



June 22, 2012

## The Westchester County Continuum of Care Partnership for the Homeless Unmet Needs and Proposed Priorities

### Major Priority Areas:

#### 1. Transitional Housing for Families that Incentivizes Employment

Many homeless families in shelters and transitional housing don't work because they fear losing their shelter allowance, shelter supplement, and other benefits. A transitional housing rent subsidy for employed families will encourage employment and can remain in place until the family earns enough to self-sustain.

#### 2. Permanent Housing + Supportive Services for Chronically Homeless and/or Disabled Individuals

Although the county has made strides in this area, there continues to be a major need to provide permanent housing and ongoing supportive services for this population. With current programs at, or close to, capacity, many individuals who are eligible remain in homeless shelters for long periods of time. Our experience has proven that securing permanent housing and providing ongoing services is successful. Placement in permanent housing is the first step, but being able to provide intensive services after placement is critical.

### Other Populations in Need:

#### 1. Families with Undocumented Heads of Household

Families with at least one documented child are eligible for shelter and transitional housing, but their benefits are calculated only by the number of documented individuals in the household. This means that a family of two undocumented parents, one undocumented older child, and one documented younger child (born here) gets public assistance for one, which does not meet their basic needs or enable the family to secure permanent housing.

#### 2. Formerly Incarcerated Singles

This population has gone largely unnoticed. At any given point more than 20% of the homeless singles population has been formerly incarcerated. Many individuals are released directly to shelters, without a plan for housing and services.