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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Establishing the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order establishing the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness.

1. Background and Need

Homelessness in Colorado has changed over the past decade. The homeless population has become increasingly dominated by families with children.

There were an estimated 9,725 persons in the seven-county Denver metropolitan area who were homeless as of January 2003. One third of these people, 3,059, were children and families. It is estimated that the annual rate of homelessness in just the Denver-metro area is more than 31,000 persons each year.

Roughly 71 percent of the homeless population were sleeping in emergency shelters, on the streets or in their car, were camping out, staying night-to-night at welfare hotels, or just coming out of institutions with nowhere to go.

Chronic homelessness affects both single individuals and families. Half of the homeless population in the seven-county metropolitan area had been homeless for less than 90 days, and more than 10 percent had been homeless for more than two years. Reasons for homelessness include unemployment, inability to pay rent or mortgage, substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence.

2. Mission and Scope

- A. The Homeless Policy Academy was an interagency working group organized within the Colorado Department of Human Services. The Colorado Department of Human Services will terminate the Homeless Policy Academy and transfer all duties, authorities, and funding to the Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness created by this Executive Order.
- B. The Homeless Policy Academy functioned as the State of Colorado's authority on homeless issues. The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness will assume the duties, authority, and funding previously belonging to the Academy.

- C. The Council shall operate with existing state resources and staff with which the Homeless Policy Academy currently operates. Funds from grants and foundations will continue to be permitted.
- D. The Governor shall appoint Council members or may delegate appointment authority to department directors, and shall choose two liaisons between the state Council and the federal Interagency Council who will act as co chairs of the Council. Council members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor, or if appointed by department director, members shall serve at the discretion of the department director.
- E. The Council shall serve as the advisory body to the Governor on housing needs and homeless issues. The Council shall make recommendations to the co chairs on homeless policy and funding priorities.
- F. Council activities may include developing an outreach and education campaign to reduce the stigma of homelessness, increasing access to mainstream resources such as TANF or CHP + assistance, expanding and maximizing service resources such as mental health/substance abuse services, expanding and maximizing housing resources, and improving cross system policies and procedures such as intake processes at shelters.

2. Directive

The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness is hereby created. The Council will assume all duties, authority, and funding previously maintained by the Homeless Policy Academy.

3. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in force until further modification or rescission by the Governor.

Given under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado this _____
day of October, 2003.

Bill Owens
Governor