



NATIONAL LAW CENTER
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

2019

State Index on Youth Homelessness





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by Dylan Waguespack and Brandy Ryan, J.D.

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About True Colors United

True Colors United implements innovative solutions to youth homelessness that focus on the unique experiences of LGBTQ young people.

In the United States, 4.2 million youth experience homelessness each year, with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their non-LGBTQ peers. True Colors United is committed to changing that.

If we can ensure that services are safe for and affirming of the most impacted young people, we can be confident that they'll be safe and affirming for everyone. We believe that youth homelessness is a community issue. Real change can happen when people come together with a shared vision.

For more information about True Colors United and to access research publications such as this Index, please visit its website at truecolorsunited.org.

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About The National Law Center On Homelessness & Poverty

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (Law Center) is the only national organization dedicated to using the power of the law to end and prevent homelessness. The Law Center works to expand access to affordable housing, meet the immediate and long-term needs of those who are homeless or at risk, and strengthen the social safety-net through policy advocacy, public education, impact litigation, and legal training and support.

Our vision is for an end to homelessness in America. A home for every family and individual will be the norm and not the exception, a right and not a privilege. For more information about the Law Center and to access publications such as this report, please visit its website at www.nlchorg.

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Glossary Of Terms

True Colors United and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty were intentional when choosing the terms found throughout the Index. This included incorporating language that youth experiencing homelessness may use to describe themselves, as well as ensuring that the chosen terms accurately convey how the community wants to be—and should be—represented. To provide clarity, below is a list of commonly used terms and acronyms, arranged alphabetically, found throughout the Index.

C

Child

The Index is about youth experiencing homelessness. It uses various non-legal terms, such as “young people,” “youth,” “youth on their own,” and “unaccompanied youth.” References to these terms include youth who have not reached the legal age of majority and/or who have left home, either at the demand or request of parents or guardians, or of their own volition. By referring to “youth” or “young people,” rather than “children,” we attempt to recognize the unique developmental stage and needs of older children and young adults. The terms “child,” “children,” or “minor” are also used where legally significant in order to track terms that

are used in state statutes, codes, and regulations. Most states define these terms to include youth up to the age of 18, but a growing majority have raised the age for youth either in foster care, the juvenile legal system, or both.

Cisgender

Denoting or relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

Couch surfing

The act of moving from one temporary living arrangement to another without having a secure and stable place to be.

E

Environment

For the specific purposes of this report, use of the term “environment” refers to the physical, social, or economic factors that influence state homeless youth policy/program implementation.

F

Federal Runaway & Homeless Youth Act

The federal law that provides funding for three pillars of early intervention to address youth experiencing homelessness: street outreach, basic centers, and transitional living.

G

Gender Identity

One’s individual concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither. How one perceives themselves and what they call themselves. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression

External appearance of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut or voice, and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

H

Homeless

Refers to experiences of sleeping in places not meant for living, staying in shelters, staying in hotels, motels, or campgrounds due to a lack of alternatives staying in cars, parks, or public spaces, or temporarily staying with others (“couch surfing”) while lacking a safe and stable alternative living arrangement. This term can also refer to experiences of living in unsafe or substandard housing, or experiences of chronic housing instability.

L

LGBTQ

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and/or questioning.

M

McKinney-Vento

Refers to the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431.

R

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA)

For the purposes of the Index, the term RHYA is used as shorthand for a law or series of laws at the state level that provides a significant level of prevention, identification, and/or funded early intervention services (drop-in centers, street outreach, community programs, etc.), coordinated entry and assessment (emergency/crisis response, shelters, host homes, transitional housing, etc.), or tailored housing solutions (non-time limited affordable housing, short-term assistance, etc) specifically for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

S

Sexual Orientation

an inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people.

State

The use of the terms “state” and “states” include the District of Columbia, unless otherwise noted.

Status offense

Status offenses are behaviors or actions that are legal for adults but punishable by law when performed by legal minors, under the age of 18, e.g., truancy or running away from home.

System

For the specific purposes of this report, the term “system” refers to features of an institution or organization that influence state homeless youth policy/program implementation.

U

Unaccompanied youth

youth not in the physical custody of their parent, guardian, or custodian.

Y

Youth

Unless otherwise defined within the text, when we use the terms “youth” we are specifically referring to young people ages 12-18.

Young Adults

Unless otherwise defined within the text, when we use the terms young adults we are specifically referring young people ages 18-24.

Introduction

Each year, True Colors United and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty collaborate to research, analyze, and publish an annual State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) that measures, scores and reports on the systems, environment, and laws of all states as they relate to preventing and ending youth homelessness. The Index paints a broad picture of where states currently stand in these categories and how they can collectively and individually improve their measures to end and prevent youth homelessness. The Index also provides an assessment of all states' current capacity to successfully prevent and end youth homelessness based on certain benchmarks and criteria. These scores and assessments should serve as a guide for policymakers and advocates on how to make changes to existing policies, systems, and services towards ending and preventing youth homelessness at the state level.

The goal of the Index is to support advocates, policymakers, and youth themselves by identifying problems in states' laws, systems, and environments toward ending youth homelessness, and making recommendations for addressing these problems based on both well-proven and promising practices in other jurisdictions. Additionally, the Index establishes a baseline that can be used for measuring annual progress and that encourages and supports continual improvement in states' laws, systems, and services toward ending youth homelessness.

On a single night in January 2018, the United States government counted 36,361 unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness under the age of 25.¹ This number is an underestimation and fails to provide a complete picture of the problem of youth homelessness in America, particularly because youth experiencing homelessness are largely hidden and difficult to identify.² Even more problematic is the fact that the number of youth experiencing homelessness is not decreasing. For example, public schools have seen the number of unaccompanied students experiencing homelessness increase by at least 21% from 2012 to 2015.³

Annually, one in 30 youth ages 13 to 17 and one in 10 young adults ages 18 to 25 endure some form of homelessness.⁴ Latinx youth make up 33% of 18- to 25-year-olds reporting homelessness. African American youth are also overrepresented, with an 83% increased risk of having experienced homelessness over youth of other races or ethnicities. African American youth who identify as LGBTQ—especially young men aged 18 to 25—reported the highest rates of homelessness. Nearly one in four African American young men, ages 18 to 25, identifying as LGBTQ reported homelessness in the last 12 months, and this does not even include those who only reported couch-surfing.⁵ Such findings are consistent with the disparities that have been found among in-school suspensions, incarceration, and foster care placement.⁶

36,361

unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness under the age of 25 were counted on a single night in January 2018, by the United States government.¹

1 in 30

youth ages 13 to 17 and one in 10 young adults ages 18 to 25 endure some form of homelessness annually.⁴

33%

percentage of youth accessing homelessness services who identified as LGBTQ according to a recent survey of service providers.

LGBTQ youth have a 120% increased risk of experiencing homelessness compared to youth who identify as heterosexual and cisgender. According to a service provider report, LGBTQ youth make up 33% of young people accessing homeless services.⁷ LGBTQ youth of color—particularly transgender youth of color—are more likely to experience violent crime, including sexual assault, police violence, robbery, and murder.⁸ Homelessness makes them even more prone to experiencing these traumatic events. LGBTQ youth of color are also vulnerable to discrimination in education, employment, housing, and more likely to be involved in the criminal legal system. These manifestations of institutional racism contribute to pathways into homelessness for these young people, and it stymies their ability to exit homelessness.⁹

Transgender youth represent around 1% of the general youth population, yet a study conducted by the Family and Youth Services Bureau, published by the Administration for Children and Families in 2016, found that 6.8% of youth served by RHY Street Outreach grantees are transgender. Among those youth, nearly one-third disclosed that they do not identify as either male or female.¹⁰ Among transgender people of all ages, one-third report experiencing homelessness at some point in their life, and 12% report experiencing homelessness in the previous year.¹¹

LGBTQ youth of color encounter numerous barriers as they attempt to access care and support from programs that are not designed to serve them. Health care, social services, housing, employment, and education systems are ill-equipped to serve unaccompanied minors, and those working in them are often under trained to meet the specific needs of young people experiencing homelessness who have been stigmatized due to lack of housing, racism, homophobia, and transphobia.

States must be held accountable for how they treat all youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth of color, who are particularly vulnerable. This is particularly important at this time, when federal agencies are loosening, and in some cases dismantling, federal-level protections for LGBTQ youth. At a broader societal level, states must commit to the difficult work of eradicating the racism, homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of discrimination in our culture that have led to homelessness for too many young people. The good news is that states as politically divergent as New York, Louisiana, West Virginia, Washington, and Minnesota are making significant strides in advancing policies that benefit youth experiencing homelessness. No matter where readers live, they should be able to find a state with a similar political climate in their geographic region to point to as an example of a jurisdiction working hard to address the issues raised in this report.

This report provides a starting place to explore potential challenges and solutions on the state level in addressing and preventing youth homelessness. State and local advocates, officials, and others should feel free to contact the authors of this State Index report to ask questions or discuss additional resources and strategies that can be used to advance best practices in youth homelessness laws, policies, systems, and environments.

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¹ Henry, M., Mahathey, A., Morrill, T., (2018). The 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress. The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

² Nat'l Law Ctr on Homelessness & Poverty, Don't Count On It: How the HUD Point-in-Time Count Underestimates the Homelessness Crisis in America (2017), <https://www.nlchp.org/documents/HUD-PIT-report2017>

³ Federal Data Summary - School Years 2012-13 to 2014-15: Education for Homeless Children and Youth. National Center for Homeless Education. <https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/data-comp-1213-1415.pdf>.

⁴ Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

⁵ Id., see also Morton, M. H., Samuels, G. M., Dworsky, A., & Patel, S. (2018). Missed opportunities: LGBTQ youth homelessness in America. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

⁶ Id. at Missed Opportunities.

⁷ Choi, S.K., Wilson, B.D.M., Shelton, J., & Gates, G. (2015). Serving Our Youth 2015: The Needs and Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth Experiencing Homelessness. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute with True Colors United.

⁸ National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP). (2016). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-Affected Hate Violence in 2016. New York, NY: Emily Waters.

⁹ Price, C., Wheeler, C., Shelton, J., & Maury, M. (Eds.). (2016). At the Intersections: A collaborative report on LGBTQ youth homelessness. True Colors United and the National LGBTQ Task Force.

¹⁰ Administration for Children and Families. Street Outreach Program Data Collection Study Final Report. April 2016.

¹¹ National Center for Transgender Equality. U.S. Trans Survey. December 2016.

Results & Findings

The Index seeks to evaluate each state and the District of Columbia's investment towards preventing and ending youth homelessness on certain metrics and benchmarks across laws and policies, systems, and environment. These metrics may look discrete at first blush, but they often overlap and inform each other in practice. And they certainly do not exist in a vacuum. The metrics included in the Index are not an exclusive list of all issues that states must address in order to prevent and end youth homelessness. But they are an integral part of a more comprehensive solution to achieving this goal. In fact, some states are already taking innovative approaches to address youth homelessness that are outside the scope of the Index. While the Index may not capture the full dynamics of how a state tackles youth homelessness, it provides a snapshot, with the metrics tied to constructive steps states could take in order to improve their laws, policies, systems, and environments for youth experiencing homelessness. Annual updates of the Index will include additional metrics as states begin to make progress and as innovative practices start to become more commonplace. States should address the gaps identified in the metrics and, if possible, incorporate lessons learned from innovative approaches happening on the local, state, and/or federal levels. Some notable legislative achievements that complement the metrics are included in the Index. The Index also provides overall recommendations that apply to all states.

To find out how each state performed against the Index's metrics and the existing gaps that need to be addressed, please refer to the individual state scorecards in Appendix B and the detailed state scoring spreadsheet, available online at: bit.ly/2019StateIndex. Each scorecard provides individual states' quick facts and statistics that break down their ranking, their overall score, and their performance for each category in Law and Policy, Systems, and Environment. The scorecard also provides key highlights on how each state has moved the needle on addressing youth homelessness and some recommendations in order to improve their performance. The detailed scoring spreadsheet shows in detail which of the 61 metrics each state meets, so that youth, lawmakers, providers, and advocates can prioritize the policy changes that are most pressing in their communities.

A close look at the results of the Index show that a majority of states are failing youth experiencing homelessness. Out of 100 points, only 20 states scored higher than 50 points. Only four states—California, Massachusetts, District of Columbia, and New York—earned passing grades of higher than 70 points. Most states have not set a goal of ending youth homelessness within their state lines. However, in recent years, there has been increased interest among state governments in addressing youth homelessness. These findings and notable achievements are discussed in greater depth in the following section.

How the States Scored Results

State	Score / 100	Ranking / 51
California	78	1
Massachusetts	78	1
District of Columbia	75	3
New York	72	4
Washington	67	5
Vermont	65	6
Louisiana	64	7
Maine	64	7
Connecticut	62	9
Minnesota	61	10
Missouri	59	11
Oregon	58	12
Tennessee	57	13
Indiana	55	14
Delaware	54	15
New Mexico	54	15
Utah	54	15
Florida	53	18
West Virginia	53	18
Maryland	52	20
New Jersey	49	21
Kentucky	48	22
Michigan	48	22
Nevada	48	22
New Hampshire	48	22
Colorado	47	26

State	Score / 100	Ranking / 51
Hawaii	47	26
Arizona	44	28
South Dakota	44	28
Texas	44	28
Kansas	43	31
Georgia	42	32
Illinois	42	32
Mississippi	42	32
Montana	42	32
Virginia	42	32
North Dakota	40	37
Alaska	39	38
Arkansas	39	38
Rhode Island	39	38
Wyoming	37	41
North Carolina	36	42
Ohio	36	42
Wisconsin	35	44
Alabama	34	45
Iowa	32	46
Oklahoma	32	46
Nebraska	30	48
South Carolina	29	49
Idaho	27	50
Pennsylvania	22	51

2019 SPOTLIGHT STATES

In 2019, several state legislatures passed bills to address gaps in their state's laws and policies for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Below are a few of this past year's critical legislative accomplishments:

Arkansas Takes Major Steps Toward Ensuring Access to Health Care for Students Experiencing Homelessness

The Republican-led Arkansas State Legislature unanimously passed Act 690 of 2019, which allows McKinney-Vento school liaisons to provide proxy consent to medical procedures for unaccompanied students experiencing homelessness, ensuring that any homeless student without a parent available to provide consent to health care will be able to access the care they need.

Utah Opens Doors for Youth in Need of Services

Utah's supermajority Republican legislature unanimously agreed to amend state laws to ensure that unaccompanied minors ages 15-17 are explicitly granted the right to consent to homelessness services, including temporary shelter, permanent housing referral, health care, and employment services. In addition, Utah's 2019 Session Law Chapter 242 waives fees associated with requesting a new certified copy of a birth certificate for any person experiencing homelessness, including youth and young adults.

Nevada Legislates Better Educational Outcomes for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Nevada's majority Democrat legislature unanimously passed comprehensive reforms to state education laws for students experiencing homelessness. Chapter 208 of the 2019 regular legislative session will mandate that public and charter schools identify students who are unaccompanied or receiving foster care services and work with these students to develop personalized academic plans in order to maximize credit accrual and progress toward graduation.

Tennessee Address Barriers Faced by Students Experiencing Homelessness in Accessing and Succeeding in Postsecondary Education

Tennessee legislators took action to remove some of the specific challenges students experiencing homelessness face in accessing and succeeding in postsecondary education. This supermajority Republican legislature unanimously passed Public Chapter 266 of 2019, which will require all public postsecondary institutions to assign the role of homelessness liaison to a staff member on campus who will be available to provide assistance to students experiencing homelessness in accessing financial aid, academic support, and other resources to help them navigate college from admissions to graduation. Additionally, this law requires any public postsecondary institution which provides on-campus housing to develop a plan for housing students experiencing homelessness, a major win for many students who often face difficult choices when their dormitories close during school breaks in the summer and winter.

THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN 2019

Youth experiencing homelessness, particularly those who are unaccompanied or who have run away from home, face numerous legal barriers. These legal barriers complicate their ability to seek and receive critical supports and services to escape the intergenerational cycle of homelessness and poverty. Laws and policies vary from state to state but they can provide important protections and benefits for young people experiencing homelessness—making the exit from homelessness easier and faster and the time spent experiencing homelessness safer. Alternately, state laws and policies can offer punishments and barriers that make it more difficult to exit homelessness and make youth less safe while experiencing homelessness. The Index divides Law and Policy issues into 5 major categories, totalling 44 metrics. Additional details on each of these metrics are available in Appendix A, the detailed methodology.

The Community Tool Box

A service of the Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, the Community Tool Box offers a free library of community building skill development resources. This invaluable service includes a comprehensive advocacy kit that helps fledgling policy advocates develop strategies to advance their goals. Often, campaigning to change a state or local law or policy requires more than directly lobbying the relevant decision makers. Advocates can use the Community Tool Box to build a plan that includes media advocacy, direct action, tactics for counteracting opposition, and more. The Tool Box even includes case studies of successful legislative advocacy campaigns that advocates can use to strengthen their own. To use the Community Tool Box, please see Chapters 30-35, Organizing for Effective Advocacy, available at <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/organizing-effective-advocacy>.

1. Enact, enforce, and implement state laws, policies, and regulations that recognize the need for comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness.

Laws that provide adequate funding and resources and comprehensive supports and services are greatly needed across states. Currently, only 14 states—California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, and Washington—have enacted state Runaway Homeless Youth Acts (RHYA). These laws may vary, but they allow states to provide funding and support for a significant level of prevention, identification, or early intervention services (drop-in centers, street outreach, community programs), coordinated entry and assessment (emergency/crisis response, shelters, host homes, transitional housing, etc.) and tailored housing solutions (non-time limited affordable housing, short-term assistance, etc) specifically for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

Even without such comprehensive state law available, states should review, revise, and adopt laws and policies that expand their definitions and understanding of homelessness to account for the multidimensional needs of youth who are runaways and/or experiencing homelessness. Definitions are critical components of statutes because they establish the meaning of key terms used therein, including who is protected and who is eligible for critical supports and services under the law. The Index examines how the states define young people, whether state law includes definitions of runaway and homeless children and youth, and up to what age young people are considered minors.

While a majority of states explicitly define “homeless child,” “homeless youth,” “homeless minor,” and “homeless student” (37 states), more advocacy is needed for state laws, policies, and regulations to include homeless youth in statutory and other legal definitions in order to recognize their needs and establish a bright-line albeit nuanced rule on who is protected under the law and who is eligible for critical supports and services. Only 29 states specifically define the term “youth” (as opposed to “homeless youth”) in at least one statute. While youth may be developmentally different from their younger peers, youth still need protections available to children and minors. Major progress has been made across the nation to establish the age of childhood to include persons older than 18 in the child welfare and juvenile legal systems in 39 states. Finally, only 26 specifically define the term “runaway,” indicating a need for a better understanding of why some youth end up experiencing homelessness. Youth homelessness disproportionately affects LGBTQ youth, yet only 4 states—Connecticut, Delaware, Nevada, and Vermont—define “sex” and/or “gender” within their RHYA state licensing agency regulations to include gender identity.

2. Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

States are struggling to meet the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness. In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) amended, reauthorized, and strengthened the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Data from the Index show that in 2018, a majority of states were not in full compliance with federal law. Today, in 2019, 44 states have updated their laws to comply with federal law prescribing legally sufficient protections that allow students to dispute decisions denying them accommodations under the law. As clarified by ESSA in 2015, it is essential for students to have a robust grievance procedure in case a dispute arises over their eligibility, school selection, or school enrollment.

Only 21 states have updated education policy to create a transparent process to allow partial and alternative credit accrual for youth experiencing homelessness. For students who often change schools due to high mobility, lack of credit for partial semesters can be a serious impediment to completing and advancing in school. In 25 states, there are laws or regulations that promote access to postsecondary education for youth experiencing homelessness.

3. Preventing contact with the criminal and juvenile legal systems of youth experiencing homelessness.

Youth experiencing homelessness are subject to liability under criminal ordinances applicable to all age groups; in many cities across the United States, they are also subject to ordinances that apply uniquely to youth. These status offenses are behaviors or actions that are legal for adults but punishable when performed by legal minors under the age of 18. Schools also play a role in entangling homeless children and youth with the juvenile and criminal legal systems through harsh, zero-tolerance school discipline policies. The Index looks at three specific areas: (1) how state laws and regulations provide opportunities for homeless youth to access diversionary supports and services that limit their court involvement; (2) status offenses; and (3) whether and how those who help homeless youth are criminalized.

Many states and territories permit the juvenile or family court to become involved with young people or families who need supervision or services. Reliance on these systems to provide supports and services to homeless youth should be approached with caution—in several jurisdictions, these systems are also authorized to punish homeless youth. In many jurisdictions, a young person who “needs supervision” can be taken into custody by police or other government officials and may need to go through court proceedings before receiving supports and services. States should take proactive steps in providing diversionary services as an alternative to court involvement and, wherever possible, assign the responsibility for the care and support of homeless youth to the social service systems rather than the criminal systems.

The Index presents the circumstances in which youth experiencing homelessness are labeled or identified as a child in need of services or supervision (often referred to as “CHINS”) under various state laws and the consequences of being identified as such. Across the states, youth and families are considered in need of supervision in a variety of circumstances, including when youth have run away from home, when they have committed a status offense, when they need care or rehabilitation, or when they are in immediate danger. A majority of states (43) have a CHINS-related statute that allows the state to either connect youth experiencing homelessness to critical supports and services or entangle them with the criminal and juvenile legal systems. Youth experiencing homelessness could be labeled as CHINS but in only 31 states are they provided the opportunity to receive diversion services without requiring court involvement and in only three states are unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness allowed to request services independent of their parents or guardians. In some jurisdictions, youth experiencing homelessness and labeled CHINS can be ordered to pay fines and/or restitution (18), to undergo drug screening (16), to relinquish their driver’s license (15); or to be detained in secure facilities even without a valid court order (i.e. without having violated a previous directive from a court) (33) and to mingle with delinquent youth when taken into custody (26). Not only do these sanctions punish young people for the mere act of running away, which is often an act of self-preservation, but they open the doors for further court involvement when youth are unable to meet the requirements for such punishments.

Some states have statutes that criminalize youth experiencing homelessness for actions directly related to their homelessness. Youth living on the streets are punished for committing acts in public that are necessary for their survival, such as sleeping, eating, and resting.¹² Over the past decade, laws prohibiting camping, sitting, lying down, or sleeping in public; laws prohibiting loitering, loafing, and vagrancy; laws prohibiting panhandling; laws prohibiting sleeping in vehicles; and laws prohibiting food sharing have dramatically increased.¹³ Many of these laws are enforced under the guise of the need to address public health concerns. Yet these laws are selectively enforced against individuals who have nowhere else to go but the streets, leading to arrest and conviction records that create new barriers to youth exiting homelessness by limiting their access to employment, housing, and postsecondary education.

There are also status offense laws, which prohibit actions only when conducted by minors, and which may target youth experiencing homelessness unfairly. For example, 22 states consider running away to be a crime. Truancy, or a person under a certain age (often 16 years) being outside of school during school hours, is punishable in seven states. Truancy enforcement can trap youth in the juvenile legal system simply because the youth does not know their rights to school access or because they want to avoid a hostile school environment, where they cannot be protected from abuse or be given a safe space. Youth and young adults commonly experiment with negative behaviors such as running away or being truant. States should provide them the opportunity to learn from the consequences of such behaviors without unfairly punishing them. Further entanglement in the juvenile legal system can make youth more likely to be involved in a life of crime because of their increased exposure to other criminal peers, the criminal legal system, and the effects of “labeling.”¹⁴

Some states even penalize adults and organizations trying to help youth experiencing homelessness. Harboring a runaway youth or concealing a minor may be considered a crime in 37 states, and interfering with custodial rights is a crime in 40 states. In only 19 states are shelters allowed to delay or waive requirements to notify parents, discouraging homeless youth who ran away from home from coming forward to seek help in the other 32 states.

4. Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Emancipation allows the state to extend to a young person the rights and privileges of a legal adult while they are still under the age of majority. Emancipation facilitates a young person's ability to legally obtain housing, buy essential goods, engage in other transactions necessary to live independently, and make their own decisions about medical care, education, and other personal matters. The Index considers whether the states permit youth to be emancipated and under what circumstances, what barriers youth may encounter in seeking emancipation such as parental consent or blanket age restriction, and whether the states give minors contract rights or allow them to enter into binding contracts for certain purposes such as obtaining necessities. In 18 states, there is still no established process for emancipation, while in 45 states, youth may be granted emancipation under very limited circumstances (i.e. when they are married while still a minor). Where emancipation is an option, barriers may still exist. Parental consent is required and cannot be waived in 14 states, making it difficult for youth to seek legal independence. Only 5 states allow youth of any age to be emancipated. In 5 states, minors do not have contract rights and are not allowed to enter into binding contracts for any purposes.

5. Allowing youth experiencing homelessness access to critical supports and services.

Youth experiencing homelessness face numerous barriers to accessing critical supports and services. Youth still cannot apply for health insurance coverage on their own in 21 states, cannot consent to their own mental health treatment in 12 states, and cannot get treatment for substance use in non-residential settings without parental consent in 9 states. And while 46 states allow minors to consent to the diagnosis and treatment of sexually-transmitted infections without parental consent, only 33 allow minors to consent to examination and treatment relating to sexual assault, which is not only necessary to protect the health of youth experiencing homelessness after an assault, but also often critical to law enforcement in pursuing the arrest and prosecution of a perpetrator.

While many states have initiated ongoing efforts to prevent and limit the contact of youth experiencing homelessness with the juvenile and criminal legal systems, states also need to ensure that those already in contact with these systems are not released to homelessness. In 13 states, there is still no requirement of transition planning for children and youth exiting the juvenile legal system. Only 21 states specifically address housing needs in transition planning, and only 23 address custody after discharge. Only 21 states require permanency planning for committed adjudicated youth and only 8 provide transportation after discharge from the juvenile legal system.

Federal law provides supports and services to youth experiencing homelessness, but the ability of youth experiencing homelessness to access such benefits depends largely on how the states implement the programs. In the case of TANF, only 36 states subsidize child care for eligible minors when employment or school is required to receive benefits, while 39 states provide exemptions from TANF's family living, work, or education requirements. Only 4 states provide cash incentives for youth who graduate high school or earn a GED. In the majority of states, receipt of federal benefits is streamlined. TANF recipients are categorically eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or food stamps) in 32 states and youth experiencing homelessness can apply for both SNAP and TANF, or SNAP and Medicaid, in over 40 states. Youth experiencing homelessness are only explicitly allowed to use SNAP to buy hot restaurant or prepared meals in 10 states, which is helpful for youth without easy access to a kitchen. Youth experiencing homelessness who are eligible for one of these programs should be categorically eligible and enrolled in other applicable benefits as well in order to reduce barriers to accessing and utilizing such benefits.

¹² National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, *Housing Not Handcuffs: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities*, <https://www.nlchp.org/documents/Housing-Not-Handcuffs>.

¹³ National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, *Housing Not Handcuffs: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities*, <https://www.nlchp.org/documents/Housing-Not-Handcuffs>.

¹⁴ Petrosino, Anthony, Carolyn Turpin-Petrosino, and Sarah Guckenburgh. 2010. “Formal System Processing of Juveniles: Effects on Delinquency.” *Campbell Systematic Reviews* <http://campbellcollaboration.org/lib/project/81/>

How the States Scored in Law & Policy

State Score / 65 Ranking / 51

Alabama	30	38
Alaska	27	41
Arizona	33	32
Arkansas	36	20
California	44	6
Colorado	35	21
Connecticut	37	19
Delaware	37	19
District of Columbia	41	12
Florida	48	3
Georgia	37	19
Hawaii	32	34
Idaho	21	50
Illinois	36	20
Indiana	43	7
Iowa	27	41
Kansas	32	34
Kentucky	34	27
Louisiana	42	8
Maine	49	2
Maryland	35	21
Massachusetts	56	1
Michigan	34	27
Minnesota	42	8
Mississippi	30	38
Missouri	42	8

State Score / 65 Ranking / 51

Montana	34	27
Nebraska	26	44
Nevada	39	17
New Hampshire	34	27
New Jersey	38	18
New Mexico	41	12
New York	45	5
North Carolina	31	36
North Dakota	28	40
Ohio	31	36
Oklahoma	26	44
Oregon	42	8
Pennsylvania	20	51
Rhode Island	25	47
South Carolina	22	49
South Dakota	27	41
Tennessee	40	16
Texas	35	21
Utah	41	12
Vermont	47	4
Virginia	34	27
Washington	41	12
West Virginia	33	32
Wisconsin	24	48
Wyoming	26	44

2019 SPOTLIGHT STATES

Indiana Removes Parental Consent Requirement for Minors Otherwise Eligible for Driver's Licenses

A bipartisan coalition of Indiana lawmakers joined together this year to address systemic barriers to necessities faced by youth experiencing homelessness. Public Law 155 of Indiana's 2019 session includes a number of policy changes; one of the key statutory changes passed will allow unaccompanied minors to access state-issued identification cards and driver's licenses without paying a fee and without the consent of a parent or guardian.

New Jersey Invests in Infrastructure to End Youth Homelessness

In 2019, the New Jersey Legislature made a significant investment in ending youth homelessness by establishing an Office of Homelessness Prevention inside the state Department of Community Affairs and directing the department to establish a mechanism for regulating and funding agencies serving youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. This office will strengthen coordination between public and private entities providing homelessness services on the state and local level, ensuring that resources can be leveraged most effectively at any given time.

New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, and Maine Ban "Conversion Therapy" for Minors

"Conversion therapy," a debunked and harmful practice that attempts to change the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of a person—usually a minor—was banned by state lawmakers in New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, and Maine as of the spring of 2019. Additionally, the governor of Puerto Rico banned conversion therapy by executive order in 2019 (N.B. With the exception of the information provided here, the 2019 State Index does not analyze U.S. territories other than the District of Columbia).

THE SYSTEMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL LANDSCAPE ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Making meaningful changes towards preventing and ending youth homelessness means acknowledging and preemptively addressing the issues that lead to homelessness in the first place. Youth homelessness does not have a single root cause, nor does it exist in a vacuum, but racism, homophobia, and transphobia are factors that render some youth more susceptible than others to experiencing homelessness. States need to create solutions at multiple levels, including within individual, family, community, and institutional systems to improve the environments for vulnerable youth who lack access to safe housing. For these solutions to be effective, it is critical to understand that race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression are not mutually exclusive identities but often overlap and develop in parallel to each other. Youth experiencing homelessness have intersectional identities that need to be addressed concurrently.

Most states have a long way to go toward ensuring that the state's systems (features of an institution or organization that influence state homeless youth policy/program implementation) and environments (the physical, social, or economic factors that influence state homeless youth policy/program implementation) are conducive to preventing and ending the epidemic of youth homelessness. Racism, homophobia, transphobia, stigma, and

lack of visibility all meet with lack of money, resources, and support to create a perfect storm that often leads to youth experiencing homelessness.

While 38 states have a plan to end homelessness and 34 states have a specific strategy towards addressing the issue of youth homelessness, only 5 states have a strategy in place to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth, who are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than their non-LGBTQ counterparts.¹⁵ Up to 40% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ, even though LGBTQ people only make up 7% of the general population.¹⁶ Having a plan that recognizes, identifies, and implements concrete steps towards ending youth homelessness for our most vulnerable youth—LGBTQ and youth of color—is essential. Additionally, most states fail to protect vulnerable youth from abuse via conversion therapy. Only 19 states explicitly ban conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Though some states have a plan or strategy to address youth homelessness, only 11 states maintain an office dedicated to homeless youth services and focused solely on creating, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

States are making some investments in providing support for youth experiencing homelessness, with 33 states currently having systems in place to address the proof of residency requirements that are often necessary for receiving a state-issued identification card. 40 states provide tuition waivers to foster youth, creating greater opportunity for them to access postsecondary education. Providing tuition waivers to foster youth is a smart investment in preventing homelessness, given the child welfare system's role as a feeder system to youth homelessness and the lack of family resources for postsecondary education for foster youth in contrast with their peers.

All states have a long way to go towards raising awareness to the issue of youth homelessness. Only 5 states have launched a public awareness campaign or created common messaging for local awareness campaigns to grow support for ending youth homelessness. Only 9 states consult a youth action board or council—including significant representation of youth currently experiencing homelessness or who have experienced homelessness in the recent past—so that the voices and insights of youth experiencing homelessness are reflected in policy making.

41 states have heeded the recommendation of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness to establish and maintain a State Interagency Council on Homelessness, convening multiple agencies to coordinate the state's response to homelessness.

¹⁵ Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

¹⁶ Durso, L.E., & Gates, G.J. (2012). Serving Our Youth: Findings from a National Survey of Service Providers Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth who are Homeless or At Risk of Becoming Homeless. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute with True Colors United and The Palette Fund.

How the States Scored in Systems

State	Score / 18	Ranking / 51
Alabama	4	41
Alaska	12	15
Arizona	10	32
Arkansas	3	46
California	17	1
Colorado	5	39
Connecticut	13	11
Delaware	16	5
District of Columbia	17	1
Florida	4	41
Georgia	4	41
Hawaii	11	23
Idaho	1	51
Illinois	3	46
Indiana	10	32
Iowa	3	46
Kansas	11	23
Kentucky	13	11
Louisiana	12	15
Maine	13	11
Maryland	15	7
Massachusetts	17	1
Michigan	12	15
Minnesota	15	7
Mississippi	11	23
Missouri	13	11

State	Score / 18	Ranking / 51
Montana	4	41
Nebraska	4	41
Nevada	6	37
New Hampshire	12	15
New Jersey	16	5
New Mexico	11	23
New York	15	7
North Carolina	5	39
North Dakota	12	15
Ohio	3	46
Oklahoma	6	37
Oregon	12	15
Pennsylvania	2	50
Rhode Island	11	23
South Carolina	7	36
South Dakota	11	23
Tennessee	15	7
Texas	8	35
Utah	12	15
Vermont	10	32
Virginia	12	15
Washington	17	1
West Virginia	11	23
Wisconsin	11	23
Wyoming	11	23

How the States Scored in Environment

State Score / 17 Ranking / 51

Alabama	0	51
Alaska	0	51
Arizona	1	40
Arkansas	0	51
California	17	1
Colorado	7	9
Connecticut	12	3
Delaware	1	40
District of Columbia	17	1
Florida	1	40
Georgia	1	40
Hawaii	4	20
Idaho	5	15
Illinois	3	26
Indiana	2	30
Iowa	2	30
Kansas	0	51
Kentucky	1	40
Louisiana	10	5
Maine	2	30
Maryland	2	30
Massachusetts	5	15
Michigan	2	30
Minnesota	4	20
Mississippi	1	20
Missouri	0	51

State Score / 17 Ranking / 51

Montana	4	20
Nebraska	0	51
Nevada	3	26
New Hampshire	2	30
New Jersey	3	26
New Mexico	2	30
New York	12	3
North Carolina	0	51
North Dakota	0	51
Ohio	2	30
Oklahoma	0	51
Oregon	4	20
Pennsylvania	0	51
Rhode Island	3	26
South Carolina	0	51
South Dakota	2	30
Tennessee	2	30
Texas	1	40
Utah	1	40
Vermont	8	7
Virginia	0	51
Washington	8	7
West Virginia	9	6
Wisconsin	0	51
Wyoming	0	51

Key Recommendations

At the heart of the State Index is a set of core recommendations that states should follow to complement any existing efforts towards preventing and ending youth homelessness. This includes:

- I. Enacting comprehensive laws that provide a significant level of prevention, identification, and early intervention services,** including drop-in centers, street outreach, community programs, coordinated entry and assessment (emergency/crisis response, shelters, host homes, transitional housing), or tailored housing solutions (non-time limited affordable housing, short-term assistance, etc.) specifically for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness with a corresponding appropriation. Such a state law, sufficiently funded and working in tandem with funding provided by RHYA on the federal level will provide the necessary infrastructure and resources to address youth homelessness.
 - Enacting a state law similar to the federal RHYA will provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
 - While authorizing these new programs is important, adequately funding them is key. An annual appropriation that provides support for RHYA programs ensures that there's state accountability and investment in preventing and ending youth homelessness.
- II. Creating a state entity—such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services, Homeless Youth State Coordinator, or a Commissioner on Youth Homelessness, etc.—that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.**
- III. Creating and appointing a State Interagency Council on Homelessness, similar to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness,** to convene state agencies to develop and carry out a multi-sectoral approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness, consistent with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness's (USICH) criteria and benchmarks for ending youth homelessness.¹⁷
 - For those states interested in implementing an Interagency Council on Homelessness, the USICH has provided a step-by-step guide for developing a council.¹⁸
- IV. Providing protections against discrimination for youth who are seeking services, implementing policies that ban harmful and ineffective services for LGBTQ youth such as conversion therapy, and creating a statewide strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness that is inclusive of LGBTQ youth.** Such strategy should also include explicit prohibition on discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in state statutes and regulations specific to child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth systems.
- V. Organizing and maintaining a self-governing youth action council**—including significant representation of youth who are currently experiencing homelessness or who have experienced homelessness in the recent past—to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- VI. Recognizing youth experiencing homelessness in state laws, policies, and regulations.** Key definitions need to be adopted, and they, along with other relevant laws and policies, need to be more inclusive, developmentally and culturally appropriate, non-judgmental, and youth-centric.
 - States should establish a definition of “youth” that is distinct from “child;”
 - Eligibility for publicly-funded opportunities and supports available to children and youth should be extended to include young adults through age 24;
 - The terms “runaway youth,” “homeless youth,” and “runaway child” should be specifically defined in both criminal and civil statutes, using the definition of homelessness found in the education subtitle of the federal McKinney-Vento Act.¹⁹
- VII. Complying with the federal requirements to ensure access to education for youth experiencing homelessness.**
 - The federal McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program, recently updated by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, requires states to meet the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness. States must ensure proper implementation of the law in order to ensure homeless youth do not experience any barriers to accessing free, appropriate public education. Under the 2015 amendments, states must adopt statutes or regulations to improve access to education for youth experiencing homelessness.
 - States should implement a robust dispute resolution process that would protect the education rights of students experiencing homelessness and allow them and their families to appeal negative decisions should there be a dispute in regards to eligibility, school placement, or enrollment. States also should find ways to help homeless youth stay and succeed in school, including permitting them to accrue credits for work previously done in another school and promoting access to postsecondary education.

VIII. Preventing and limiting youth experiencing homelessness contact with the criminal and juvenile legal systems and connecting them to critical supports and services.

- Punitive approaches to unaccompanied youth should be avoided and court involvement minimized. Court sanctions such as fines, fees, drug screening, and suspended driving privileges increase the probability of more court involvement. Rather than punishing youth, states should provide them with the opportunity to access diversionary supports and services. The juvenile legal system should not be used for providing youth services related to housing or homelessness when a youth has committed no crime and there is no other reason for a youth to interact with the juvenile legal system.
- Youths' safety should be the paramount concern. States should rely less on law enforcement and more on service providers to address the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. Youth should only be taken into custody in limited circumstances and with their consent, or if they are in immediate physical danger. States should adopt more nuanced policies that cover youth experiencing homelessness in different circumstances, including those who are on their own and those in families that need services. At no point should law enforcement or any entity force youth to return home against their will as this could put them at an even greater risk of harm.
- Running away and truancy should be decriminalized. The juvenile legal system should not bear the responsibility for the safety and care of youth experiencing homelessness who run away from home. Communities should work with schools to ensure youth experiencing homelessness have access to safe, adequate, and appropriate transportation and that school policies accommodate the needs of these students.
- Curfews for youth experiencing homelessness should be eliminated and states should find ways to provide adequate and appropriate shelter to those youth who call the streets their home, rather than issuing fines and citations.
- Service providers, "Good Samaritans," and other professionals should be protected from civil or criminal liability when they render medical care or service in good faith to unaccompanied youth.

IX. Legally permitting unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness to live on their own if reunification with family or appointment of a guardian is not feasible or is not appropriate.

- Barriers to emancipation, such as blanket minimum age restrictions or parental consent without exceptions, should be reviewed, revised, and in most cases, repealed.
- States should consider establishing emancipation procedures to remove minimum age restrictions in favor of individualized assessments of each youth's ability and need to live independently. Emancipation procedures should permit courts the maximum flexibility to grant emancipation according to the best interests of the youth. Likewise, youth should be allowed to initiate the procedures independently and should not have to obtain parental consent.
 - » In some cases, neglectful or abusive parents may withhold consent to punish their children. The law should not permit such a harmful outcome, as emancipation may be essential for youth to live independently.

- » Procedural safeguards should be in place to ensure the process is fair and accessible to youth and to prevent abuse of the process by parents.

- » In cases of extreme family conflict, it can be advantageous for youth to become emancipated from their parents. Emancipation can ensure that financial benefits to which a youth is entitled go directly to a youth who is managing their own care, rather than to parents or guardians.

- Emancipation should be approached cautiously; among other concerns it can terminate parents' responsibility for a young person and leave the youth with no legal rights to demand support or care from parents or to receive benefits upon their death. Nonetheless, emancipation can be critically important for unaccompanied youth, as it permits them to function as adults in many circumstances, including controlling their own finances, entering into contracts, renting property, and consenting to medical treatment. The availability of emancipation and the ability to contract for necessities is crucial for those youth experiencing homelessness who live independently, either by choice or because there are no adults available to support them. Youth experiencing homelessness should be given authority to make important decisions about their own health, safety, and welfare. Unaccompanied minors able to live on their own should be allowed to contract for necessities, including real property, employment, student loans, admission to school, medical and mental health care treatment, bank accounts, cell phones, insurance, and admission to shelter, housing, and supportive service programs.

X. Removing barriers facing youth experiencing homelessness in accessing critical supports and services.

- States should authorize or require the provision of healthcare, education, and other needed supports and services to youth experiencing homelessness in cases where obtaining parental consent is not possible or necessary. In addition to financial barriers that may exist and obstacles associated with confidentiality of services, homeless youth should be given authority to consent for their own care. Youth should be able to access care and services for health conditions, without the significant deterrent of parental consent and notification requirements.
- States should ensure discharge-planning and aftercare procedures are in place for youth in juvenile detention facilities so that they are not at risk of experiencing homelessness upon release. Youth should not be released into unsafe or temporary living situations that could lead to homelessness; states should focus on appropriate release procedures that include adequate supports and services that foster reintegration of youth discharged from the juvenile legal system. Combating youth homelessness upon release can benefit youth who are at-risk of displacement and also reduce rates of youth re-entering juvenile legal systems.
- State laws, policies, and regulations implementing federal benefits such as SNAP and TANF should provide exemptions to their eligibility and retention requirements that account for the precarious circumstances of youth experiencing homelessness.

¹⁷ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2018, February). Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness. Retrieved from: https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Youth-Criteria-and-Benchmarks-revised-Feb-2018.pdf

¹⁸ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Developing a State Interagency Council on Homelessness: A Step-by-Step Guide. https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/pptsich.pdf

¹⁹ 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.

The Advocate's Roadmap

A Beginner's Guide to Policy Advocacy

The State Index is not just meant as a resource of information for information's sake. It is the hope of True Colors United and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty that readers can use this report as a tool to make the case for better policies in their own communities through education and advocacy. Often, achieving consensus among policy experts is only the first step to changing laws and policies to better address an issue. Advocates must be prepared to collaborate with public officials and other influential voices in the policymaking process, engage with the media, and educate the public about the policy goals they wish to achieve. Sometimes, changing state policy can be as simple as starting a conversation with the right person in a governor's office or a state legislature. More commonly, it can be as complicated as developing and executing a large-scale public campaign.

A good first step for most beginner advocates is to become familiar with your state's legislative process. In most states, this process is very similar: almost every state has a bicameral legislature, meaning two separate lawmaking bodies which work in partnership to create new laws, amend existing ones, and repeal laws they no longer favor. Nebraska is the only exception; the legislature in Nebraska is unicameral, meaning that it only has one lawmaking body.

THE LAWMAKING PROCESS

Below is a step-by-step overview of the typical state's legislative process. States differ in the timing and length of their legislative sessions. Often legislative sessions have restrictions related to what kinds of legislation can be filed. Visit your state legislature's website for specific information on its calendar and rules.

Phase One: The Legislative Chambers

- 1. First Committee Hearing** - Amendments can be made by committee. Then the committee votes whether to send the amended bill to the full chamber.
- 2. Full Chamber** - The bill is then debated by the full chamber. Amendments can be made, then the whole chamber votes whether to pass the amended bill to the next step.
- 3. Second Committee Hearing** - Again, amendments can be made by committee. Then the committee votes whether to send the amended bill to the full chamber.
- 4. Full Chamber** - Lastly, the bill will be debated by the full (second) chamber.

Phase Two: Reconciling Different Versions Passed

- | | |
|--|---|
| 5a. If passed by the second chamber with amendments, sent to original chamber so they can vote to accept changes. | 5b. If passed without amendments, sent to governor. See Step Three. |
| 6a. If the original chamber rejects any amendments, sent to conference committee with members of both chambers to negotiate a version all can agree with. | 6b. If other chamber accepts amendments, sent to governor. See Step Three. |
| 7a. If conference committee reaches agreement, they send the final version to both chambers for approval. | 7b. If conference committee doesn't reach an agreement, the bill does not become law. |
| 7c. If one or both chambers doesn't approve the final version, the bill does not become law. | 7d. If both chambers approve, the final version is sent to the governor. See Step Three. |

Phase Three: The Governor

- 8a.** The governor signs the bill, and it becomes law; or
- 8b.** The governor vetoes the bill. The bill does not become law unless two-thirds of both chambers vote to override the veto; or
- 8c.** The governor takes no action, and the bill becomes law.

Initial Contact

An easy way for advocates to start the conversation about their state's role in ending youth homelessness is to initiate contact with their own state legislators. Readers might consider sending their legislators an email to introduce themselves. It's important that this

first contact includes a home address and a cell phone number or some other way for legislators to be in touch.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: INITIAL CONTACT

Hello/Good Morning

Representative or Senator _____,

My name is _____ and I'm a constituent of yours. I work as a _____ at _____ (describe your role/job), and I live in _____. I am writing to introduce myself as a constituent, and also as _____. [Feel free to add any personal details such as schools attended or connections to the community, etc.]

I'm reaching out to you to let you know I am very interested in following youth homelessness issues at the state level and plan to stay involved in the process as we move towards the legislative session this year. I'd like to be kept informed as you work on pending legislation and keep an open dialogue as various decisions are made, especially with regards to policies which may impact youth homelessness.

Thank you,

[Name]

Making Your Voice Heard

Throughout a state's legislative session, there are opportunities to reach out to legislators in support or in opposition to bills. Each legislator has a legislative aide whose main job is to note concerns from constituents and pass them along to the legislator. Advocates can call legislative offices to make their voices heard on either side.

This is a crucial component of any advocacy effort. Advocates often use social media and other means to distribute contact information for legislative offices that are influential in the process, alongside short scripts for phone calls or emails.

SAMPLE SCRIPT: WEIGHING IN DURING A LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Hello, my name is _____, and I'm a constituent in Rep. / Sen. _____'s district. I'm calling to ask him/her to support health care access for youth experiencing homelessness.

Thank you for your time.

The legislative aide answering the phones may ask for callers' home addresses to ensure they are constituents. Advocates can call any legislator, not just the one who represents their district. In many cases, it's important for advocates to call legislators who don't represent their district. That's because their legislator may not serve

on the committee that a bill will move through.

State legislatures work for the people of their state. They're expecting these calls. When most people think of civic duty, voting comes to mind. Some may also think of paying taxes and attending jury duty. But one of the most impactful civic duties is the duty to hold government accountable. We hope that readers will take advantage of their rights as community members to get involved in the legislative process.

Other Strategies to Consider

COALITIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Odds are there are a number of people and organizations already working toward systems change for youth experiencing homelessness, among others, in most states. Beginner advocates should reach out to organizations working on legislative reforms for children and youth to find out if there are opportunities for partnership or volunteering. Organizations that are focused on reforms to the juvenile justice and foster care systems, as well as organizations which serve people experiencing homelessness of all ages, are good places to start. Those who want to prioritize advancing policies that are focused on supporting students experiencing homelessness should consider outreach to teachers unions and professional associations for educators and school administrators. If healthcare is the priority, associations representing health care providers, such as physicians, nurses, school nurses, and community health care centers, might be stakeholders worth initiating a conversation with. One of the strengths of partnering with these kinds of associations is that they typically will already have a robust presence in state government affairs, and they are often open to including new ideas in their legislative agendas.

MEDIA STRATEGIES

The more people who are aware of a problem in their community, the more likely action will be taken to address it. Consider whether there are opportunities to partner with the press to get the word out about youth homelessness. The release of this State Index is one such opportunity. By sharing your state scorecard with members of the press, you may be able to spark a community conversation about the issue of youth homelessness, leading to greater awareness and, hopefully, action!

Appendix A:

Detailed Methodology & Outline Of Metrics

Each state was evaluated on metrics and recommendations listed in the Index. Out of a possible 100 points, over half (52%) of the points were distributed across the following 13 key metrics, which are indicative of states' overall approaches toward youth homelessness: :

1. The state establishes the age of childhood as encompassing persons older than 18 (outside of a "homeless youth" definition, but includes youth in jurisdiction of child welfare or juvenile court).
2. The state has a Runaway & Homeless Youth Act—or similar legislation—with corresponding funding.
3. Youth experiencing homelessness have partial or full contract rights.
4. Running away is declassified as a status or delinquent offense.
5. The state allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
6. The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.
7. Unaccompanied youth under 18 can apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
8. There is a state entity (office of homeless youth services, homeless youth state coordinator, commission on homeless youth, etc.) that focuses solely on youth homelessness.
9. There is a current state plan to end homelessness.
10. The current state plan to end homelessness includes a "youth" component with youth-specific strategies.
11. The state maintains a self-governing youth action council—including significant representation of youth currently experiencing homelessness or who have experienced homelessness in the past—to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
12. The state requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual, development or issues specific to LGBTQ+ youth for staff working in RHY Systems.
13. The state establishes protected class status based on one's sexual orientation and gender identity for runaway and homeless youth programs.

These recommendations are critical to effectively addressing youth homelessness on the state level. How states perform on each of these metrics is indicative on a broader scale of how their laws, policies, systems, and environments treat youth experiencing homelessness. The remaining metrics, grouped by law and policy, systems, and environment, were weighted equally. Detailed explanations of the metrics are included in the following sections. Additional metrics may be included in future iterations as states make progress on tackling youth homelessness, in order to better evaluate each state's commitment to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

To that end, some key metrics shifted in our 2019 report. Our 2018 report assigned a higher weighted value to these four metrics:

- The state provides opportunities for CHINS to receive diversion services without court involvement.
- The state's dispute resolution process has been amended to reflect ESSA's changes to McKinney-Vento.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- Conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression is banned.

In 2019, these metrics are still important, but have been deprioritized in favor of four metrics we believe have a greater impact on state laws, systems, and environments for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness:

- The state establishes the age of childhood as encompassing persons older than 18 (outside of a "homeless youth" definition, but includes youth in jurisdiction of child welfare or juvenile court).
- The state allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through regulations.
- The state establishes protected class status based on one's sexual orientation and gender identity for runaway and homeless youth programs.

This shift in weighting, combined with changes to state laws and regulations over the past year, accounts for the greatest differences in state scores and rankings from the inaugural State Index report in 2018 to this year's State Index report.

The Index does not examine state practices and how they implement laws and policies. Many states that have employed innovative models and approaches to address youth homelessness are not fully captured in the Index. The Index also does not address or measure the pace of advocacy efforts over time. Some states that may not have performed well in the Index but have ramped up efforts to address youth homelessness should not be discouraged. Even though these dynamics are outside the scope of the Index, states should continue to pursue these efforts.

Additionally, there may be cases where a state has a specific policy in place, but does not earn points for it. Circumstances under which this may occur include (1) if the state follows a policy directive that is not codified in regulation or law, and therefore is not easily available to researchers and (2) if the state meets only part of a metric, e.g. sexual orientation included as a protected class in child welfare, but not gender identity.

For more information on the policies below and the research methodology, see the 2018 State Index.

Law & Policy

The Law and policy section looks at 5 key areas: (1) how the state recognizes the need for comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness in state laws, policies, and regulations; (2) how the state addresses the educational needs of homeless youth; (3) how the state limits or prevents homeless youth's contact with the criminal and juvenile legal systems; (4) whether the state provides homeless youth the option to be emancipated; and (5) how the state allows youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services. Each of these areas and the specific metrics or criteria associated with them are shown in greater depth below. Laws, policies, and regulations surveyed for the Index are current as of September 2019.

1. The state has comprehensive state laws, policies, and regulations ensuring supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness.

- The state establishes a specific definition of the term "youth."
- The state defines the term "runaway."
- The state explicitly defines the terms "homeless child," "homeless youth," "homeless minor," or "homeless student."
- The state establishes the age of childhood as encompassing persons older than 18 (outside of a "homeless youth" definition, but includes youth in jurisdiction of child welfare or juvenile court).
- The state defines "sex" and/or "gender," which includes gender identity, within its RHYA State licensing agency regulations.
- The state has a state Runaway & Homeless Youth Act.

2. The state addresses the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

- The state's dispute resolution process has been amended to reflect ESSA's changes to McKinney-Vento.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through statute or regulations.
- The state has laws or regulations that promote access to higher education for homeless youth.

3. The state limits or prevents contact of youth experiencing homelessness with the criminal and juvenile legal systems.

- The state has a "Child in Need of Supervision" (CHINS) related statute.
- The state prohibits mingling of CHINS youth taken into custody with delinquent youth.
- The state provides opportunities for CHINS to receive diversion services without court involvement.
- The state does not explicitly authorize courts to force CHINS to pay fines and/or restitution.
- The state does not explicitly authorize courts to force CHINS to undergo drug screening.
- The state does not explicitly authorize courts to force CHINS to relinquish their driver's license or suspend driving privileges.
- The state allows unaccompanied homeless youth to request services independently under CHINS.
- The state does not consider runaway youth as delinquent or a status offender.
- The state does not explicitly allow police to take runaway youth into custody.
- The state does not explicitly allow runaway and homeless youth to be detained in secure facilities.
- Truant youth are not classified as status offenders or delinquents.
- The state does not have curfew laws.
- The state does not criminalize harboring a runaway youth or concealing a minor.
- The state does not criminalize interfering with custodial rights.
- The state allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

4. The state provides unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

- The state has an established process for emancipation.
- The state recognizes emancipation in limited circumstances.
- The state can waive or not require parental consent for emancipation.
- The state has no age restrictions for emancipation.
- The state gives minors broad contract rights OR allows them to enter into binding contracts for certain purposes (e.g. necessities).

5. The state allows youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services.

- The state explicitly allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage (without parental consent).
- The state allows unaccompanied youth to consent to mental health treatment (without parental consent).
- The state allows minors to consent to non-residential treatment for substance use (without parental consent).
- The state explicitly allows minors to consent to the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (without parental consent).
- The state allows minors, regardless of their legal status, to consent to examination and treatment relating to a sexual assault (without parental consent).
- The state has transition planning for children exiting the juvenile legal system.
- The transitional planning specifically addresses housing needs.
- The state addresses custody after discharge from the juvenile legal system.
- The state requires permanency planning for committed adjudicated youth.
- The state provides transportation home after discharge from the juvenile legal system.
- The state provides a subsidy for child care for eligible minors when employment or school is required under TANF.
- The state has exemptions from TANF's family living and/or work/education requirements.
- The state provides cash incentives for youth who graduate high school or earn a GED.
- TANF recipients are categorically eligible for SNAP.
- The state explicitly allows homeless youth to use SNAP to buy hot restaurant or prepared meals.

- There is a state entity (Office of homeless youth services, homeless youth state coordinator, commission on homeless youth, etc.) that focuses solely on youth homelessness.
- The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth.
- The State Department of Transportation has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card.
- The state does not require parental consent for youth to obtain a state-issued identification card.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- A statewide housing needs assessment that identifies groups at greatest risk for homelessness has been implemented.

Environment

Laws, policies, and the systems that operationalize and implement them also influence the environment for youth experiencing homelessness. The Index looks at several metrics that provide some measure of how supportive or hostile state environments are to youth experiencing homelessness, and more broadly, to LGBTQ youth receiving services.

- The state maintains a community advisory board for youth that informs youth homelessness policy.
- Ending youth homelessness is a goal at the executive branch (governor).
- The state requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual, development or issues specific to LGBTQ+ youth for staff working in RHY Systems.
- The state has a public awareness campaign/common messaging for local awareness campaigns for youth homelessness.
- The state establishes protected class status based on one's sexual orientation and gender identity for runaway and homeless youth programs.
- The state establishes protected class status based on one's sexual orientation and gender identity for juvenile justice programs.
- The state establishes protected class status based on one's sexual orientation and gender identity for child welfare programs.
- Conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression is banned.

In order to score 100, a state would have to earn points for all of the metrics listed above in the Policy & Law, Systems, and Environment categories.

Systems

Outside of the legal or regulatory actions that have a significant impact on youth homelessness, the Index also examines systems, evaluating features of an institution, organization, or system at the state level that influences state homeless youth, child welfare, juvenile justice, and education program implementation.

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness.
- The state plan has a "youth" component.
- The state plan has an "LGBT youth" component.

Appendix B: State Scorecards



Alabama

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

45

Overall score 2019:

34

Overall score 2018:

27

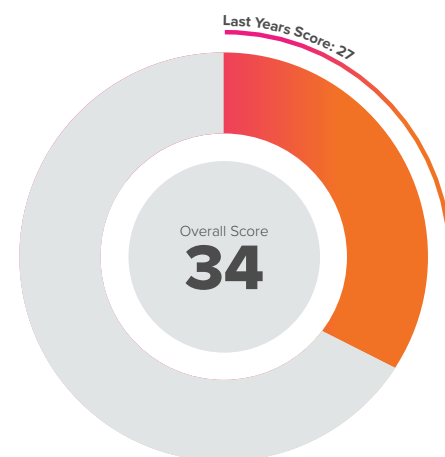
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 46% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 29% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 38% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 22% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Alabama has moved the needle relative to other states in addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for significant improvement throughout the metrics for the Yellowhammer State across all categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness, crafting statewide plans to address homelessness that contains a youth-specific component, designating agencies to develop and enforce these plans, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state has extended foster care to age 21 and allows young adults under 21 to opt back into services after exiting if needed. The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through regulations. State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Enact a state law which allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements. Enact a law which gives minors the right to enter into contracts for certain purposes (e.g. necessities). Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth are able to obtain state-issued identification cards without parental consent in certain circumstances. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness that includes a strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness and LGBTQ youth homelessness. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs. Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Alaska

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

38

Overall score 2019:

39

Overall score 2018:

42

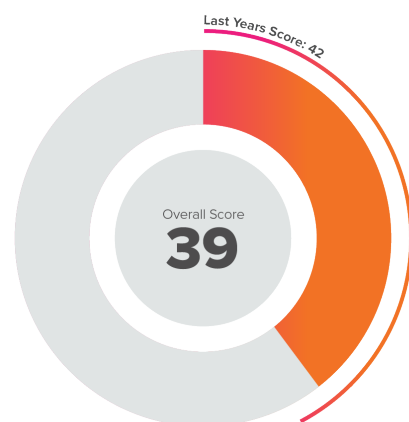
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 42% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 8% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 62% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 33% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Alaska has moved the needle relative to other states in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics in the Last Frontier state, with emphasis on the Environment category. Protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State law does not specifically criminalize running away. State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness. The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement. Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component. There is a state interagency council on homelessness. The state allows youth to obtain a state-issued identification card without parental consent. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Arizona

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

28

Overall score 2019:

44

Overall score 2018:

42

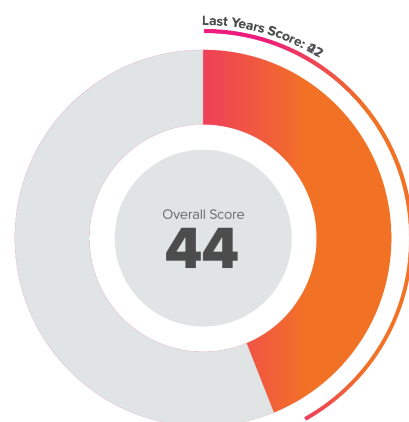
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 51% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 58% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 19% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 56% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Some areas where Arizona has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics in the Grand Canyon State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, decreasing contact with the criminal justice system, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state has extended foster care to age 21 in certain circumstances and allows young adults under 21 to opt back into services after exiting if needed. • State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness. • The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. • Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. • Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs. • Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. • Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. • Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy. • Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Arkansas

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness—particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

38

Overall score 2019:

39

Overall score 2018:

32

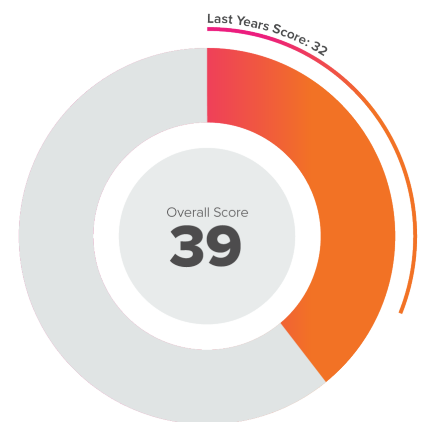
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 55% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 67% of metrics met

Systems: 17% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Arkansas** has moved the needle relative to other states include limiting contact by youth experiencing homelessness with the criminal and juvenile justice systems and providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement across the metrics for the **Natural State**. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing their educational needs, and protecting the rights and interests of vulnerable youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has extended foster care to age 21 in certain circumstances and allows young adults under 21 to opt back into services after exiting if needed.
- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law which allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Enact regulations which explicitly allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Create a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness that includes a strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness and LGBTQ youth homelessness.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- None

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

California

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

1

Overall score 2019:

78

Overall score 2018:

61

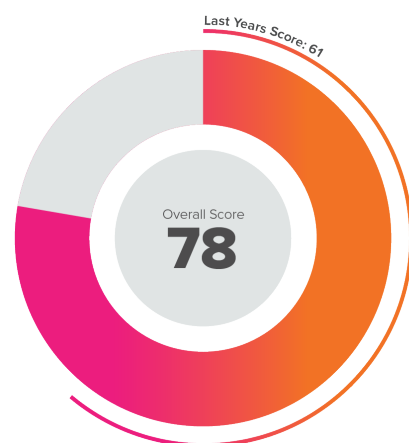
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 68% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 38% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 78% of metrics met

Systems: 94% of metrics met

Environment: 100% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **California** has moved the needle relative to other states include authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Golden State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Systems categories. Reducing contact with the courts and amending the statewide plan to end homelessness to include an LGBTQ youth-specific component should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- The state has statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through regulations.



- Enact state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Enact a state law which allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- The State Department of Transportation has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

Environment

- The state requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and/or expression.
- The state maintains a community advisory board for youth that informs youth homelessness policy.



- None.

Colorado

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

26

Overall score 2019:

47

Overall score 2018:

60

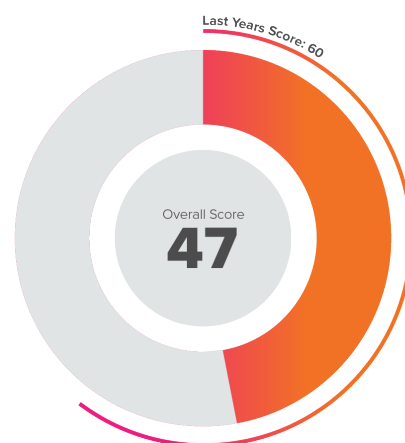
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 54% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 48% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 39% of metrics met

Systems: 28% of metrics met

Environment: 41% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Colorado** has moved the needle relative to other states include authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, elevating the voices of youth who have experienced homelessness by partnering with them throughout policy development, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Centennial State**, with emphasis on the Systems and Environment categories. Protecting the rights and interests of vulnerable youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.

- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- The state has created an entity – an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

- Create a public-facing state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including strategies to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Enact a state law or regulation which allows minors to obtain state-issued identification cards without parental consent.
- Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

Environment



- The state maintains a self-governing youth action board or council that informs youth homelessness policy.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Connecticut

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

9

Overall score 2019:

62

Overall score 2018:

61

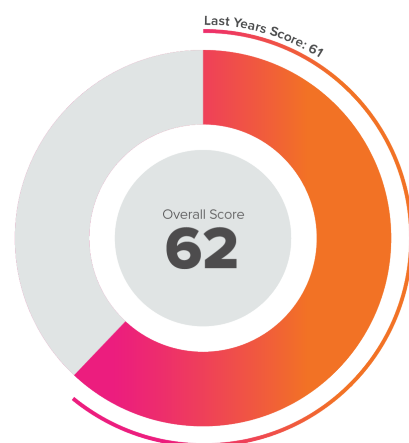
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 57% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 58% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 19% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 72% of metrics met

Systems: 72% of metrics met

Environment: 71% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Connecticut** has moved the needle relative to other states include addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness and elevating the voices of youth who have experienced homelessness by working with them throughout policy development.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Constitution State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and addressing their educational needs should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through regulations.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
- The state has extended foster care to age 23 in certain circumstances and allows young adults to opt back into services after exiting if needed.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law which allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains youth-specific strategy components.
- The state has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card and allows youth to obtain state-issued identification without parental consent.

- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

Environment



- The state maintains a self-governing youth action board or council that informs youth homelessness policy.
- Ending youth homelessness is a goal of the Executive branch.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.

Delaware

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

15

Overall score 2019:

54

Overall score 2018:

38

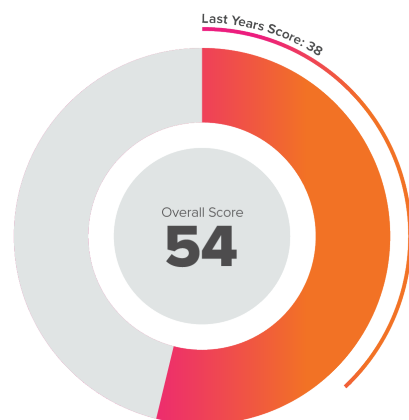
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 46% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 67% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 71% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 38% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 22% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

Delaware has moved the needle relative to other states in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **First State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws addressing educational needs and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has a law similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- The state allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

District of Columbia

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

3

Overall score 2019:

75

Overall score 2018:

58

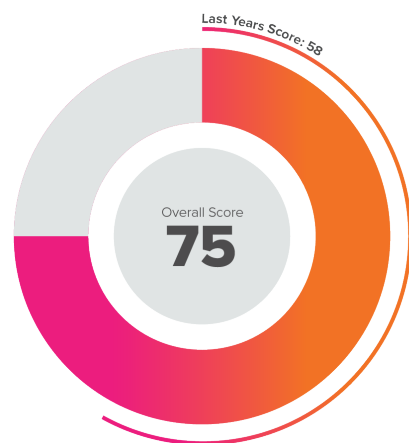
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 55% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 75% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 63% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 56% of metrics met

Systems: 94% of metrics met

Environment: 100% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **District of Columbia** has moved the needle relative to other states include authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, and promoting safe and inclusive environments by providing protections for LGBTQ youth across multiple sectors.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **District**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Reducing contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal justice or juvenile justice systems, as well as providing greater support to youth and young adults exiting the juvenile justice system, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The District has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- The District does not specifically criminalize running away and limits contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal justice system.
- The District provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The District allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact a law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Mandate transition planning for children exiting the juvenile justice system and ensure that this planning specifically addresses housing needs.
- Require permanency planning for committed adjudicated youth.
- Provide transportation home to youth and young adults after discharge from the juvenile justice system.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains youth-specific and LGBTQ youth-specific strategy components.
- There is an interagency council on homelessness.

- Update District law or regulation to ensure that youth can obtain district-issued identification cards without parental consent.

Environment



- The District requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- The District promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The District has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

- None

Florida

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

18

Overall score 2019:

53

Overall score 2018:

43

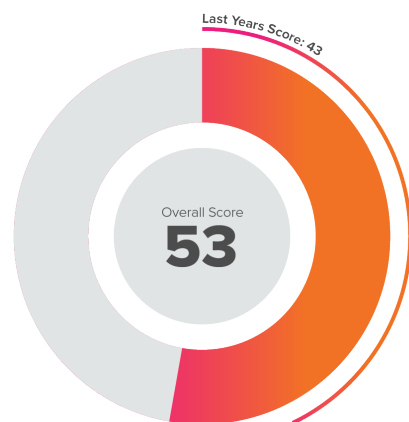
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 74% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 81% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 44% of metrics met

Systems: 22% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Some areas where Florida has moved the needle relative to other states include authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Sunshine State, with emphasis on the Systems and Environment categories. Creating a statewide strategy to end homelessness that includes a youth-specific component and protecting the rights and interests of vulnerable youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness. • State does not criminally punish youth who run away. • State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement. • State law provides partial or full contract rights for homeless youth. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a state interagency council on homelessness. • The state has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card and allows youth to obtain state-issued identification without parental consent. • The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a statewide strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness that includes a plan to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. • Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. • Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. • Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. • Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Georgia

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

32

Overall score 2019:

42

Overall score 2018:

34

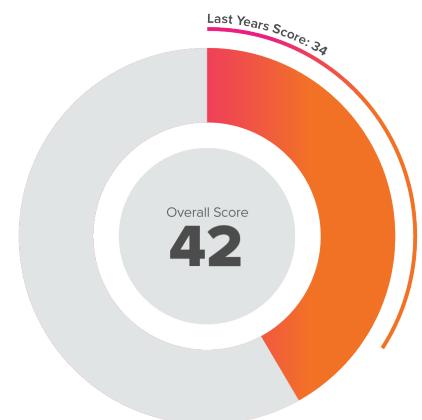
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 57% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 19% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 83% of metrics met

Systems: 17% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Georgia** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing their educational needs, and allowing them to access critical supports and services.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement across the metrics for the **Peach State**. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has extended foster care to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows young adults under 21 to opt back into services after exiting if needed.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness in compliance with federal law to reflect ESSA's changes to McKinney-Vento for students, and the state allows partial and alternative school credit accrual through regulations.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Create a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness that includes a strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness and LGBTQ youth homelessness.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Hawaii

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

26

Overall score 2019:

47

Overall score 2018:

47

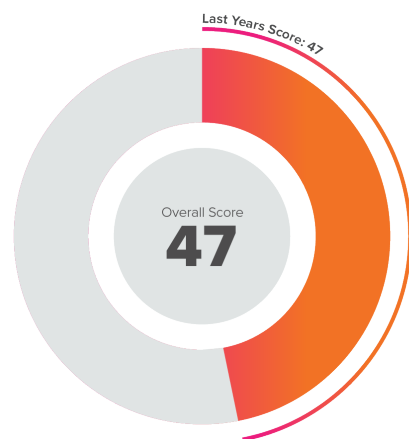
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 49% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 56% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 24% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Hawaii** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and preventing homeless youth's contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Aloha State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing their educational needs, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure that shelters are able to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and allow students to earn partial and alternative school credits.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Idaho

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

50

Overall score 2019:

27

Overall score 2018:

30

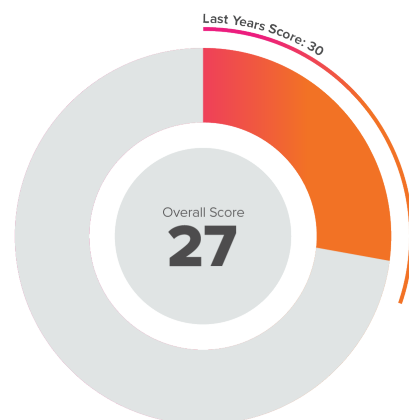
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 35% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 29% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 50% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 44% of metrics met

Systems: 6% of metrics met

Environment: 31% of metrics met



State Highlights

Idaho has not moved the needle relative to other states in any key areas, but there are some individual policies worth highlighting.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement across metrics for the **Gem State**. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, addressing their educational needs, creating a statewide strategy to end homelessness that includes a youth-specific strategy, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law, and take action to ensure youth can earn partial and alternative school credit.

Systems



- The state provides postsecondary tuition waivers for foster youth.

- Create a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness that includes a strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness and LGBTQ youth homelessness. that includes a plan to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Environment



- The state maintains a community advisory board for youth that informs youth homelessness policy.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Illinois

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

32

Overall score 2019:

42

Overall score 2018:

43

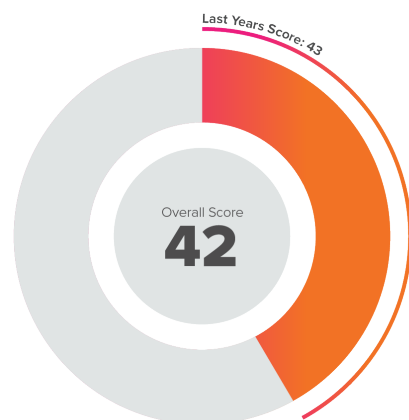
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 55% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 72% of metrics met

Systems: 17% of metrics met

Environment: 18% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Some areas where Illinois has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and allowing them to access critical supports and services.</p>	<p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Prairie State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness should be of importance, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement. State law does not specifically criminalize running away. State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights. The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and ensure that students can earn partial and alternative school credit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth. Youth can gain access to a state-issued identification cards without parental consent in certain circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a statewide strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness that includes a plan to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs. Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Indiana

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

14

Overall score 2019:

55

Overall score 2018:

45

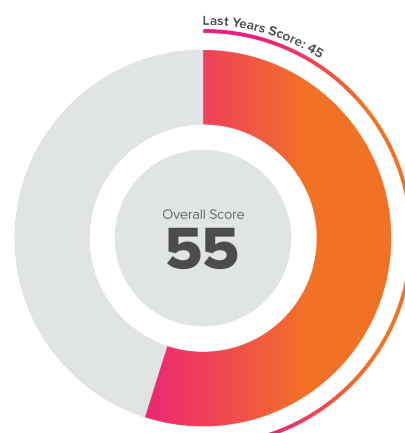
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 66% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 58% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 100% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metric

Systems: 56% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Indiana** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing their educational needs, and creating systems to address their other needs.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Hoosier State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized. Additionally, protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for homeless students in compliance with federal law and allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness with a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Iowa

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

46

Overall score 2019:

32

Overall score 2018:

50

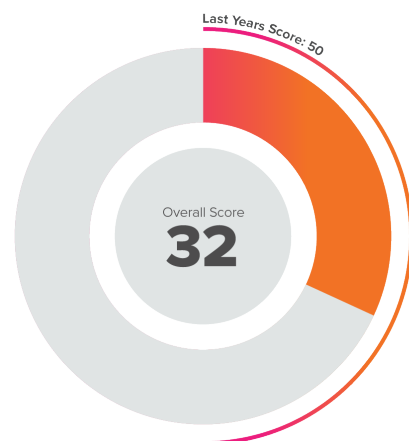
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 42% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 25% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 38% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 44% of metrics met

Systems: 17% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Iowa** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing their educational needs, and allowing them to access critical supports and services.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Treasure State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized. Additionally, protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness in compliance with federal law.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Enact a state law or regulation that allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Enact a comprehensive statewide plan to end homelessness.
 - Create a statewide strategy to prevent and end youth homelessness that includes a plan to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Kansas

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

31

Overall score 2019:

43

Overall score 2018:

33

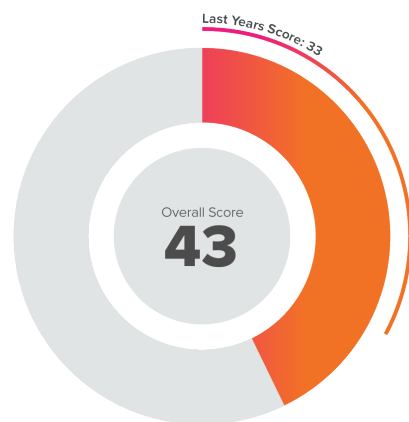
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 49% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 25% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 43% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Kansas** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and addressing the educational needs of youth.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Sunflower State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized. Additionally, protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for homeless students in compliance with federal law and allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
- Enact a state law or regulation which allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- There is a current state plan to end homelessness with a youth-specific strategy component.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- None.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Kentucky

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

22

Overall score 2019:

48

Overall score 2018:

38

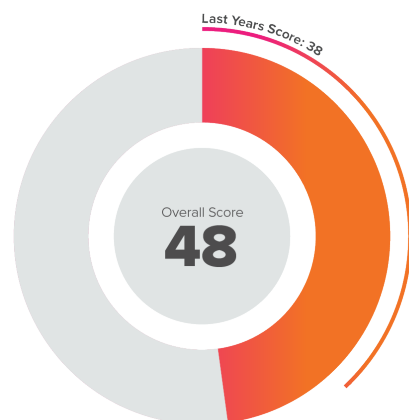
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 14% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 94% of metrics met

Systems: 72% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Kentucky** has moved the needle relative to other states include creating systems to address the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, and addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Bluegrass State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law provides partial or full contract rights for homeless youth.
- The state has a grievance process in compliance with federal law.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services or youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- The state has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements and does not require parental consent for youth to obtain state-issued identification cards.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Louisiana

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

7

Overall score 2019:

64

Overall score 2018:

56

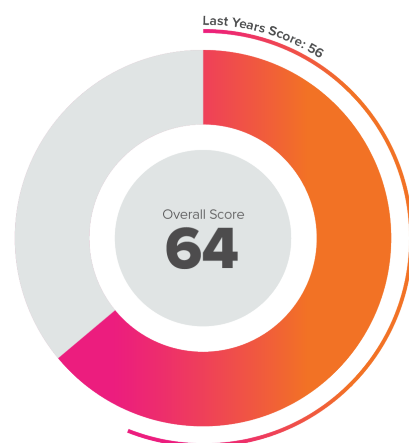
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 65% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 92% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 59% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Louisiana** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, creating systems to address the needs of homeless youth, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Pelican State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Limiting opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the juvenile and criminal justice systems should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact regulations which explicitly allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Enact a law or regulation which allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Amend regulations to allow minors to obtain state-issued identification without parental consent.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Maine

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

7

Overall score 2019:

64

Overall score 2018:

54

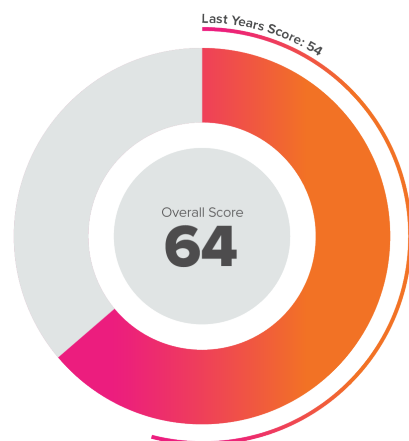
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 77% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 76% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 83% of metrics met

Systems: 76% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Maine** has moved the needle relative to other states include laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, allowing them to access critical supports and services, and promoting safe and inclusive environments by providing protections for LGBTQ youth in key programs.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Pine Tree State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law does not criminally punish youth who run away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Maryland

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

20

Overall score 2019:

52

Overall score 2018:

49

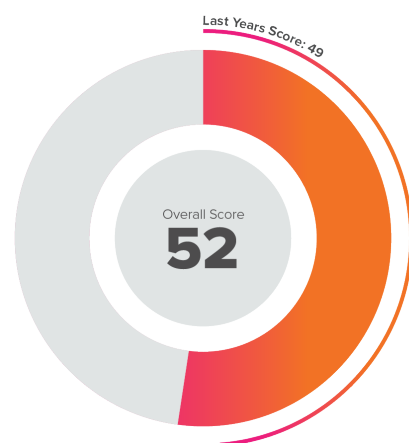
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 54% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 56% of metrics met

Systems: 83% of metrics met

Environment: 59% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Maryland** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and creating systems to address the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement across the metrics for the **Old Line State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized. Additionally, protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Massachusetts

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

1

Overall score 2019:

78

Overall score 2018:

63

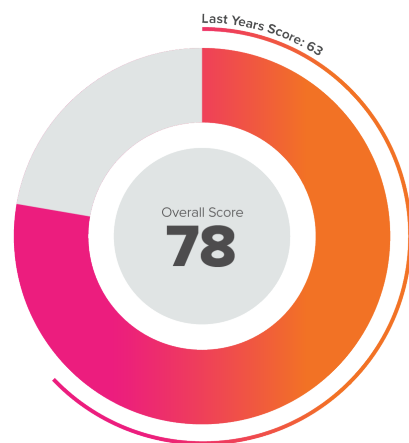
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 86% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 92% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 86% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 78% of metrics met

Systems: 94% of metrics met

Environment: 29% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Massachusetts** has moved the needle relative to other states include addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness, preventing their contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, allowing them to access critical supports and services, creating systems to address their needs, and promoting safe and inclusive environments by providing protections for LGBTQ youth in key programs.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Bay State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Creating a more welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Establish a formal process for emancipation.
- Provide cash incentives for youth who graduate high school or earn a GED.
- Explicitly allow homeless youth to use SNAP to buy hot restaurant or prepared meals.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component which addresses the needs of LGBTQ youth.
- The state has created an entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Implement a statewide housing needs assessment that identifies groups at greatest risk for homelessness.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Michigan

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

22

Overall score 2019:

48

Overall score 2018:

48

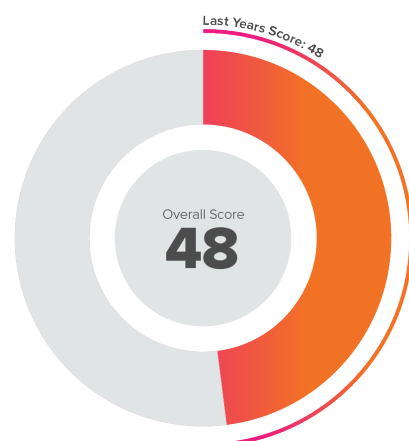
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 48% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Michigan** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, creating systems to address the needs of homeless youth, and promoting safe and inclusive environments by providing protections for LGBTQ youth in key programs.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Great Lakes State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact regulations which explicitly allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Minnesota

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

10

Overall score 2019:

61

Overall score 2018:

53

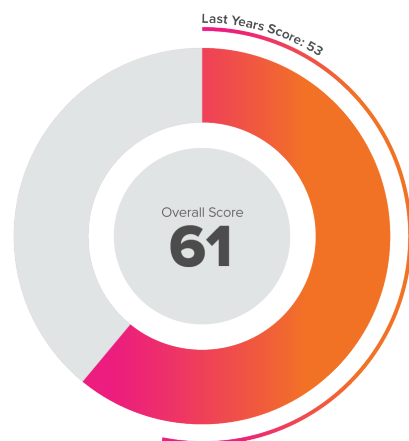
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 65% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 92% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 67% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 83% of metrics met

Environment: 24% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Minnesota** has moved the needle relative to other states include laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, allowing them to access critical supports and services, and implementing a multi-sector approach to addressing youth homelessness.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **North Star State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Creating a more welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law does not criminally punish youth who run away.
- The state allows shelters to take in homeless youth with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

- Enact regulations which explicitly allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth.
- Establish a formal process for emancipation.
- Enact regulations which explicitly allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- The state has created an entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth.

- Create a system within the State Department of Transportation to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card.
- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Mississippi

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

32

Overall score 2019:

42

Overall score 2018:

38

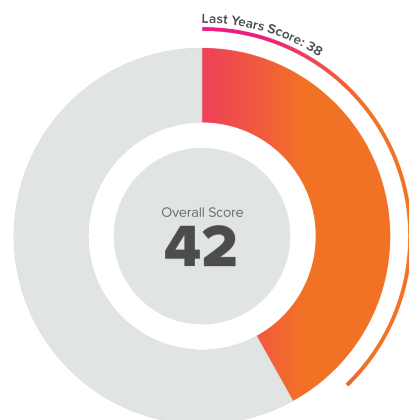
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 46% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 19% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 100% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

One area where **Mississippi** has moved the needle relative to other states is in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Magnolia State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Policies authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law provides partial or full contract rights for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness in compliance with federal law and allows partial and alternative school credit accrual.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Add a strategy to prevent and end LGBTQ youth homelessness to the current state plan to end homelessness.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Missouri

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

11

Overall score 2019:

59

Overall score 2018:

47

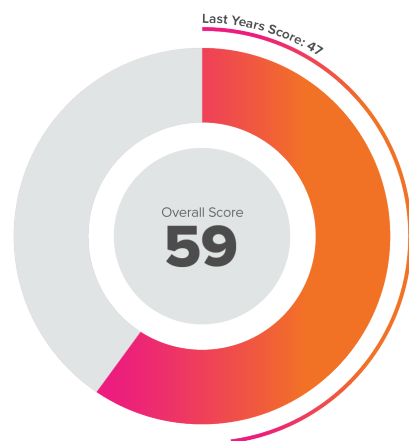
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 65% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 76% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 44% of metrics met

Systems: 72% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Missouri** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

There is room for improvement across the metrics for the **Show-Me State**, with much more state support needed to prevent and end youth homelessness. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and allows partial and alternative school credit accrual.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact state law that allows youth in need of care to receive services without court involvement.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- None.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Montana

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

32

Overall score 2019:

42

Overall score 2018:

39

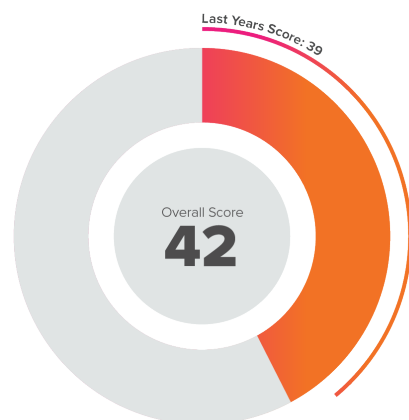
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 39% of metrics met

Systems: 22% of metrics met

Environment: 24% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **Montana** has moved the needle relative to other states include not relying on the criminal justice system to provide services to youth experiencing homelessness, maintaining a state plan to end homelessness, and providing youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Treasure State**, with emphasis on the Systems and Environment categories. Protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and allows partial and alternative school credit accrual.



- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems

- The state has systems in place to address proof of residency requirements to receive a state-issued identification card and allows youth to obtain state issued identification without parental consent.



- Draft and publish state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including strategies to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

Environment

- The state maintains a community advisory board for youth that informs youth homelessness policy.



- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy

Nebraska

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

48

Overall score 2019:

30

Overall score 2018:

37

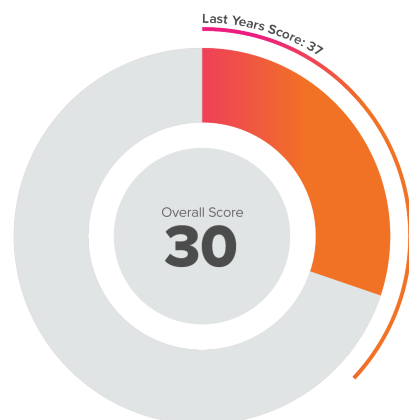
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 40% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 43% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 38% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 39% of metrics met

Systems: 22% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Nebraska has not moved the needle relative to other states in any key areas, but there are some individual policies worth highlighting.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Cornhusker State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law. State law does not specifically criminalize running away. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Enact state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth under 18 are able to obtain state-issued identification cards without parental consent. The state has an interagency council on homelessness. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft and publish state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including strategies to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Nevada

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

22

Overall score 2019:

48

Overall score 2018:

52

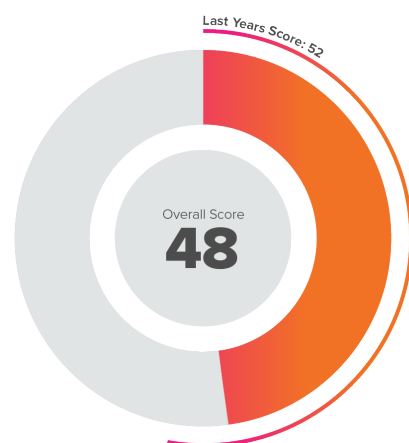
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 60% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 76% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 63% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 67% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 33% of metrics met

Environment: 18% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Nevada** has moved the needle relative to other states include authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, and preventing youth from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Silver State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has a law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.

- Allow youth experiencing homelessness to earn partial and alternative school credits.
- Enact law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Draft and publish a state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific and LGBTQ youth-specific strategy component.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a state-level, self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

New Hampshire

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

22

Overall score 2019:

48

Overall score 2018:

45

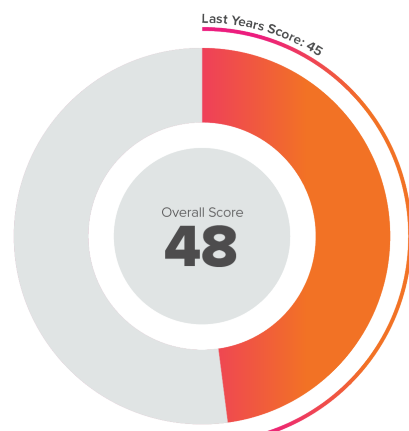
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 50% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 56% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **New Hampshire** has moved the needle relative to other states include minimizing opportunity for youth experiencing homelessness to come in contact with the courts and maintaining a state plan to prevent and end homelessness.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Granite State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- State law allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure through law or regulation that students experiencing homelessness are able to earn partial or alternative school credits.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and/or expression.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

New Jersey

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

21

Overall score 2019:

49

Overall score 2018:

55

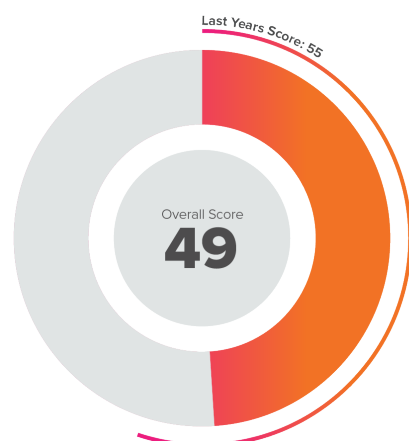
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 58% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 86% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 33% of metrics met

Systems: 89% of metrics met

Environment: 18% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **New Jersey** has moved the needle relative to other states include preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems and providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Garden State**, with emphasis on the Environment category.

Law & Policy

- The state has a law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.



- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and ensure that students can earn partial and alternative school credit.
- Enact law or regulation which explicitly allows youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.



- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Enact law or regulation which removes barriers to obtaining state-issued identification cards due to proof of residency requirements.

Environment

- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.



- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

New Mexico

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

15

Overall score 2019:

54

Overall score 2018:

54

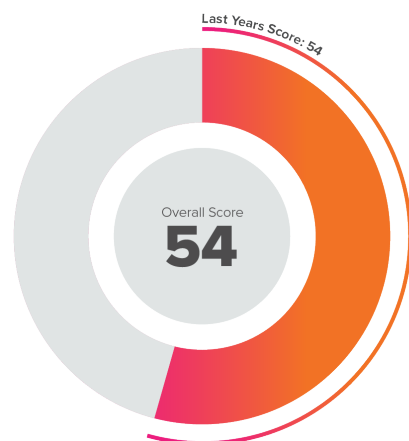
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 63% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 25% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 83% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **New Mexico** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing their educational needs, and allowing them to access critical supports and services.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Land of Enchantment**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Enacting and funding a state RHYA law, implementing a coordinated state government response to youth homelessness, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for homeless youth.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

New York

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

4

Overall score 2019:

72

Overall score 2018:

59

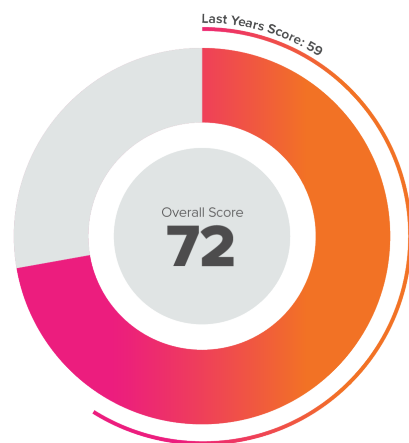
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 69% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 92% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 71% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 67% of metrics met

Systems: 83% of metrics met

Environment: 71% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **New York** has moved the needle relative to other states include having a state RHYA, decriminalizing youth homelessness, granting homeless youth contract rights, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Empire State**, with emphasis on the Environment category. Requiring training about the needs of LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Enact law or regulation to ensure that students experiencing homelessness can earn partial or alternative school credit.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific and LGBTQ youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state maintains a community advisory board for youth that informs youth homelessness policy.

- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.

North Carolina

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

42

Overall score 2019:

36

Overall score 2018:

33

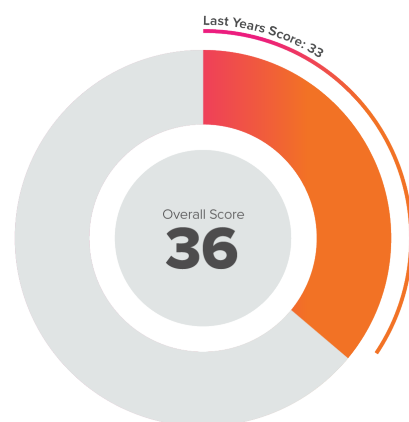
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 48% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 39% of metrics met

Systems: 28% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **North Carolina** has moved the needle relative to other states include preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems and providing youth the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Tar Heel State** across all categories. Enacting and funding a state RHYA law, implementing a coordinated state government response to youth homelessness, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter through the age of 21.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth.
- Youth are able to obtain state-issued identification cards without parental consent.

- Draft and publish a comprehensive statewide plan to prevent end homelessness that includes a plan to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- None.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

North Dakota

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

37

Overall score 2019:

40

Overall score 2018:

44

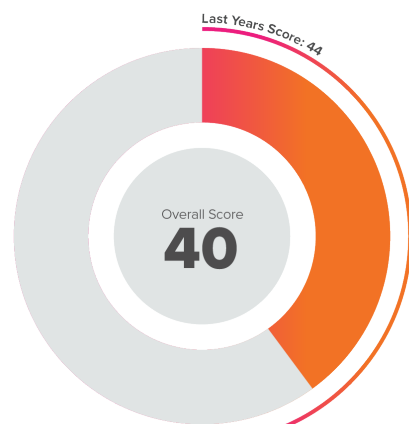
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 43% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 48% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 50% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 39% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights

North Dakota has not moved the needle relative to other states in any key areas, but there are some individual policies worth highlighting.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Peace Garden State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter through the age of 21.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Enact a law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- None.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Ohio

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

42

Overall score 2019:

36

Overall score 2018:

43

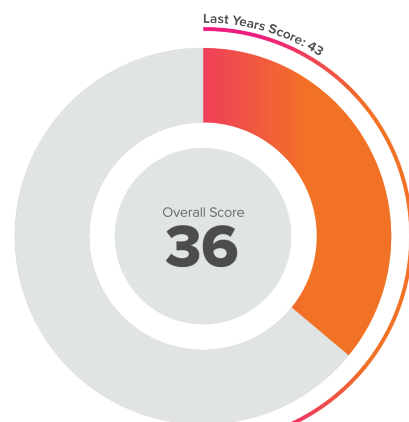
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 48% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 14% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 63% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83%
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 72% of metrics met

Systems: 17% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **Ohio** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing youth the opportunity to seek legal independence, allowing youth to access critical supports and services, maintaining a multi-sector approach to ending homelessness, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Buckeye State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Enacting and funding a state RHYA law, implementing a coordinated state government response to preventing and ending youth homelessness, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter through the age of 21.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
- The state allows youth to earn partial or alternative school credit.



- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Enact state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Enact a law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems

- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- Publish a comprehensive state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment

- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Oklahoma

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

46

Overall score 2019:

32

Overall score 2018:

35

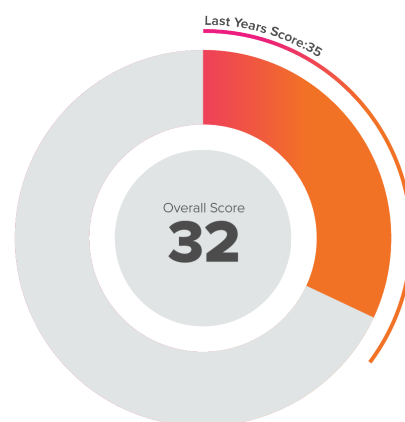
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 40% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 100% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 28% of metrics met

Systems: 33% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Some areas where Oklahoma has moved the needle relative to other states include allowing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness to live independently and maintaining a multi-sector approach to ending homelessness.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Sooner State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, as well as protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights. State law allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Enact state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement. Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense. Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. Ensure through law or regulation that students experiencing homelessness are able to earn partial or alternative school credits and implement a grievance process for homeless students that complies with federal law.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a current state plan to end homelessness. There is a state interagency council on homelessness. The state provides tuition waivers for foster youth. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish a comprehensive state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Oregon

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

12

Overall score 2019:

58

Overall score 2018:

55

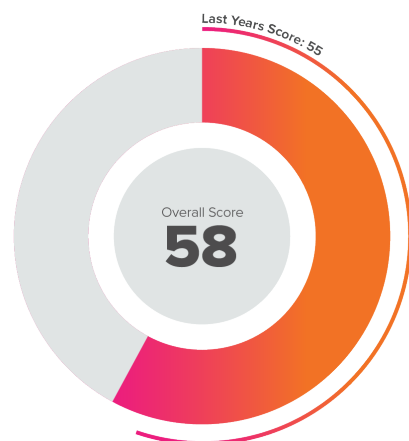
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 65% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 48% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 72% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 24% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview



Some areas where **Oregon** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, minimizing barriers to their access to comprehensive supports and services, addressing their educational needs, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.

There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Beaver State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Preventing contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.

- Enact state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
- Enact law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

Environment



- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Pennsylvania

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

51

Overall score 2019:

22

Overall score 2018:

42

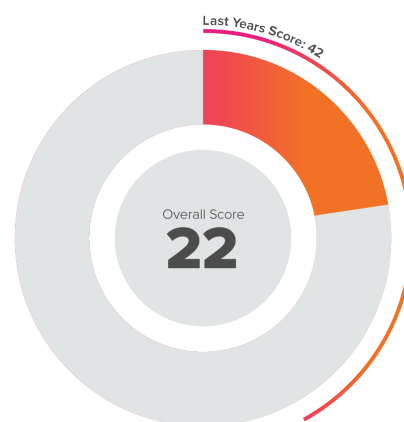
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 31% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 43% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 13% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 22% of metrics met

Systems: 11% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Pennsylvania has not moved the needle on youth homelessness relative to other states, but there are some policies worth highlighting.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Keystone State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter through the age of 21. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense. Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. Enact law or regulation to allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an interagency council on homelessness. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish a comprehensive state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, including strategies to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Rhode Island

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

38

Overall score 2019:

39

Overall score 2018:

39

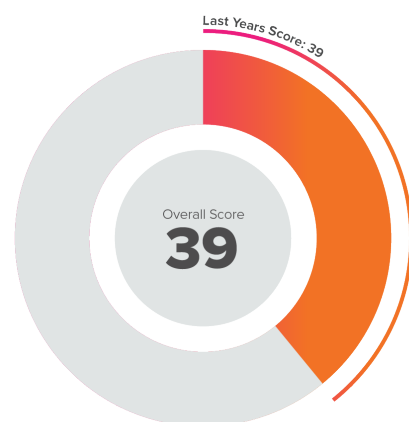
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 38% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 29% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 28% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 18% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Rhode Island** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and enacting a multi-sector approach to ending homelessness.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement across categories in the **Ocean State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter through the age of 21.
- The state allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

South Carolina

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

49

Overall score 2019:

29

Overall score 2018:

27

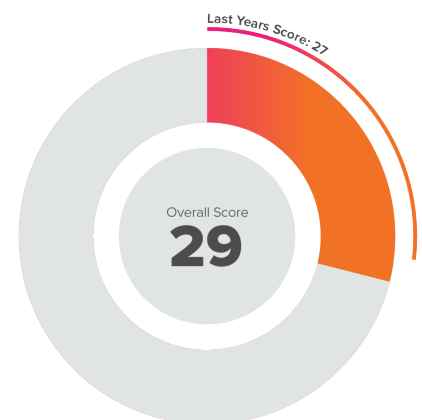
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 34% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 0% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 39% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>South Carolina has moved the needle relative to other states in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Palmetto State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing their educational needs, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter within 12 months of exiting care. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense. Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements. Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a current state plan to end homelessness. There is a state interagency council on homelessness. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend the state plan to prevent and end homelessness to add strategies to address homelessness among youth, including LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

South Dakota

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

28

Overall score 2019:

44

Overall score 2018:

45

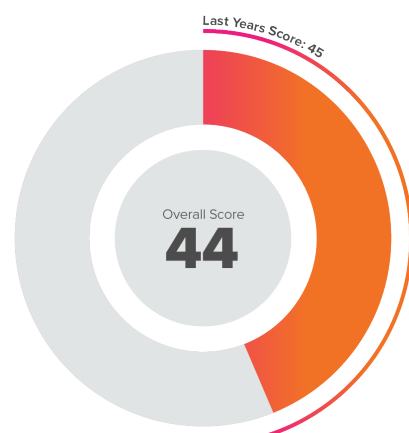
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 42% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 50% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 19% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 61% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **South Dakota** has moved the needle relative to other states include preventing homeless youth's contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems and providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement in the **Mount Rushmore State** across each category. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing their educational needs, and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under limited circumstances.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Implement a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and allow students to earn partial and alternative school credits.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.

- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sectoral approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Tennessee

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

13

Overall score 2019:

57

Overall score 2018:

48

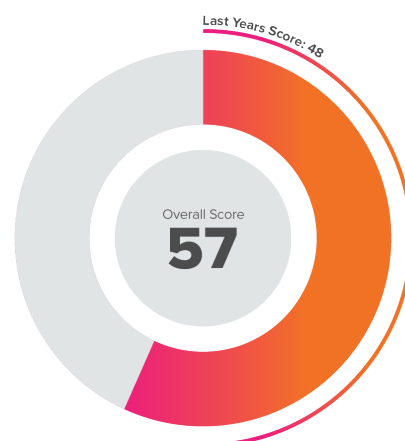
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 62% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 56% of metrics met

Systems: 83% of metrics met

Environment: 12% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Tennessee** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Volunteer State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state has a grievance process for students experiencing homelessness that complies with federal law and explicitly allows students to earn partial and alternative school credits.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.

- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Remove barriers to obtaining state-issued identification cards by enacting policies which remove the requirement of parental consent for youth and address proof of residency requirements for youth experiencing homelessness.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Texas

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

28

Overall score 2019:

44

Overall score 2018:

51

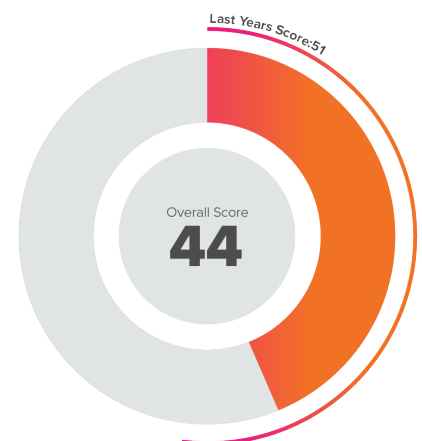
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 54% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 58% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 33% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 44% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

Some areas where **Texas** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Lone Star State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing their educational needs, and protecting their rights and interests, including the rights and interests of LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy



- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under certain circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care before 20 years and 11 months of age.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for homeless youth through regulations.

- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems



- There is a current state plan to end homelessness.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.
- The state provides tuition waivers to foster youth.

- Expand the state plan to prevent and end homelessness to include strategies to address homelessness among youth, including LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment



- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Utah

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

15

Overall score 2019:

54

Overall score 2018:

33

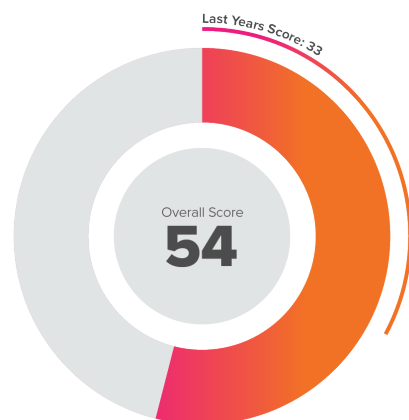
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 63% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 58% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 76% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 33% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 6% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **Utah** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently and implementing a multi-sectoral approach to preventing and ending homelessness.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Beehive State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting their rights and interests, including the rights and interests of LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights for homeless youth.
- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under any circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care until age 21.
- The state allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.



- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact a state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment

- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Vermont

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

6

Overall score 2019:

65

Overall score 2018:

56

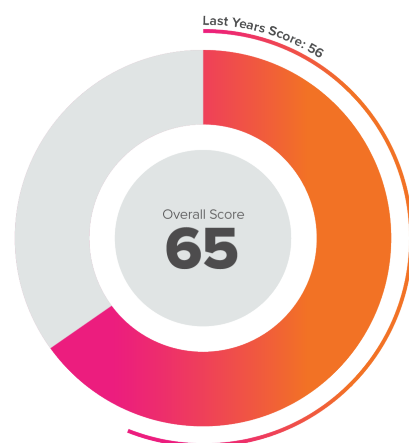
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 72% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 67% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 78% of metrics met

Systems: 56% of metrics met

Environment: 47% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **Vermont** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth opportunities to seek legal independence, allowing access to critical supports and services, and protecting the rights of LGBTQ youth within key state programs.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Green Mountain State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- State law does not specifically criminalize running away.
- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 22 under any circumstances and allows youth who have exited the foster care system after 16 to re-enter care until age 22.
- Unaccompanied youth under 18 years of age can apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual through regulations.



- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- Remove barriers to obtaining a state-issued identification cards, including parental consent and proof of residency requirements.

Environment

- There is a state-level Youth Action Board of youth with lived experience of homelessness who inform state policy-making on youth homelessness.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.



- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Virginia

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

32

Overall score 2019:

42

Overall score 2018:

45

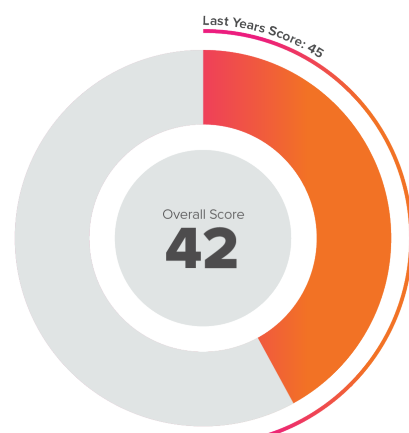
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 57% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 50% of metrics met

Systems: 67% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Virginia has moved the needle relative to other states in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Old Dominion State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness and protecting the rights and interests of youth experiencing homelessness, including LGBTQ youth, should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under some circumstances and allows eligible youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care until age 21. • State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement. • State law does not specifically criminalize running away. • State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. • Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component. • There is a state interagency council on homelessness. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. • Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. • Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. • Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. • Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Washington

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

5

Overall score 2019:

67

Overall score 2018:

65

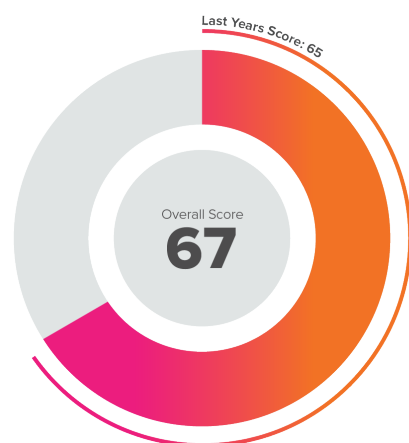
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 65% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 83% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 38% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 100% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 67% of metrics met

Systems: 94% of metrics met

Environment: 47% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations
for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **Washington** has moved the needle relative to other states include laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness, and promoting safety and inclusion by providing protections for LGBTQ youth within key state programs.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Evergreen State**, with emphasis on the Systems category.

Law & Policy

- The state has RHY statutes similar to the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) that provides funding for emergency services and other supports to prevent and end youth homelessness.
- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under some circumstances and allows eligible youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care until age 21.
- State law provides youth experiencing homelessness some contract rights.
- The state allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- The state explicitly allows partial and alternative school credit accrual for youth experiencing homelessness.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own.



- Reduce opportunities for contact between youth experiencing homelessness and the criminal and juvenile justice systems by declassifying running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Provide greater support to youth transitioning out of the juvenile justice system, including transition planning that specifically addresses housing needs, custody after discharge, and youth permanency.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- The state has created an entity that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- Allow youth to obtain state-issued identification cards without parental consent.

Environment

- The state has banned conversion therapy for minors on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



- Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

West Virginia

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

18

Overall score 2019:

53

Overall score 2018:

41

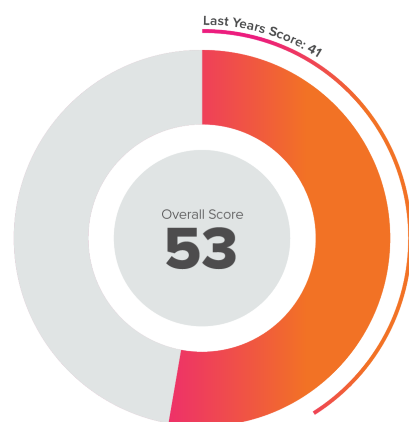
Performance Breakdown:

Law & Policy: 52% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 42% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 24% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 75% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 83% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 53% of metrics met



State Highlights

Recommendations for Improvement

Overview

Some areas where **West Virginia** has moved the needle relative to other states include providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and to access critical supports and services.



There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the **Mountain State**, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, preventing homeless youth's contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and protecting the rights and interests of LGBTQ youth should be prioritized.

Law & Policy

- The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under some circumstances and allows eligible youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care until age 20.
- State law provides partial or full contract rights for homeless youth.
- The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage without parental consent.



- Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness.
- Enact state law that allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement.
- Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense.
- Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements.
- Allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for youth experiencing homelessness.

Systems

- There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component.
- There is a state interagency council on homelessness.



- As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth.
- Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.

Environment

- The state requires training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual, development or issues specific to LGBTQ+ youth for staff working in RHY Systems.
- The state promotes safe and inclusive environments in child welfare and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.



- Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state.
- Promote safe and inclusive environments in juvenile justice programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Wisconsin

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

44

Overall score 2019:

35

Overall score 2018:

42

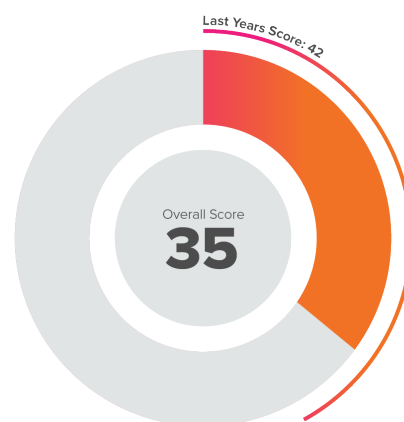
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 37% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 38% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 38% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 17% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 44% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Wisconsin has not moved the needle relative to other states in any key areas, but there are individual policies worth highlighting.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Badger State, with emphasis on the Law & Policy and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness, providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently, and protecting the rights and interests of LGBTQ youth should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state allows youth in foster care to access extended foster care services to age 21 under some circumstances and allows eligible youth who have exited the foster care system after 18 to re-enter care until age 21. The state allows shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements. The state allows unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Declassify running away as a status or delinquent offense. Enact law that gives homeless youth contract rights or allows them to enter into binding contracts for certain purposes (e.g. necessities). Allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for youth experiencing homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component. There is a state interagency council on homelessness. The state does not require parental consent for youth to obtain state-issued identification cards. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Wyoming

Moving the Needle on Youth Homelessness

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults up to age 24 experience homelessness each year in the United States. Youth experiencing homelessness — particularly those who are unaccompanied — face numerous challenges, which can include legal barriers to meeting their basic needs and accessing services. Every level of government has a role in removing these barriers, addressing the challenges youth are facing, and ultimately ensuring that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness (the Index) provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers faced by youth experiencing homelessness on the state level. The Index also provides state officials, advocates, grassroots activists, and youth themselves with recommended steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness, thereby helping end the cycle of homelessness and growing opportunity for young people to achieve positive outcomes.

This scorecard evaluates the state based on 61 metrics assigning points up to 100. For a complete list of metrics, see Appendix A.

Quick Facts & Stats

State Ranking:

41

Overall score 2019:

37

Overall score 2018:

32

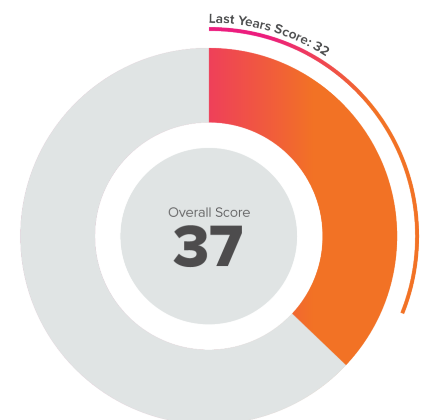
Performance Breakdown:





Law & Policy: 40% of metrics met

- Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness: 0% of metrics met
- Preventing youth experiencing homelessness from coming into contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems: 52% of metrics met
- Providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently: 88% of metrics met
- Addressing the educational needs of youth experiencing homelessness: 33% of metrics met
- Allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services: 33% of metrics met

Systems: 61% of metrics met

Environment: 0% of metrics met



State Highlights	Recommendations for Improvement
<p>Wyoming has moved the needle relative to other states in providing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness the opportunity to seek legal independence and live independently.</p>	<p>Overview</p>  <p>There is room for improvement throughout the metrics for the Equality State, throughout the Law & Policy, Systems, and Environment categories. Laws authorizing comprehensive supports and services for youth experiencing homelessness, allowing youth experiencing homelessness to access critical supports and services, and protecting the rights and interests of LGBTQ youth should be prioritized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State law allows youth in need of supervision to receive services without court involvement. State law does not specifically criminalize running away. State law provides partial or full contract rights for homeless youth. 	<p>Law & Policy</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enact and fund a state law similar to the federal RHYA to provide key intervention and emergency services for youth experiencing homelessness. Extend services beyond 18 for youth in child welfare or juvenile justice jurisdiction. Allow unaccompanied youth under 18 to apply for health insurance coverage on their own. Allow shelters to take in youth experiencing homelessness with a delay or waiver of notification requirements. Allow partial and alternative school credit accrual for youth experiencing homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a current state plan to end homelessness that contains a youth-specific strategy component. 	<p>Systems</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the state plan to prevent and end youth homelessness, include a strategy to address homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Create a state entity – such as an Office of Homeless Youth Services – that focuses solely on designing, implementing, and evaluating youth homelessness programs. Create an Interagency Council on Homelessness that mirrors the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), providing a multi-sector approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. 	<p>Environment</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and maintain a self-governing youth action board or council to inform youth homelessness policy within the state. Require training about sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, healthy sexual development, or issues specific to LGBTQ youth for staff working in runaway and homeless youth systems. Promote safe and inclusive environments in child welfare, juvenile justice, and runaway and homeless youth programs by providing protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Ban harmful and ineffective service provision that includes conversion therapy.

Appendix C: Model Legislation

For states looking to put the recommendations found within the Index into action, having examples of existing legislation, model legislation, and regulations, can be helpful in the crafting of future policy. Legislation included within this section is meant to serve as a guide, may or may not be considered “model” in its entirety, and may need to be adjusted to fit depending on the state.

N.B. Any readers interested in model policy to address a specific metric that is not included below should contact True Colors United, which can assist in locating existing model policy or drafting new model policy.

In the following legislation, text which is **bolded and underlined** is being added to the law, while text which is ~~struck through and bracketed~~ is being deleted from the law. Legislation which amends current laws often includes the text of the current law for context, with amendments placed in the appropriate places.

Health Care Access for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

ACT 690 OF THE 2019 REGULAR SESSION OF THE ARKANSAS STATE LEGISLATURE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
STATE OF **ARKANSAS**:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 20-9-602 is
amended to read as follows:

20-9-602. Consent generally — Definition.

It is recognized and established that, in addition to other authorized persons, any one (1) of the following persons may consent, either orally or otherwise, to any surgical or medical treatment or procedure not prohibited by law that is suggested, recommended, prescribed, or directed by a licensed physician:

- (1) Any adult, for himself or herself;
- (2) (A) Any parent, whether an adult or a minor, for his or her minor child or for his or her adult child of unsound mind, whether the child is of the parent's blood, an adopted child, a stepchild, a foster child not in custody of the Department of Human Services, or a pre-adoptive child not in custody of the Department of Human Services.

(B) However, the father of an illegitimate child cannot consent for the child solely on the basis of parenthood;
- (3) Any married person, whether an adult or a minor, for himself or herself;
- (4) Any female, regardless of age or marital status, for herself when given in connection with pregnancy or childbirth, except the unnatural interruption of a pregnancy;
- (5) Any person standing in loco parentis, whether formally serving or not, and any guardian, conservator, or custodian, for his or her ward or other charge under disability;
- (6) Any emancipated minor, for himself or herself;
- (7) Any unemancipated minor of sufficient intelligence to understand and appreciate the consequences of the proposed surgical or medical treatment or procedures, for himself or herself;

(8) Any adult, for his or her minor sibling or his or her adult sibling of unsound mind;

(9) During the absence of a parent so authorized and empowered, any maternal grandparent and, if the father is so authorized and empowered, any paternal grandparent, for his or her minor grandchild or for his or her adult grandchild of unsound mind;

(10) Any married person, for a spouse of unsound mind;

(11) Any adult child, for his or her mother or father of unsound mind;

(12) Any minor incarcerated in the Department of Correction or the Department of Community Correction, for himself or herself; and

(13)(A) Any foster parent or pre-adoptive parent, for a child in custody of the Department of Human Services in:

- (i) (a) Emergency situations.
(b) As used in this subdivision (13)(A)(i), “emergency situation” means a situation in which, in competent medical judgment, the proposed surgical or medical treatment or procedures are immediately or imminently necessary and any delay occasioned by an attempt to obtain a consent would reasonably be expected to jeopardize the life, health, or safety of the person affected or would reasonably be expected to result in disfigurement or impaired faculties;
 - (ii) Routine medical treatment;
 - (iii) Ongoing medical treatment;
 - (iv) Nonsurgical procedures by a primary care provider; and
 - (v) Nonsurgical procedures by a specialty care provider.
- (B) The Department of Human Services shall be given timely notice of all admissions and discharges consented to by a foster parent or pre-adoptive parent for a child in custody of the Department of Human Services.

(C) The consent of a representative of the Department of Human Services is required for:

- (i) Nonemergency surgical procedures;
- (ii) Nonemergency invasive procedures;
- (iii) "End-of-life" nonemergency procedures, such as do-not-resuscitate orders, withdrawal of life support, and organ donation; and
- (iv) Nonemergency medical procedures relating to a criminal investigation or judicial proceeding that involves gathering forensic evidence; **and**

(14) A local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432 et seq., as existing on January 1, 2019, when the minor patient:

(A) Meets the definition of a homeless child or youth under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11432 29 et seq., as existing on January 1, 2019;

(B) Is not in the care or custody of a parent or guardian; and

(C) Is not in the care or custody of the Department of Human Services.

SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE.

It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that homeless children and youths are going without medical care and treatment that they need; that the State of Arkansas has an interest in the health of homeless children and youths; that this act would authorize local educational agency liaisons to consent to medical treatment for homeless children and youths; and that this act is immediately necessary to ensure that homeless children and youths receive the medical care and treatment that they need. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

Consent to Services for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

HB 371 OF THE 2019 REGULAR SESSION OF THE UTAH STATE LEGISLATURE

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section 26-2-12.6 is amended to read:

26-2-12.6. Fee waived for certified copy of birth certificate.

(1) Notwithstanding Section 26-1-6 and Section 26-2-12.5, the department shall waive a fee that would otherwise be charged for a certified copy of a birth certificate, if the individual whose birth is confirmed by the birth certificate is:

- (a) the individual requesting the certified copy of the birth certificate; and
- (b) (i) homeless, as defined in Section 26-18-411;

(ii) a person who is homeless, as defined in Section 35A-5-302; ~~or~~

(iii) an individual whose primary nighttime residence is a location that is not designed for or ordinarily used as a sleeping accommodation for an individual~~;~~; **or**

(iv) a homeless child or youth, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a.

(2) To satisfy the requirement in Subsection (1)(b), the department shall accept written verification that the individual is homeless or a person, **child, or youth** who is homeless from:

(a) a homeless shelter, as defined in Section 10-9a-526;

(b) a permanent housing, permanent, supportive, or transitional facility, as defined in Section 35A-5-302;

(c) the Department of Workforce Services; ~~or~~

(d) a facility that serves an individual described in Subsection (1)(b) and maintains data on an individual described in Subsection (1)(b) through the Homeless Management Information System~~;~~; **or**

(e) a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii).

Section 2. Section 53-3-105 is amended to read:

53-3-105. Fees for licenses, renewals, extensions, reinstatements, rescheduling, and identification cards.

The following fees apply under this chapter:

(1) An original class D license application under Section 53-3-205 is \$32.

(2) An original provisional license application for a class D license under Section 53-3-205 is \$39. Z

(3) An original application for a motorcycle endorsement under Section 53-3-205 is \$11.

(4) An original application for a taxicab endorsement under Section 53-3-205 is \$9.

(5) A learner permit application under Section 53-3-210.5 is \$19.

(6) A renewal of a class D license under Section 53-3-214 is \$32 unless Subsection (10) applies.

(7) A renewal of a provisional license application for a class D license under Section 53-3-214 is \$32.

(8) A renewal of a motorcycle endorsement under Section 53-3-214 is \$11.

(9) A renewal of a taxicab endorsement under Section 53-3-214 is \$9.

(10) A renewal of a class D license for a person 65 and older under Section 53-3-214 is \$17.

(11) An extension of a class D license under Section 53-3-214 is \$26 unless Subsection (15) applies.

(12) An extension of a provisional license application for a class D license under Section 53-3-214 is \$26.

(13) An extension of a motorcycle endorsement under Section 53-3-214 is \$11.

(14) An extension of a taxicab endorsement under Section 53-3-214 is \$9.

(15) An extension of a class D license for a person 65 and older under Section 53-3-214 is \$14.

(16) An original or renewal application for a commercial class A, B, or C license or an original or renewal of a provisional commercial class A or B license under Part 4, Uniform Commercial Driver License Act, is \$52.

(17) A commercial class A, B, or C license skills test is \$78.

(18) Each original CDL endorsement for passengers, hazardous material, double or triple trailers, or tankers is \$9.

(19) An original CDL endorsement for a school bus under Part 4, Uniform Commercial Driver License Act, is \$9.

(20) A renewal of a CDL endorsement under Part 4, Uniform Commercial Driver License Act, is \$9.

(21) (a) A retake of a CDL knowledge test provided for in Section 53-3-205 is \$26.

(b) A retake of a CDL skills test provided for in Section 53-3-205 is \$52.

(22) A retake of a CDL endorsement test provided for in Section 53-3-205 is \$9.

(23) A duplicate class A, B, C, or D license certificate under Section 53-3-215 is \$23.

(24)(a) A license reinstatement application under Section 53-3-205 is \$40.

(b) A license reinstatement application under Section 53-3-205 for an alcohol, drug, or combination of alcohol and any drug-related offense is \$45 in addition to the fee under Subsection (24)(a).

(25)(a) An administrative fee for license reinstatement after an alcohol, drug, or combination of alcohol and any drug-related offense under Section 41-6a-520, 53-3-223, or 53-3-231 or an alcohol, drug, or combination of alcohol and any drug-related offense under Part 4, Uniform Commercial Driver License Act, is \$255.

(b) This administrative fee is in addition to the fees under Subsection (24).

(26)(a) An administrative fee for providing the driving record of a driver under Section 53-3-104 or 53-3-420 is \$8.

(b) The division may not charge for a report furnished under Section 53-3-104 to a municipal, county, state, or federal agency.

(27) A rescheduling fee under Section 53-3-205 or 53-3-407 is \$25.

(28)(a) Except as provided under Subsections (28)(b) and (c), an identification card application under Section 53-3-808 is \$23.

(b) An identification card application under Section 53-3-808 for a person with a disability, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12102, is \$17.

(c) A fee may not be charged for an identification card application if the individual applying:

- (i) (A) has not been issued a Utah driver license;
- (B) is indigent; and
- (C) is at least 18 years of age; or

(ii) submits written verification that the individual is homeless, as defined in Section 26-18-411, [or] a person who is homeless, as defined in Section 35A-5-302, **or a child or youth who is homeless, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(2),** from:

(A) a homeless shelter, as defined in Section 10-9a-526;

(B) a permanent housing, permanent, supportive, or transitional facility, as defined in Section 35A-5-302; ~~[or]~~

(C) the Department of Workforce Services~~[;]~~; **or**

(D) a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii).

(29)(a) An extension of a regular identification card under Subsection 53-3-807(5) for a person with a disability, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12102, is \$17.

(b) The fee described in Subsection (29)(a) shall be waived if the applicant submits written verification that the individual is homeless, as defined in Section 26-18-411, or a person who is homeless, as defined in Section 35A-5-302, **or a child or youth who is homeless, as defined in 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11434a(2),** from:

(i) a homeless shelter, as defined in Section 10-9a-526;

(ii) a permanent housing, permanent, supportive, or transitional facility, as defined in Section 35A-5-302; ~~[or]~~

(iii) the Department of Workforce Services~~[;]~~; **or**

(iv) a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth designated under 42 U.S.C. Sec. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii).

(30)(a) An extension of a regular identification card under Subsection 53-3-807(6) is \$23.

(b) The fee described in Subsection (30)(a) shall be waived if the applicant submits written verification that the individual is homeless, as defined in Section 26-18-411, or a person who is homeless, as defined in Section 35A-5-302, from:

(i) a homeless shelter, as defined in Section 10-9a-526;

(ii) a permanent housing, permanent, supportive, or transitional facility, as defined in Section 35A-5-302; or

(iii) the Department of Workforce Services.

(31) In addition to any license application fees collected under this chapter, the division shall impose on individuals submitting fingerprints in accordance with Section 53-3-205.5 the fees that the Bureau of Criminal Identification is authorized to collect for the services the Bureau of Criminal Identification provides under Section 53-3-205.5.

(32) An original mobility vehicle permit application under Section 41-6a-1118 is \$30.

(33) A renewal of a mobility vehicle permit under Section 41-6a-1118 is \$30.

(34) A duplicate mobility vehicle permit under Section 41-6a-1118 is \$12.

Section 3. Section 62A-4a-501 is amended to read:

62A-4a-501. Harboring a runaway -- Reporting requirements -- Division to provide assistance -- Affirmative defense -- Providing shelter after notice.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Harbor" means to provide shelter in:

- (i) the home of the person who is providing the shelter; or
- (ii) any structure over which the person providing the shelter has any control.

(b) "Homeless youth" means a child, other than an emancipated minor:

- (i) who is a runaway; or**
- (ii) who is not accompanied by the child's parent or legal guardian.**

~~[(b)]~~ (c) "Receiving center" means the same as that term is defined in Section 62A-7-101.

~~[(c)]~~ (d) "Runaway" means a child, other than an emancipated minor, who is absent from the home or lawfully prescribed residence of the child's parent or legal guardian ~~[of the child]~~ without the permission of the parent or legal guardian.

~~[(d)]~~ (e) "Temporary homeless youth shelter" means a facility that:

- (i) provides temporary shelter to a ~~[runaway]~~ **homeless youth**; and
- (ii) is licensed by the Office of Licensing, created in Section 62A-1-105, as a residential support program.

~~[(e)]~~ (f) "Youth services center" means a center established by, or under contract with, the Division of Juvenile Justice Services, created in Section 62A-1-105, to provide youth services, as defined in Section 62A-7-101.

(2) Except as provided in Subsection (3), a person, including a temporary homeless youth shelter, is guilty of a class B misdemeanor if the person:

- (a) knowingly and intentionally harbors a child;
- (b) knows at the time of harboring the child that the child is a runaway;
- (c) fails to notify one of the following, by telephone or other reasonable means, of the location of the child:
 - (i) the parent or legal guardian of the child;
 - (ii) the division; or
 - (iii) a youth services center; and
- (d) fails to notify a person described in Subsection (2)(c) within eight hours after the later of:
 - (i) the time that the person becomes aware that the child is a runaway; or
 - (ii) the time that the person begins harboring the child.

(3) A person described in Subsection (2), including a temporary homeless youth shelter, is not guilty of a violation of Subsection (2) and is not required to comply with Subsections (2)(c) and (d), if:

- (a)
 - (i) a court order is issued authorizing a peace officer to take the child into custody; and
- ~~[(b)]~~ (ii) the person notifies a peace officer or the nearest detention center, as defined in Section 62A-7-101, by telephone or other reasonable means, of the location of the child, within eight hours after the later of:

- ~~[(ii)]~~ (A) the time that the person becomes aware that the child is a runaway; or
- ~~[(iii)]~~ (B) the time that the person begins harboring the child~~[-];~~ or

(b) (i) the child is a runaway who consents to shelter, care, or licensed services under Section 62A-4a-502; and

(ii) (A) the person is unable to locate the child's parent or legal guardian; or

(B) the child refuses to disclose the contact information for the child's parent or legal guardian.

(4) A person described in Subsection (2), including a temporary homeless youth shelter, shall provide a report to the division:

- (a) if the person has an obligation under Section 62A-4a-403 to report child abuse or neglect; or
- (b) if, within 48 hours after the person begins harboring the child:
 - (i) the person continues to harbor the child; and
 - (ii) the person does not make direct contact with:
 - (A) a parent or legal guardian of the child;
 - (B) the division;
 - (C) a youth services center; or
 - (D) a peace officer or the nearest detention center, as defined in Section 62A-7-101, if a court order is issued authorizing a peace officer to take the ~~[minor]~~ **child** into custody.

(5) It is an affirmative defense to the crime described in Subsection (2) that:

- (a) the person failed to provide notice as described in Subsection (2) or (3) due to circumstances beyond the control of the person providing the shelter; and
- (b) the person provided the notice described in Subsection (2) or (3) as soon as it was reasonably practicable to provide the notice.

(6) Upon receipt of a report that a runaway is being harbored by a person:

- (a) a youth services center shall:
 - (i) notify the parent or legal guardian that a report has been made; and
 - (ii) inform the parent or legal guardian of assistance available from the youth services center; or
- (b) the division shall:
 - (i) determine whether the runaway is abused, neglected, or dependent; and
 - (ii) if appropriate, make a referral for services for the runaway.

(7) **(a)** A parent or legal guardian of a runaway who is aware that the runaway is being harbored may notify a law enforcement agency and request assistance in retrieving the runaway.

(b) The local law enforcement agency may assist the parent or legal guardian in retrieving the runaway.

(8) Nothing in this section prohibits a person, including a temporary homeless youth shelter, from continuing to provide shelter to a runaway, after giving the notice described in Subsections (2) through (4), if:

- (a) a parent or legal guardian of the child consents to the continued provision of shelter; or
- (b) a peace officer or a parent or legal guardian of the child fails to retrieve the runaway.

(9) Nothing in this section prohibits a person or a temporary homeless youth shelter from providing shelter to a child whose [parents] parent or legal [guardians have] guardian has intentionally:

- (a) ceased to maintain physical custody of the child; and
- (b) failed to make reasonable arrangements for the safety, care, and physical custody of the child[; and].
- ~~[(c) failed to provide the child with food, shelter, or clothing;]~~

(10) Nothing in this section prohibits:

- (a) a receiving center or a youth services center from providing shelter to a runaway in accordance with the requirements of Title 62A, Chapter 7, Juvenile Justice Services, and the rules relating to a receiving center or a youth services center; or
- (b) a government agency from taking custody of a child as otherwise provided by law.

Section 4. Section 62A-4a-502 is enacted to read:

62A-4a-502. Consent to shelter, care, or services by a child.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) “Care” means providing:

- (i) assistance to obtain food, clothing, hygiene products, or other basic necessities;**
- (ii) access to a bed, showering facility, or transportation; or**
- (iii) assistance with school enrollment or attendance.**

(b) “Homeless youth” means the same as that term is defined in Section 62A-4a-501.

(c) “Licensed services” means a service provided by a temporary homeless youth shelter, a youth services center, or other facility that is licensed to provide the service to a homeless youth.

(d) “Service” means:

- (i) youth services, as defined in Section 62A-7-101;**
- (ii) child welfare or juvenile court case management or advocacy;**
- (iii) aftercare services, as defined in 45 C.F.R. 1351.1; or**
- (iv) independent living skills training.**

(e) “Temporary homeless youth shelter” means the same as that term is defined in Section 62A-4a-501.

(f) “Youth services center” means the same as that term is defined in Section 62A-4a-501.

(2) A homeless youth may consent to temporary shelter, care, or licensed services if the homeless youth:

- (a) is at least 15 years old; and**
- (b) manages the homeless youth’s own financial affairs, regardless of the source of income.**

(3) In determining consent under Subsection (2), a person may rely on the homeless youth’s verbal or written statement describing the homeless youth’s ability to consent to temporary shelter, care, or licensed services.

(4) A person who provides shelter, care, or licensed services to a homeless youth who consents to the shelter, care, or licensed services under Subsection (2):

(a) shall report to the division as required under Section 62A-4a-403 and Subsection 62A-4a-501(4); and

(b) may provide the homeless youth a referral to safe permanent housing, employment services, medical or dental care, or counseling.

Reducing Barriers to Higher Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness

PUBLIC CHAPTER 266 OF THE 2019 SESSION OF THE TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) A degree-granting postsecondary educational institution, as defined in § 49- 7-2003, shall:

(1) Designate a staff member who is employed in the financial aid office, or another appropriate office or department as determined by the institution, to serve as a homeless-student liaison. The homeless-student liaison is responsible for understanding the provisions pertaining to financial aid eligibility of homeless students, including eligibility as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 1087vv), and identifying services available and appropriate for students enrolled at the institution who fall under these categories. The homeless-student liaison shall assist homeless students who are enrolled, or planning to enroll, in the institution in applying for and receiving federal and state financial aid and available services; and

(2) Develop a plan to provide homeless students who are enrolled in the institution access to housing resources offered by the institution during and between academic terms. The plan must include granting homeless students first priority in housing placement and placing those students in housing facilities that remain open for occupation for the most days in a calendar year.

(b) As used in this section, “homeless student” means a student under twenty five (25) years of age who has been verified as a homeless child or youth, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)), at any time during the twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding the student’s enrollment in, or at any time while enrolled in, a degree-granting postsecondary educational institution by:

(1) A director or designee of a governmental or nonprofit agency that receives public or private funding to provide services to homeless people;

(2) An LEA liaison for homeless children and youth designated pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 11432(g) (1)(J)(ii), or a school social worker or counselor;

(3) The director of a federal TRIO or Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs program, or a designee of the director; or

(4) A financial aid administrator for a degree-granting postsecondary educational institution.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019, the public welfare requiring it.

Establishing an Office of Homelessness Prevention

S.3585/A.5205 OF THE 2019 SESSION OF THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

Be It Enacted by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.52:27D-287.5 OFFICE OF HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION.

1. a. There is hereby established within the Department of Community Affairs an Office of Homelessness Prevention to coordinate among State and local agencies and private organizations that provide services to persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness, and to implement a Statewide strategy to address homelessness.

b. The office shall be under the immediate supervision of a director, who shall be a person qualified by training and experience to direct the work of such office. The Commissioner of Community Affairs shall appoint the director, who shall serve at the pleasure of the commissioner. The director shall administer the work of the office under the direction of the commissioner and shall perform such other functions of the department as the commissioner may prescribe.

c. In addition to other functions, powers, and duties vested in the Department of Community Affairs by P.L.2019, c.73(C.52:27D-287.5 et al.) or by any other law, the Department of Community Affairs shall, through the Office of Homelessness Prevention:

(1) Collect, maintain, and make available information concerning persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness, including demographics information, current services and resources available, the cost and availability of services and programs, and the met and unmet needs of this population. All entities that receive State, county, or municipal funding shall provide the office access to all data they maintain;

(2) Evaluate State and local services and resources and develop, implement, and revise, as necessary, a consolidated plan for addressing the needs of persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness;

(3) Explore, compile, and disseminate information regarding public and private funding sources for State and local programs serving persons who are homeless;

(4) Assess and provide recommendations for coordinating the activities of State programs, including multi-State programs, and local coalitions for persons who are homeless and promote the effectiveness of programs addressing the needs of persons who are homeless;

(5) Convene meetings and workshops of State and local agencies, local coalitions and programs, and other stakeholders for developing and reviewing policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of efforts to meet the needs of persons who are homeless, including training, counseling, and navigation services essential to enable persons who are homeless to make the transition to permanent housing; and

(6) Conduct or promote research on the effectiveness of programs addressing the needs of persons who are homeless.

d. All State, county, and municipal departments and agencies shall, upon request, make every reasonable effort to assist the Office of Homelessness Prevention in carrying out the office's functions, powers, and duties.

e. (1) On the effective date of P.L.2019, c.73(C.52:27D-287.5 et al.), the Office of Homelessness Prevention shall have access to all information in the Homeless Management Information System administered in the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency.

(2) The Homeless Management Information System, administered in the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, including any personnel charged with administering and maintaining the Homeless Management Information System, may be transferred to the Office of Homelessness Prevention. If the Homeless Management Information System is transferred pursuant to this paragraph, all appropriations, grants, and other moneys available and to become available to the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, which the agency uses for the maintenance and administration of the Homeless Management Information System, shall be transferred to the Office of Homelessness Prevention.

C.52:27D-287.6 Findings, declarations; "New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Task Force."

2.a. The Legislature finds and declares that it is in the public interest for State policymakers, providers of services to people who are homeless, advocacy organizations, and other concerned representatives of the public to engage in an intensive collaborative effort to seek to devise more effective means of coordinating among various State and local initiatives that provide assistance to persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless; to identify public and private sources of funding for programs to meet the needs of persons within New Jersey who are homeless or at risk for homelessness; and to develop more permanent housing solutions for this population.

b. There is established the "New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Task Force." The purpose of the task force shall be to serve as an advisory body to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs, to develop recommendations, through an intensive collaborative effort among representatives of State government, providers of services to the homeless, advocacy organizations, and other concerned representatives of the public, and to develop, promote, and support efforts for the most effective means of coordinating among various State and local initiatives that provide assistance to persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless; to identify public and private sources of funding for programs to meet the various needs of persons within this State who are homeless or at risk for homelessness; and to develop more permanent housing solutions for this population.

c. The task force shall consist of 15 members including the Director of the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs, or the director's designee, the Director of the Division of Family Development in the Department of Human Services, or the director's designee, and 13 members, who shall be appointed by the Governor no later than the 60th day after the effective date of P.L.2019, c.73 (C.52:27D-287.5 et al.), and who may be government officials or members of the public with a demonstrated expertise in issues relating to the work of the task force.

d. The Director of the Office of Homelessness Prevention, or the director's designee, shall serve as chairperson of

the task force. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable following the appointment of its members and shall select a vice-chairperson from among the members. The chairperson shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task force.

e. The public members shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties and within the limits of funds available to the task force.

f. The task force shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

g. The task force may meet and hold hearings at the places it designates during the sessions or recesses of the Legislature.

h. The Department of Community Affairs shall provide staff support to the task force.

i. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original appointments.

3. Section 4 of P.L.1999, c.224 (C.9:12A-5) is amended to read as follows:

C.9:12A-5 Comprehensive programs for homeless youth; list of organizations, agencies participating.

4. The department shall establish and support a comprehensive program for homeless youth in the State by contracting with organizations and agencies, licensed by the department, that provide street outreach or basic center shelter or transitional living services for homeless youth. The department shall establish licensure requirements and shall contract for programs that ensure that services, as specified by this act, are provided to homeless youth in the State in an appropriate and responsible manner. The commissioner may establish such other requirements for the homeless youth programs as he deems necessary. On or before December 31 of each year, the department shall provide to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs a list of organizations and agencies participating in the program and any available information in the possession of the department concerning persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness in accordance with any applicable privacy, security, and data quality standards.

4. N.J.S.18A:38-1 is amended to read as follows:

Attendance at school free of charge.

18A:38-1. Public schools shall be free to the following persons over five and under 20 years of age:

- a. Any person who is domiciled within the school district;
- b. (1) Any person who is kept in the home of another person domiciled within the school district and is supported by such other person gratis as if he were such other person's own child, upon filing by such other person with the secretary of the board of education of the district, if so required by the board, a sworn statement that he is domiciled within the district

and is supporting the child gratis and will assume all personal obligations for the child relative to school requirements and that he intends so to keep and support the child gratuitously for a longer time than merely through the school term, and a copy of his lease if a tenant, or a sworn statement by his landlord acknowledging his tenancy if residing as a tenant without a written lease, and upon filing by the child's parent or guardian with the secretary of the board of education a sworn statement that he is not capable of supporting or providing care for the child due to a family or economic hardship and that the child is not residing with the resident of the district solely for the purpose of receiving a free public education within the district. The statement shall be accompanied by documentation to support the validity of the sworn statements, information from or about which shall be supplied only to the board and only to the extent that it directly pertains to the support or nonsupport of the child. If in the judgment of the board of education the evidence does not support the validity of the claim by the resident, the board may deny admission to the child. The resident may contest the board's decision to the commissioner within 21 days of the date of the decision and shall be entitled to an expedited hearing before the commissioner on the validity of the claim and shall have the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence that the child is eligible for a free education under the criteria listed in this subsection. The board of education shall, at the time of its decision, notify the resident in writing of his right to contest the board's decision to the commissioner within 21 days. No child shall be denied admission during the pendency of the proceedings before the commissioner. In the event the child is currently enrolled in the district, the student shall not be removed from school during the 21-day period in which the resident may contest the board's decision nor during the pendency of the proceedings before the commissioner. If in the judgment of the commissioner the evidence does not support the claim of the resident, he shall assess the resident tuition for the student prorated to the time of the student's ineligible attendance in the school district. Tuition shall be computed on the basis of 1/180 of the total annual per pupil cost to the local district multiplied by the number of days of ineligible attendance and shall be collected in the manner in which orders of the commissioner are enforced. Nothing shall preclude a board from collecting tuition from the resident, parent or guardian for a student's period of ineligible attendance in the schools of the district where the issue is not appealed to the commissioner;

(2) If the superintendent or administrative principal of a school district finds that the parent or guardian of a child who is attending the schools of the district is not domiciled within the district and the child is not kept in the home of another person domiciled within the school district and supported by him gratis as if the child was the person's own child as provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the superintendent or administrative principal may apply to the board of education for the removal of the child. The parent or guardian shall be entitled to a hearing before the board and if in the judgment of the board the parent or guardian is not domiciled within the district or the child is not kept in the home of another person domiciled within the school district and supported by him gratis as if the child was the person's own child as provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the board may order the transfer or removal of the child from school. The parent or guardian may contest the board's decision before the commissioner within 21

days of the date of the decision and shall be entitled to an expedited hearing before the commissioner and shall have the burden of proof by a preponderance of the evidence that the child is eligible for a free education under the criteria listed in this subsection. The board of education shall, at the time of its decision, notify the parent or guardian in writing of his right to contest the decision within 21 days. No child shall be removed from school during the 21-day period in which the parent may contest the board's decision or during the pendency of the proceedings before the commissioner. If in the judgment of the commissioner the evidence does not support the claim of the parent or guardian, the commissioner shall assess the parent or guardian tuition for the student prorated to the time of the student's ineligible attendance in the schools of the district. Tuition shall be computed on the basis of 1/180 of the total annual per pupil cost to the local district multiplied by the number of days of ineligible attendance and shall be collected in the manner in which orders of the commissioner are enforced. Nothing shall preclude a board from collecting tuition from the parent or guardian for a student's period of ineligible attendance in the schools of the district where the issue is not appealed to the commissioner;

The provisions of this section requiring proof of support, custody or tenancy shall not apply to a person keeping a child in his home whose parent or guardian is a member of the New Jersey National Guard or a member of the reserve component of the armed forces of the United States and who has been ordered into active military service in any of the armed forces of the United States in time of war or national emergency. In such a situation, the child shall be eligible to enroll in the district in which he is being kept, and no tuition shall be charged by the district. Following the return of the child's parent or guardian from active military service, the child's eligibility for enrollment without tuition in the district in which he or she is being kept shall cease at the end of the current school year;

c. Any person who fraudulently allows a child of another person to use his residence and is not the primary financial supporter of that child and any person who fraudulently claims to have given up custody of his child to a person in another district commits a disorderly persons offense;

d. Any person whose parent or guardian, even though not domiciled within the district, is residing temporarily therein, but any person who has had or shall have his all-year-round dwelling place within the district for one year or longer shall be deemed to be domiciled within the district for the purposes of this section;

e. Any person for whom the Division of Youth and Family Services in the Department of Children and Families is acting as guardian and who is placed in the district by the division;

f. Any person whose parent or guardian moves from one school district to another school district as a result of being homeless and whose district of residence is determined pursuant to section 19 of P.L.1979, c.207 (C.18A:7B-12). On or before December 31 of each year, a public school shall report to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs an accounting of each instance in which the public school is made aware that a student enrolled in the public school because the student's parent or guardian moved from one school district to another school district as a result of being homeless.

5. R.S.26:8-63 is amended to read as follows:

Free certified copies.

26:8-63. The State registrar shall:

a. Furnish a certification or certified copy of a birth, marriage, civil union, domestic partnership, fetal death or death certificate without fee in the prosecution of any claim for public pension or for military or naval enlistment purposes; and

b. Furnish the United States Public Health Service without expense to the State, microfilm or photocopy images of birth, marriage, civil union, domestic partnership, fetal death and death certificates without payment of the fees prescribed in this article; and

c. Furnish a certified transcript of any entry in the records of the New Jersey State census without fee for certification in the prosecution of any claim for public pension, for military or naval enlistment purposes; and

d. Furnish without fee upon request for administrative use by any city, State or federal agency a certified transcript of any New Jersey State census entry, or a certification or certified copy of a birth, death, fetal death, marriage, civil union or domestic partnership certificate; and

e. Furnish without fee upon request a certified copy of a veteran's death certificate to the veteran's legal representative, the executor or administrator of the veteran's estate, or to a family member authorized to obtain a copy of the death certificate pursuant to subsection a. of R.S.26:8-62. No more than one copy of a veteran's death certificate may be provided without fee pursuant to this subsection; all other copies of the death certificate shall be subject to the statutory fee; and

f. Furnish without fee upon request by a person who is homeless a certified copy of the person's birth certificate, provided that the person submits the request through a social worker or the coordinator of the emergency shelter for the homeless where the person is temporarily residing. The request shall be transmitted on the emergency shelter's letterhead and shall include the shelter's employer identification number and an attestation by the coordinator that the person requesting the certificate is currently homeless and residing at the shelter or the request shall be submitted on the social worker's agency or professional practice letterhead and shall include the agency's or the professional practice's employer identification number and an attestation by the social worker that the person requesting the certificate is currently homeless. A certified copy of a birth certificate furnished pursuant to this subsection shall be transmitted to the social worker or coordinator who transmitted the request. No more than one certified copy of a birth certificate furnished to a person who is homeless pursuant to this subsection shall be provided without fee; all other copies of the birth certificate shall be subject to the statutory fee. On or before December 31 of each year, the State Registrar shall report to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs an accounting of each instance in which the State Registrar furnished without fee a certified copy of a person's birth certificate pursuant to this subsection.

As used in this section:

"Fee" includes, but is not limited to, any search, certification, processing, authentication, standard shipping, or other fees that would ordinarily be assessed to furnish a certified copy of a certificate or transcript; and

"Person who is homeless " means a person without a domicile who is unable to secure permanent and stable housing as determined by a social worker or the coordinator of an emergency shelter for the homeless established pursuant to P.L.1985, c.48 (C.55:13C-1 et seq.).

6. Section 6 of P.L.1980, c.47 (C.39:3-29.7) is amended to read as follows:

C.39:3-29.7 Fees.

6.a. The chief administrator shall charge fees as follows:

Identification Card, Original	\$18
Identification Card, Duplicate	\$5
Identification Card, Renewal	\$18
Digitized picture	\$6, in addition to the fees required above.

b. The chief administrator may waive the fees established under subsection a. of this section for a person who is homeless who submits proof of temporary residence through a social worker or the coordinator of an emergency shelter for the homeless where the person is temporarily residing. On or before December 31 of each year, the commission shall report to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs an accounting of each instance in which the commission provided a fee waiver pursuant to this section. For the purposes of this section, "person who is homeless" means a person without a domicile who is unable to secure permanent and stable housing as determined by a social worker or the coordinator of an emergency shelter for the homeless established pursuant to P.L.1985, c.48 (C.55:13C-1 et seq.).

7. Section 1 of P.L.1982, c.56 (C.40:5-2.10b) is amended to read as follows:

C.40:5-2.10b Provision of services to runaway, homeless youths, families.

1. The governing body of a county or municipality annually may appropriate funds to a private, nonprofit organization for the purpose of providing services to runaway or homeless youths and their families. The services may include temporary shelter, food, clothing, medical care, transportation, individual and family counseling, and any other service necessary to provide adequate temporary, protective care for runaway or homeless youths, or to aid in reuniting the youths with their parents or guardians. On or before December 31 of each year, the governing body of a municipality shall provide to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs a list of nonprofit organizations to which the governing body appropriated funds pursuant to this section and any available information in the possession of the governing body concerning persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness in accordance with any applicable privacy, security, and data quality standards. For the purposes of this section, "runaway or homeless youth" means a person under the age of 18, who is absent from his legal residence without the consent of his parents or legal guardian, or who is without a place of shelter where supervision and care are available.

8. Section 3 of P.L.1988, c.29 (C.52:27C-24.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27C-24.1 Fund for assistance to homeless.

3. a. The Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs shall establish within the Division of Housing and

Community Resources a fund for the purpose of funding programs to assist persons who are homeless pursuant to subsections f. and h. of section 24 of P.L.1944, c.85 (C.52:27C-24).

b. The fund shall consist of moneys appropriated thereto by section 4 of P.L.1988, c.29 and such other moneys as may be appropriated or otherwise made available for that purpose.

c. Not more than 5% of moneys paid into the fund during any fiscal year of the State may be used to pay the costs of the fund's administration by the Department of Community Affairs during that fiscal year.

d. Upon the effective date of P.L.2019, c.73 (C.52:27D-287.5 et al.), the fund created pursuant to subsection a. of this section may be transferred from the Division of Housing and Community Resources to the Office of Homelessness Prevention.

9. Section 4 of P.L.2009, c.123 (C.52:27D-287d) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-287d Adoption of homeless housing plan by local government.

4. A local government, in consultation with the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs, may adopt a homeless housing plan to address the housing needs of persons who are homeless within its jurisdiction, which shall be in accordance with the provisions of P.L.2009, c.123 (C.52:27D-287a et al.). The plan shall include provisions for establishing a trust fund for the purposes of receiving funds pursuant to P.L.2009, c.123 (C.52:27D-287a et al.), and shall evidence a strategic local scheme to identify and address the needs of persons who are homeless within the jurisdiction, including strategies to reduce the need for emergency room care, hospital care, law enforcement, foster care, and other social services associated with persons who are homeless and homelessness.

10. Section 6 of P.L.2009, c.123 (C.52:27D-287f) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-287f Utilization of County Homelessness Trust Fund.

6. a. Each county shall utilize its County Homelessness Trust Fund with the advice of the County Homelessness Trust Fund Task Force for the operation of a homeless housing grant program. This program is established in order to provide:

(1) for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of housing projects or units within housing projects that supply permanent affordable housing for persons who are homeless or families, including those at risk of homelessness;

(2) rental assistance vouchers, including tenant and project based subsidies, for affordable housing projects or units within housing projects that provide permanent affordable housing for persons

who are homeless or families, including those at risk of homelessness;

(3) supportive services as may be required by homeless individuals or families in order to obtain or maintain, or both, permanent affordable housing; and

(4) prevention services for at risk homeless individuals or families so that they can obtain and maintain permanent affordable housing.

b. Grants awarded by the governing body of the county shall be used to support projects that:

(1) measurably reduce homelessness;

(2) demonstrate government cost savings over time;

(3) employ evidence-based models;

(4) can be replicated in other counties;

(5) include an outcome measurement component;

(6) are consistent with the local homeless housing plan; or

(7) fund the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation projects that will serve homeless individuals or families for a period of at least 30 years or the equal to the longest term of affordability required by other funding sources.

c. Each county that has established a County Homelessness Trust Fund shall transmit information concerning the uses of the funds to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs in accordance with requirements established by that office.

d. The governing body of a county may by resolution establish a preference for veterans that gives first priority, in the distribution of grants, for the benefit of homeless veterans, including those at risk of homelessness.

e. A county may utilize its County Homelessness Trust Fund to support emergency shelter for the homeless services provided in connection with a Code Blue alert.

11. Section 1 of P.L.2008, c.28 (C.52:27I-8.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27I-8.1 Additional powers of authority.

1. In addition to the powers granted the authority pursuant to section 8 of P.L.2006, c.16 (C.52:27I-8), the authority shall have the power to enter into any legally binding agreements with representatives of persons who are homeless that are necessary in order to comply with and implement the requirements of 32 CFR 176.30 and 24 CFR 586.30. On or before December 31 of each year, the authority shall report each agreement entered into by the authority pursuant to this section to the Office of Homelessness Prevention in the Department of Community Affairs.

12. There is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Community Affairs the sum of \$3,000,000 to carry out the purposes of section 1 of P.L.2019, c.73 (C.52:27D-287.5).

13. This act shall take effect immediately.

