

Since its inception in 2010 as a subsidiary of AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC), the Center for Housing & Health (CHH) has been a leader in improving the lives of Chicagoans by bridging the healthcare and housing systems for people experiencing homelessness and living with chronic illnesses.

CHH has led numerous large cross-sector collaborations and spurred the creation of over **1,200** permanent supportive housing units across Cook County. Permanent supportive housing, a model that combines affordable housing with intensive supportive services, is a proven way to keep individuals and families sustainably housed for the long term.

To create this first-ever set of CHH policy priorities, staff worked alongside people with lived experience of homelessness, members of the housing support service workforce, and advocates from across Illinois. Recognizing that historic and current racist policies created the crisis of homelessness, CHH operates from the framework that “**Racism is a Public Health Crisis.**” Through that framework, CHH is proud to prioritize the following issues in partnership and coalition with local and state partners:

## Illinois

### **SB2158 | Stop the Revolving Door from Re-Entry to Homelessness to Prison**

Housing is the basis for stability and success, but current Illinois registry and housing banishment laws systematically displace, exclude and reincarcerate people—disproportionately Black men—with past convictions, while failing to support survivors. CHH is proud to work alongside [The Chicago 400](#) to support **SB2158**, legislation that would reduce housing banishment zones from 500 to 250 feet, allow Illinoisans experiencing homelessness to register at police stations annually or quarterly (like housed people do) rather than weekly, and shrink the registry footprint by reducing failure to register penalties from a felony to a misdemeanor.

### **1115 Medicaid Waiver | Behavioral Health Transformation**

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) application to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to extend by five years an existing **1115 Medicaid Waiver – Behavioral Health Transformation** has been approved. HFS applied for this five-year extension to provide additional services not yet covered under Illinois’ Medicaid or Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) program. Three examples of the additional service categories in the 1115 Waiver include housing support, employment assistance, and services for people returning from prison or jail. CHH will advocate for full and equitable implementation of the 1115 Waiver to ensure that Illinoisans enrolled in Medicaid who are living with chronic health conditions, experiencing homelessness or housing instability, have experience with the criminal legal system, and/or need employment assistance will benefit from these additional services and have a better opportunity to achieve their best health. One focus of CHH’s work will be to advocate for Medicaid to adopt streamlined billing and reimbursement systems for supportive housing services.

### **State Budget | Ending homelessness for people living with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions, substance use disorders, or HIV**

Housing and health are deeply interconnected. In coalition with our organizational partners, CHH will advocate for increased state funding for housing and supportive services for people experiencing homelessness and housing instability, who are also living with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions, substance use disorder and HIV. Permanent supportive housing—affordable housing coupled with supportive services—is a model proven to keep individuals and families sustainably housed for the long-term. Along with our partners, CHH will also work to ensure the timely allocation and spending of these funds by state agencies, with special priority on getting money to the state’s permanent supportive housing providers to ensure that people living with chronic health conditions can lead their healthiest lives.

# City of Chicago

**City Budget |** Ending homelessness for people living with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions, substance use disorders, or HIV

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is a model that combines housing with supportive services that help people remain stably housed. CHH is advocating for funding in the City's budget for affordable housing and supportive services, including **\$11.2 million** for fiscal year 2025 (FY25) for the Flexible Housing Pool Program, to create a path to housing stability for the **68,000** Chicagoans currently experiencing homelessness. This funding must be spent in a timely manner to ensure that Chicagoans experiencing homelessness have access to the housing and supportive services they deserve, and that organizations providing these services can do so without financial disruption in order to adequately attract and retain staff.

This list of policy priorities is not an exhaustive list and does not encompass all the policy and advocacy work being supported by the Center for Housing & Health. As this list reflects city and state legislation and administrative policy, CHH will monitor and engage with emerging issues that arise when they align with our mission, vision, and values. We will also continue to support legislation that meaningfully addresses racial health equity and impacts people experiencing homelessness and living with chronic health conditions, including mental health conditions, substance use disorder and HIV.

---

Keep up with the Center for Housing and Health's policy & advocacy work by signing up for our Mobile Action Network! You can sign up by texting **AFC** to **40649** or by visiting **[p2a.co/sjJqISb](https://p2a.co/sjJqISb)**.



**[p2a.co/sjJqISb](https://p2a.co/sjJqISb)**

For more information, please contact:



**Dominique Chew**  
Housing Policy & Advocacy Manager  
**[dchew@aidschicago.org](mailto:dchew@aidschicago.org)** | (620) 217-6916

July 2024

Center for Housing & Health | 2024-2025 Policy Priorities

200 W Monroe St, Ste 1150, Chicago, IL 60606

**[housingforhealth.org](https://housingforhealth.org)**