



New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness

2000-2010 State Advocacy Agenda

Tier 1 Priorities

Secure a dedicated source of funding for the New Mexico Housing Trust Fund

The NM Housing Trust Fund was created in 2005 to fund the development of affordable housing throughout New Mexico. Since then, the Housing Trust Fund has leveraged over \$116 million in other housing funding and funded the development of over 1,374 housing units throughout the state. However, the Housing Trust Fund needs a dedicated source of funding in order to continue being a viable funding source for affordable housing development and so that it can benefit New Mexico's lowest-income residents. Funding for the Trust Fund has been inconsistent; it received an initial investment of \$10 million in 2005 but only received \$1 or \$2 million in 2006, 2007 and 2008. In 2009, the Housing Trust Fund did not receive any funding.

Create a Housing Support Services Fund

Housing support services are services that help homeless individuals and families obtain housing and remain in housing. While the exact type of services vary from household to household, housing support services help tenants with three key goals: 1) Overcoming obstacles to obtaining housing 2) Finding and moving into affordable, permanent housing 3) Successfully remaining in housing. Unfortunately, there are few dollars available to fund these types of flexible services. A state-funded Housing Support Services Fund would address this critical gap.

Increase state funding for General Assistance program so that benefits are maintained at the current level.

The General Assistance program serves the most vulnerable New Mexicans. General Assistance provides small amounts of cash assistance to people who are seriously disabled and who have very low incomes. In some cases, it helps children in difficult circumstances. For many people who receive General Assistance, this is their only source of income. As a result, General Assistance is a critical source of income that is the difference between being able to pay for housing and other basic necessities and becoming homeless.

Tier 2 Priorities

Support implementation of the Behavioral Health Collaborative's Long Range Supportive Housing Plan

The Supportive Housing Plan was completed in December 2007 and two pilot projects are already underway. The NMCEH will support funding requests and other policy requests by the Behavioral Health Collaborative to continue implementation of the Supportive Housing Plan. (A link to the Supportive Housing Plan can be found at: http://www.bhc.state.nm.us/pdf/BH_Collaborative_Housing_Plan_December_2007.pdf).

Advocate for accessible, affordable, and accountable health care for all people living in New Mexico

The NMCEH believes that everyone should have access to affordable health care. Providing affordable health care to all New Mexican would prevent homelessness, since many people become homeless due to illness or injury. The NMCEH is one of the Health Care for All Campaign steering committee members. Please visit the Health Action New Mexico website to learn more about health care reform in New Mexico at www.healthactionnm.org.

Protect the right and ability of non-profit organizations to lobby on behalf of the people they serve.

Non-profit that have 501(c)3 status from the IRS can and should engage in lobbying activities, such as meeting with legislators or city councilors, speaking at committee hearings at the Capitol or educating members about how legislators have voted on a particular issue. These activities are essential to the mission of nonprofits that advocate on behalf of vulnerable people.

Tier 3 Priorities

Expand Workman's Compensation to include farm and ranch workers

The New Mexico Center on Law & Poverty is advocating for changes to the Workman's Compensation Act that would expand Workman's Compensation to include farm and ranch workers in mandatory coverage. Workers' compensation insurance provides medical and indemnity benefits to workers who are injured on the job. The NMCEH supports this effort. To learn more please visit the New Mexico Center on Law & Poverty website at www.nmpovertylaw.org.