Decriminalize Homelessness**

Ensure accountability in our communities while not criminalizing acts related to homelessness.



## Supportive Housing Need

Salt Lake County estimates that 1,000 people are living unsheltered within the county.

**300 people** require intensive mental health treatment and housing support such as residential or ACT team levels of care.

**300 people** require permanent supportive housing with case management and a focus on mental health support.

**400 people** need various levels of housing which could be permanent supportive housing or rental subsidies with less intensive behavioral health supports.



## Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Challenges

- Systems are not aligned nor coordinated.
- America's drug crisis has led to increased drugs on our streets.
- Law enforcement response for people who are homeless or in mental health crisis is not standardized.
- Inconsistent Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT) officers.

Due to a lack of affordable housing and sufficient mental health treatment and other social services, jail has become the defacto system to serve people experiencing homelessness who have mental illness and substance use disorders.

**Length of stay in jail is 3.5x longer** for those in emergency shelters vs those in more permanent housing.

**Over 50 unhoused people** in jail at anytime, have a severe mental illness.

**1,200 people** who are in pretrial and probation, are unstably housed.



## Systemic Gaps

### Workforce:

Insufficient behavioral health workforce for mental health treatment and supportive housing needs.

### Health and Wellness Care:

Insufficient coordinated health and wellness care system to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

### Mental Health Services:

Insufficient mental health capacity to serve those with severe mental illness in the community and in the jail.

### Integrated Data System:

Need for integrated data system to better serve clients and evaluate system outcomes.



## Solution: Expand Housing Units in Salt Lake County

**Bring an additional 1,000 units online over the next 5 years.**

Current Housing		Additional Housing Needed
<b>92</b> Units operating in the group home facilities	+	<b>300</b> New Group Home Units
<b>115</b> Permanent Supportive Housing Units focused on mental health	+	<b>300</b> New Permanent Supportive Housing Units focused on mental health
<b>765</b> Transitional and Permanent Housing Units	+	<b>400</b> New Permanent Supportive Housing Units for people experiencing homelessness

### Progress:

- Opened Valley Oaks Group Home with 29 beds in November, 2023
- Opened Canyon Rim Group Home for 40 women in Millcreek on April 15, 2024
- Potential renovation and expansion (12 beds to 40) of existing group home – Salt Lake City
- Two sites purchased by non-profit partner for development of permanent supportive housing for those with serious mental illness (approximately 90 units)
- Studying capital and construction costs for a mix of housing to meet the 400 general PSH.



## Solution: Enforcement and Criminal Justice Reform

**Engage in system policy change and reform, to bring about cost savings and efficiencies for better outcomes.**

### Provide:

Regional SLCO-wide Crisis Intervention Training for local law enforcement.

**Progress:** Criminal Justice Advisory Council (CJAC) Work Group has been established and is working on a plan to implement/fund. Applying for Federal funding to support for training and coordination.

### Work:

With State to design and implement an effective HOME Court program.

**Progress:** SLCO Human Services is working with the state DHHS and court system on an implementation plan - \$2M funded for 5-year pilot.

### Support:

Regional Law Enforcement education and training for use of the new Receiving Center alternative to jail for those in substance use disorder (SUD) and mental health crisis.

**Progress:** CJAC Work Group has been established and is working with state and LE partners on guiding criteria and educational campaign for Spring 2025 opening.

### Reinforce:

SLC Justice Court Familiar Faces program.

**Progress:** This program is operational at the SLC Justice Courts. SLCO Criminal Justice Services is partnering with the court to support this initiative. The program continues to grow.



## Solution: Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) Task Force

**By further investing we can continue to get drugs off the street and hold criminals accountable.**

The federal government provides hard cost support for the local DEA operations but the salaries of the enforcement officers is a local responsibility.

DEA operations have not been as extensive as possible due to the decentralized law enforcement system in Salt Lake County.

Many local jurisdictions cannot afford officers.

Estimated Annual Amount =  
**\$1,600,000 for 10 additional officers**

### Progress:

- DEA Task Force Leadership presented to the SLCO Council on April 9, 2024
- DEA Task Force Leadership presented to the Criminal Justice Advisory Council on April 10, 2024
- DEA Task Force Expansion Working Group has been added to the Systemic Reform Committee structure to be led by Sheriff Rosie Rivera to review and determine the timing/cadence of adding 10 new DEA Task Force officers, the funding (County & Federal) and evaluate systemic impacts of the expansion to determine if other gaps are created and/or need to be addressed



## Solution: Build An Accountability and Justice Center

- 1. Add 100 bed community correctional step down model as part of the jail expansion to provide behavioral health treatment, workforce training, and other supports in an environment of accountability as people prepare to leave jail.**
- 2. Build 250-300 housing units focused on housing stability, mental health services, training and other support services for those with criminal involvement and experiencing homelessness or housing instability.**

### Progress:

- System Mapping and Personas Research Completed
- Held 2/4/24 Mapping and Personas Workshop for review and feedback with stakeholders
- Held 2 half day retreats with County Elected Officials, Staff and Legislators 3/11/24 & 3/14/24 to discuss and determine jail expansion and justice accountability center model
- Final decisions, programs and cost estimates in process
- On track to finalize and submit to County Council a ballot initiative in August for placement on the November 2024 ballot for voter approval



## Solution: Address Systemic Gaps

### Workforce:

Implement workforce training programs and a peer support specialist program to help meet service needs and provide employment opportunities.

**Progress:** Convening local peer support coalition to support their needs and receive feedback for program expansion. Program expansion ready for implementation once funding source is determined. Federal appropriation submitted through Congressman Curtis's office for pilot program. Additional applications for federal funding are being drafted. Also, SLCO supported legislation passed this session to assist with workforce needs.

### Health and Wellness Care:

Expand medical and street services for those who are unsheltered.

**Progress:** Program is developed and ready for expansion through 4th Street Clinic and VOA once funding source is determined.

### Mental Health Services:

Expand mental health supports in the jail and in expanded SMI housing.

**Progress:** Need currently being evaluated and finalized within the Jail Expansion/JAC design model.

### Integrated Data System:

Develop data sharing agreements and design and implement an integrated data system to support better client outcomes.

**Progress:** Work group has been established and data integration mapping both internal and external to SLCO is underway.