
Navigating the Coordinated Access Network

Person-Centered Planning for Individuals & Families
Experiencing Homelessness

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Presenters

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Agenda

What We Do

Brief background overview of the homelessness response system in Connecticut

The People We Serve

An introduction to the people and special populations served by the Connecticut homelessness response system

How Coordinated Access Works

How providers coordinate to identify, divert, assess, match, and house people experiencing homelessness

What We Do

Brief background overview of the homelessness response system in Connecticut

How we approach our work

The Connecticut homelessness response system is built on principles and practices that enable us to effectively end homelessness

- We use a **Housing First approach**, which removes barriers to help homeless individuals obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible, without unnecessary prerequisites.
- Our successes are built on the foundation of **collaboration and cooperation** among state agencies, over 200 programs, and other stakeholders committed to ending homelessness
- **We use data** to track our progress, improve our practices, and maximize our efficiencies

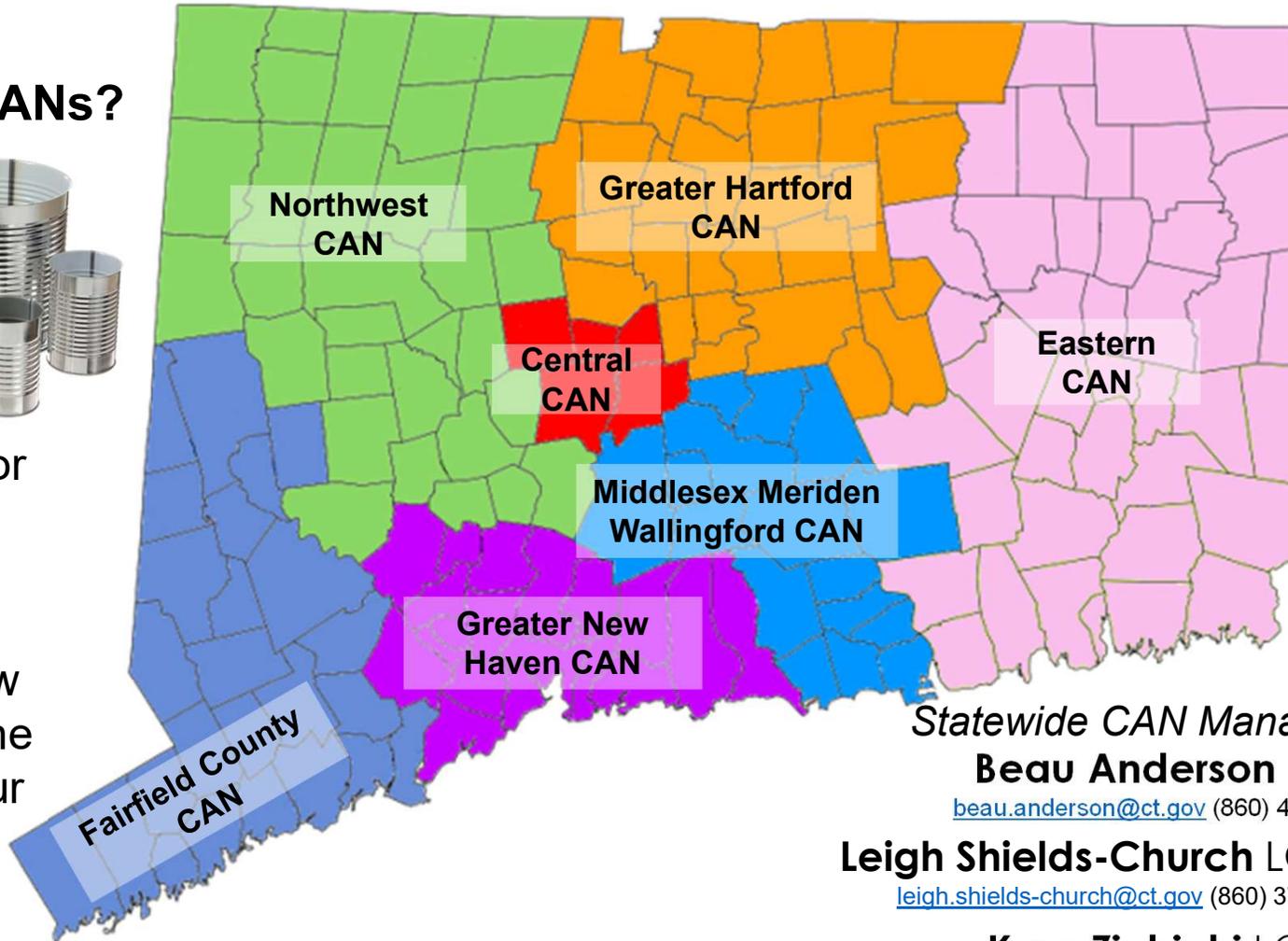


CAN Geography & Contact Info

What are CANs?



CAN stands for **C**oordinated **A**ccess **N**etwork and CANs are how we organize the work within our statewide system.



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CONNECTICUT
Department of Housing

Central CAN

Berlin, Bristol, New Britain, Plainville, Southington

Fairfield County CAN

Bethel, Bridgeport, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Cos Cob, Danbury, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Sherman, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, Wilton

Eastern CAN

Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Danielson, Eastford, East Lyme, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Hampton, Killingly, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Mansfield, Montville, Mystic, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainfield, Pomfret, Preston, Putnam, Salem, Scotland, Sprague, Sterling, Stonington, Thompson, Union, Voluntown, Waterford, Willimantic, Willington, Windham, Woodstock

Greater Hartford CAN

Andover, Avon, Bloomfield, Bolton, Canton, East Granby, East Hartford, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rockville, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Stafford, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, West Hartford, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks

Greater New Haven CAN

Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Branford, Derby, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, West Haven, Woodbridge

Middlesex Meriden Wallingford CAN

Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Killingworth, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Saybrook, Portland, Wallingford, Westbrook

Northwest CAN

Barkhamsted, Bethlehem, Burlington, Canaan, Cheshire, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Middlebury, Morris, Naugatuck, New Hartford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Plymouth, Prospect, Salisbury, Sharon, Southbury, Thomaston, Torrington, Warren, Washington, Waterbury, Watertown, Winchester, Winsted, Wolcott, Woodbury

Guide to Commonly Used Acronyms

BNL – By Name List. A registry of people experiencing homelessness, by name.

CAN – Coordinated Access Network(s). The organizing geographies used for coordinated entry system.

CoC – Continuum of Care. The organizing geographies used for service delivery of federal resources.

DMHAS – Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. State of Connecticut.

DOH – Department of Housing. State of Connecticut.

ES – Emergency Shelter.

HMIS – Homeless Management Information System. This is our centralized database of client data.

HUD – Housing of Urban Development. Federal government.

PSH – Permanent Supportive Housing. A long-term, low-barrier housing assistance resource that includes support services.

RRH – Rapid Re-Housing. A time-limited assistance resource to help people quickly exit homelessness.

VI-SPDAT – Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool. The common assessment tool used to identify level of service need and aid in prioritization for housing resource.

The People We Serve



An introduction to the people and special populations served by the Connecticut homelessness response system

Literally Homeless

The population we serve are those who meet the HUD definition of literal homelessness, which is required for entry into homeless projects throughout the state.

- An individual or family is **literally homeless** if they lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence meant for human habitation.
- Individuals and families who live in a public or private space not meant for human habitation are **literally homeless**.
- Individuals and families who live in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other temporary arrangement funded by a charity or government are **literally homeless**.
- Individuals who enter an institution (hospital, long-term care, incarceration, etc.) from literal homelessness and remain there for 90 days or less are **literally homeless**.

Chronically Homeless

All three of these criteria must be satisfied for a client to meet the HUD definition of chronically homeless.

Must be Literally Homeless

currently living in a place not meant for human habitation or an emergency shelter

Must have a qualifying disabling condition

clients need to have a disability that is or can be documented by a licensed clinical provider

Must meet Homeless History requirement

clients need to have been literally homeless for the past 12 consecutive months or have 4 episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years that add up to 12 or more months

Individuals and families experiencing chronic homelessness receive first priority for certain housing resources



Qualifying Disabling Conditions

Physical, mental or emotional impairment – includes impairment caused by alcohol or drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, or brain injury

- Is expected to be long-continuing or of indefinite duration
- and**
- Substantially impedes the person's ability to live independently
- and**
- Could be improved by more suitable housing

Developmental Disability

HIV/AIDS



Other special populations served by our system

Our homelessness response system incorporates especially vulnerable populations into the process, ensuring that they can be prioritized and matched appropriately

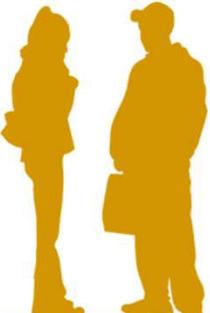
Veterans

People who served in the U.S. military and are experiencing homelessness



Youth

Young adults aged 18-24 who are experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness



Any person actively fleeing domestic violence can be considered literally homeless

Survivors



Families who are experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness

Families



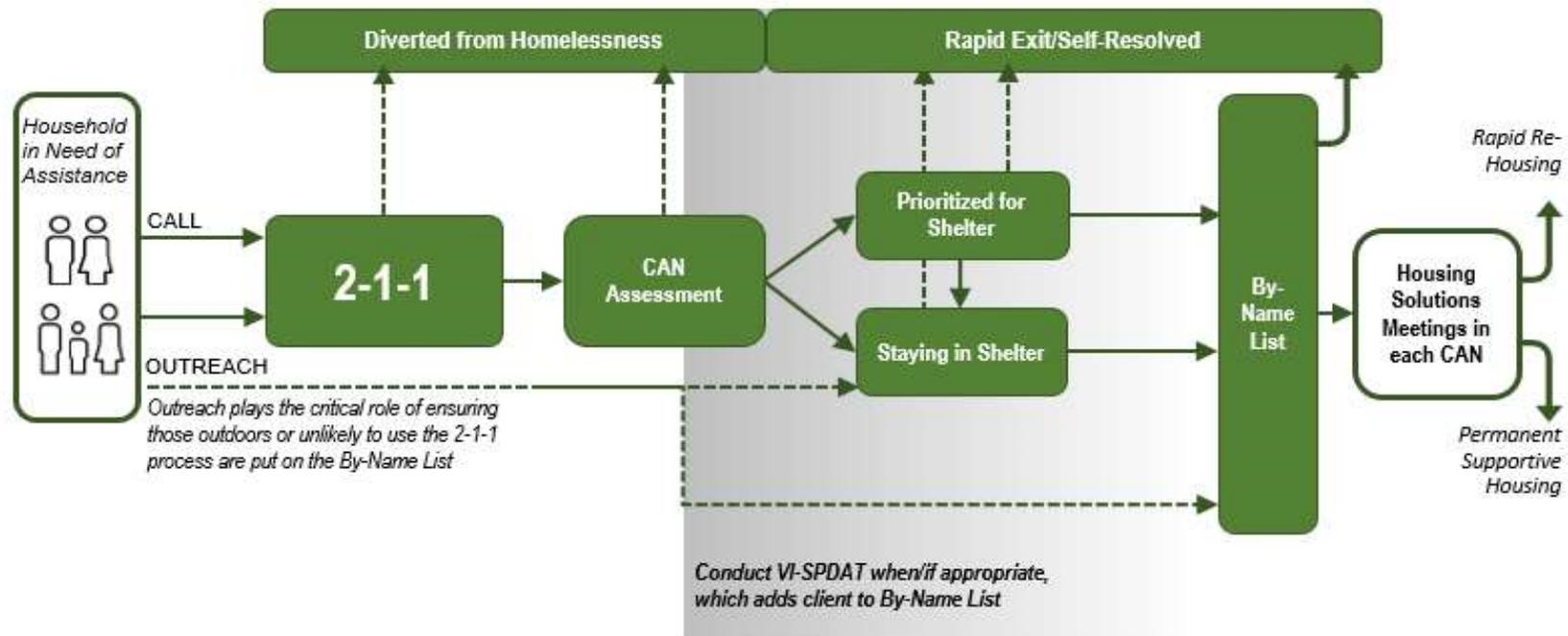


How Coordinated Access Works

How providers coordinate to identify, divert, assess, match, and house people experiencing homelessness

CAN System Overview

A high-level diagram of the coordinated access process from entry to exit



CT System: Identify

Connecticut has a comprehensive outreach system, which is utilized in conjunction with coordinated entry to identify individuals in housing crisis

- The vast majority of those who may be chronically homeless are identified through outreach, at Coordinated Access or shelter entry, through soup kitchens or interactions with other providers
- Our coordinated entry system, which includes partners such as 2-1-1, hospitals, and Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) expands our reach
- We seek to identify clients through self report as well as observation



Diversion from Homelessness

CAN staff are trained to explore client strengths to reconnect individuals to natural supports, negotiate with landlords, and identify solutions to resolve housing crisis

Diversion is any strategy that prevents homelessness by helping people to identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to or maintain permanent housing.



POSSIBLE DIVERSION OUTCOMES

Permanently back
living with friends
or family

Return to their
own residence

Temporarily
diverted as they
seek new housing

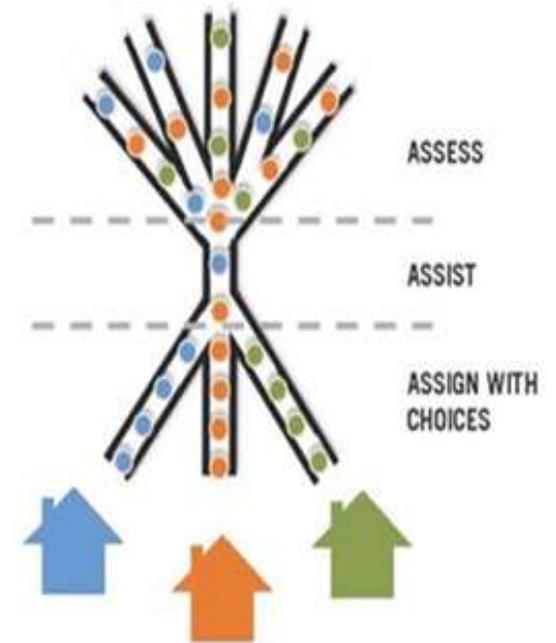
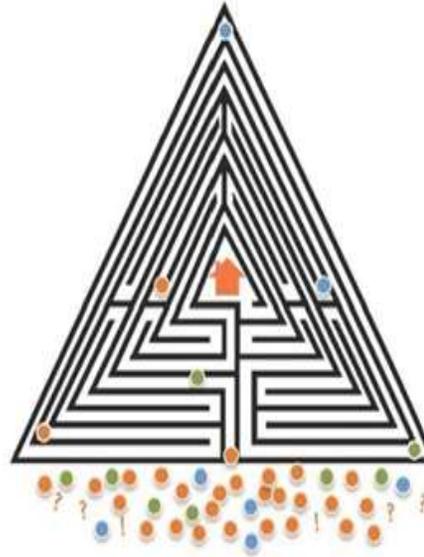
Relocating
permanently to
safe place out of
town

According to the best available data, 25-30% of all people in housing crisis are diverted from homelessness each month statewide.

CT System: Assess

Coordinated Access Networks (CANs) assess the housing needs of all individuals experiencing homelessness

- Individuals identified through outreach and those who present at CAN appointment/shelter entry identifiable as potentially CH will be assessed with VI-SPDAT immediately
- Most individuals entering the CT system are assessed after 14 days (period of time during which the bulk of clients self-resolve their homelessness in CT)



CT System: Match

CANs hold regular matching meetings to identify appropriate housing opportunities for clients on the BNL who have matched to a housing resource

- BNLs for all CANs are maintained in the statewide HMIS, and are updated in real-time
- CANs conduct bi-weekly case conferencing to prioritize and match individuals to housing interventions
- Housing resources available through the CAN system are prioritized to those who are verified as meeting the chronic homeless definition.



Housing

The housing and selection process has changed now that Coordinated Access has been implemented.

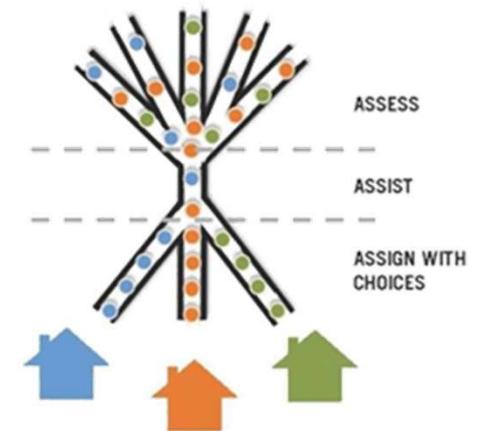
Process Before Coordinated Access

- First-come, first-served waitlist
- Lottery-based waitlists
- Eligibility based on self-report of homelessness
- Eligibility not verified prior to being added onto the waitlist
- Households may be on waitlist for years



Process With Coordinated Access

- No waitlists maintained for Homeless Special Populations units
- Vacancies are reported to CAN by the property manager
- CAN will use BNL to identify most vulnerable household that meets eligibility requirements
- Service provider will assist client through lease up



CAN Meeting Structure

- Leadership / Steering Committee Meetings
Executive Directors, Program Managers
- Operational Meetings
Program Managers, Community Partners
- Housing Solutions Meetings
Direct-Service Staff, Case Managers, Housing Providers
- Outreach
PATH Outreach Staff, State Funded Outreach Staff, Local Outreach Providers

Advantages (and Challenges) of Coordinated Access

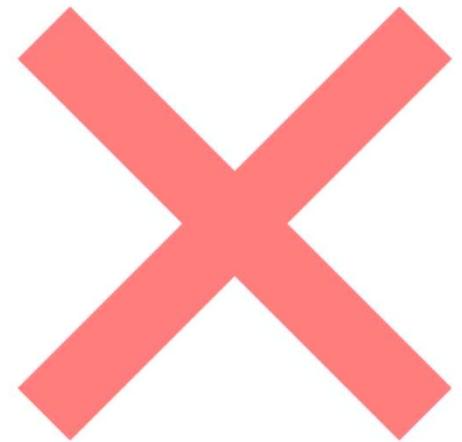
Advantages

- Local coordination and implementation of homelessness response
- Fosters collaboration among providers, bringing everyone to the table
- Clearly defines responsibilities for people experiencing homelessness in the region – not *my* client, but *our* client
- Systems-based approach is fairer to those who are most vulnerable, least able to self-advocate



Challenges

- Long-term sustainability – CAN is sustainable, but it is also new and CANs are working through the specifics of long-term planning
- Diverse geography creates logistical challenges in CANs with regard to moving people to where resources and assistance are available
- Providers lost some autonomy in transition to CAN
- Information/education about CAN, and managing expectations about what CAN “should” do vs. the reality of what CAN does



Additional Housing Resources

The resources designated for people experiencing homelessness are put to use via the coordinated access networks, so the information and resources listed below may be helpful in assisting people who have housing needs that are not within the scope of the homelessness response system.

- **2-1-1 Housing** – Includes links and information about a wide range of housing topics, and can also be accessed by dialing 2-1-1. <http://uwc.211ct.org/categorysearch/housing/>
- **CT Housing Search** – A free resource for finding housing anywhere in the state of Connecticut, updated daily. <http://www.cthousingsearch.org>
- **CT Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)** – A list of all current housing choice voucher (section 8) waiting list openings in Connecticut. Users can register to receive free alerts when new postings are made. <http://www.cthcvp.org>
- **Youth-Help** – Information about resources for and the rights of youth who are unstably housed. <http://www.youth-help.org>

Questions



And answers.