



What is Zero: 2016 Rhode Island?

No one wants to see homeless Rhode Islanders yet there are hundreds of individuals and families who spend their nights in shelters, cars, parks and other places not meant for habitation. In 2014 Rhode Island made a commitment to both house all those who are currently homeless and create a system that is able to rapidly house individuals and families who lose housing in the future due to financial difficulties or domestic disruption. This commitment was made by signing on to a national movement, the Zero:2016 campaign.

Zero: 2016 is a movement of communities working to end veteran homelessness by the close of 2015 and end chronic homelessness by the end of 2016. It is an initiative of Community Solutions, a national organization whose mission is to, "work toward a future without homelessness, in which poverty never follows families beyond a single generation. We do it by helping communities become better problem solvers, so they can fix the expensive, badly designed systems that low income people must rely on every day."

Rhode Island was selected as one of 5 states and 67 communities to tackle ending homelessness with help from Community Solutions. In addition to embracing the goal of ending homelessness for veterans by the end of 2015 and for the chronically homeless by the end of 2016, **Rhode Island became the first state or community to include a goal to end family homelessness which we plan to do by 2017.**

Ending homelessness does not mean no one will ever be homeless again. But, ending homelessness means reaching functional zero, a time when the number of newly homeless individuals does not exceed the average number of individuals housed in the previous three months. Furthermore, we, as a community, commit to having future episodes of homelessness be **rare, brief and non-recurring**, by utilizing an effective coordinated entry, housing placement and wrap-around service delivery system.

Rhode Island can be the first state to end homelessness.

Ending homelessness and creating a system to prevent homelessness requires funding for affordable housing, housing vouchers and homeless diversion programs as well as Rhode Island's housing and homelessness organizations working together and building off best practices from throughout the country. This work is data-driven and proving successful. We are on track to house the homeless in Rhode Island and will be successful with the commitment and participation of our entire Rhode Island community.



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