



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 26.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 20, 2025

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY REPORT: HOMELESS OUTREACH MANAGEMENT & ENGAGEMENT (HOME)

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE the HOME Quarterly Report.

ISSUE

Los Angeles is experiencing a homelessness crisis, and many unhoused individuals seek shelter on Metro's rail and busway system. Since 2017, Metro has been funding local social service agencies to deploy multidisciplinary teams who engage and deliver resources and services to unhoused riders. In addition, Metro has partnered with local homeless shelters to provide beds for the outreach teams to utilize. This is a report on the status and outcomes of Metro's homeless engagements throughout October, November, and December of 2024.

BACKGROUND

Metro continues to fund multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) who perform outreach to people experiencing homelessness on Metro's rail and bus systems. Metro began contracting eight MDTs through the LA County Department of Health Services (DHS) in 2017, expanding contracted outreach services to the current operating total of 24 MDTs. The initial eight teams were employed by the community agency People Assisting the Homeless (PATH); Metro now has five additional community agencies who deploy MDTs: Christ Centered Ministries (CCM), HOPICS, LA Family Housing, Union Station Homeless Services, and Helpline Youth Counseling.

In addition to MDT outreach, Metro currently funds a total of 45 interim housing beds through LA County DHS. These beds, located in Central Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley, are reserved for MDTs to directly refer the people they serve. Metro MDTs also have access to 25 beds through partnerships with the LA County Chief Executive Office Homeless Initiative (LA CEO-HI) and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Agency (LAHSA). Most recently, the LA CEO-HI agreed to fund ten additional beds in Long Beach.

Metro has made notable progress in addressing homelessness on Metro's rail and busway systems

since 2017 through the expansion of MDT outreach, increased access to housing resources, and improved partnerships with City, County, and Community partners. Metro MDTs focus on engaging individuals and connecting them to housing and other services and are deployed across the entire rail and bus system seven days a week, with 24-hour coverage Monday through Friday. The six community agencies that deploy the 24 MDTs are based in different areas of LA County and are strategically assigned to segments of the Metro system located in their regions.

Since 2023, Metro has increased the number of interim housing resources from 25 to the current total of 80. This includes the most recent addition of ten beds in the city of Long Beach, through a collaboration with LA County and National Housing & Healthcare Advisors (NHHA). These beds provide occupants with access to a wide range of resources and programming that address a variety of client needs. All beds are required to provide 24-hour access, offering a vital resource to people experiencing homelessness during the late evening and early morning hours of Metro operation. Through the key partnerships between Metro and external stakeholders, staff plan for continued expansion of Metro-specific interim housing resources.

Since 2018, Metro MDTs have enrolled more than 20,000 individuals into the Homeless Management and Information System (HMIS), allowing them to gain access to homeless resources and services. The teams have successfully connected more than 5,000 people to interim housing and more than 1,500 people to permanent housing.

DISCUSSION

The following quarterly report provides an overview of the homeless response activities during October, November, and December of 2024, as well as year-to-date outcomes.

Operational Capacity and Deployment

Of the 24 teams currently funded under the active DHS contract (Letter of Agreement #8), 23 teams are deployed, with the remaining team in the process of recruitment. MDTs perform outreach on the rail and bus system seven days a week, with 24-hour coverage Monday through Friday. Outreach data is collected daily and analyzed to inform strategic deployment planning. Data analysis shows the highest levels of activity on the A, B, D, and E lines, which is where most teams are deployed using three strategic approaches: 1) co-deployment with Metro Ambassadors, Transit Security, and Law Enforcement partners at mutually agreed upon focus stations, 2) rover from station to station along designated lines within their respective deployment zones, and 3) nighttime deployment to End of Line stations Monday through Friday.

Impact

MDTs use a person-centered approach when performing outreach on the Metro system by focusing on building rapport and trust to meet individuals' needs. The primary goal is to connect people to interim or permanent housing. The multidisciplinary nature of these teams allows them to provide individuals with a variety of resources, from basic food, water & clothing to substance use and mental health interventions.

During the months of October, November, and December, the MDTs successfully enrolled 1,494 people into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The total number of individuals

enrolled into HMIS during the current fiscal year is 3,154. The HOME department sets an annual housing connection goal, which includes the total number of individuals placed into either interim or permanent housing. Metro's total housing placement goal for this fiscal year is 1,800, which represents a 86% increase over last year's goal of 966 total placements. During the months of October, November and December, the MDTs enrolled 615 individuals into interim housing and connected 113 individuals to permanent housing. This amounts to a total of 728 housing placements during quarter two, which is a 9% increase over quarter one (666 placements). In total, the MDTs have connected 1,394 individuals to housing resources this fiscal year, which represents 77% of the annual goal. Figure 1 below shows the quarterly outcomes for the current fiscal year.

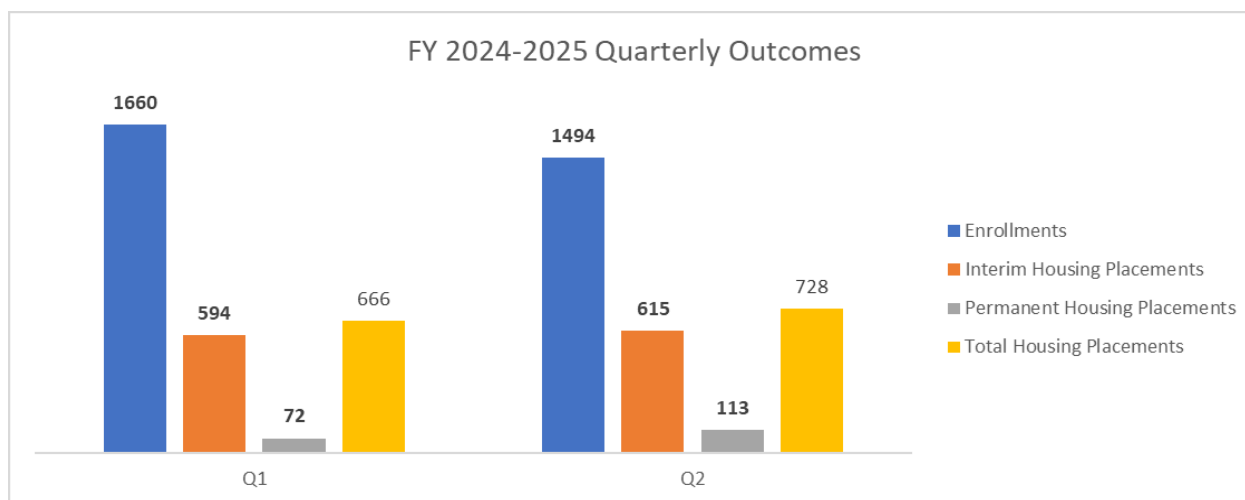
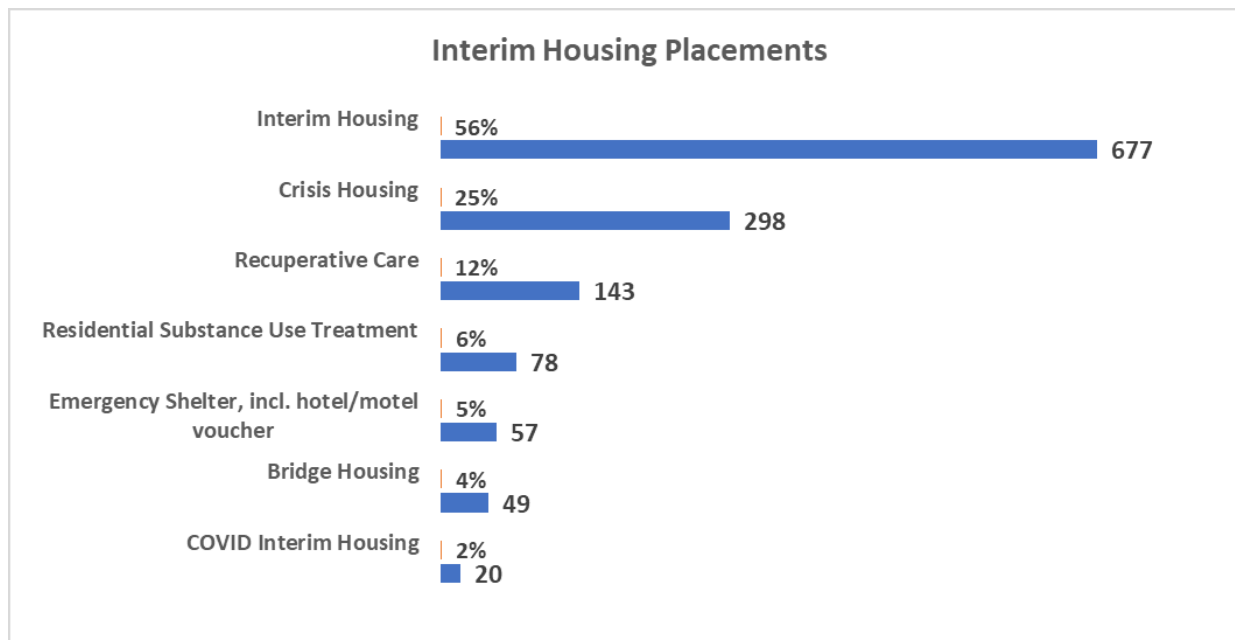
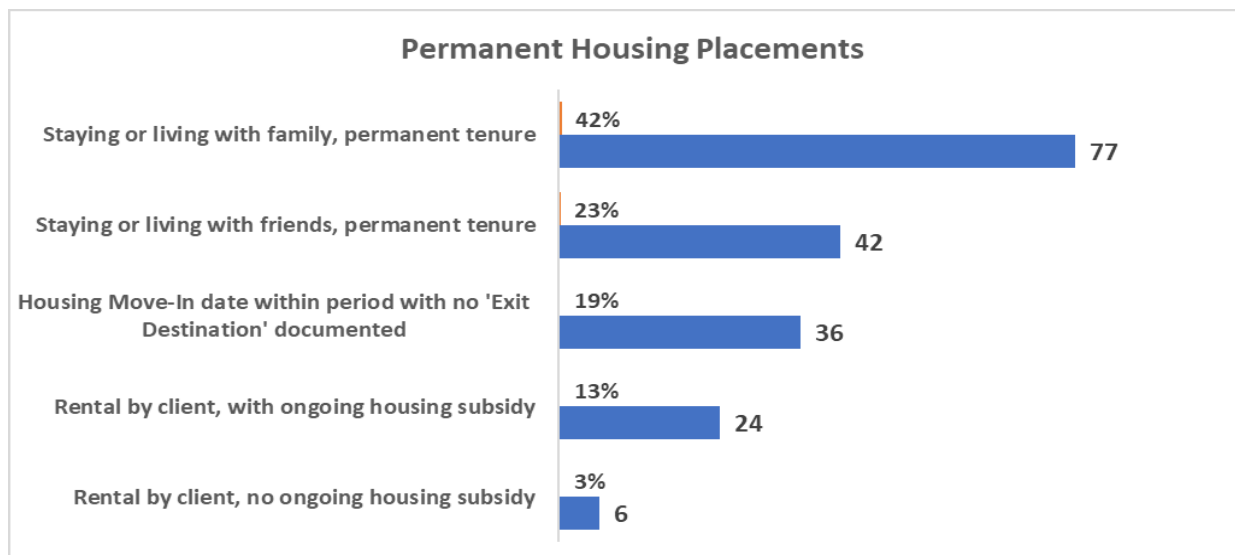


Figure 1: Metro MDT Fiscal Year Quarterly Outcomes

MDT staff have a variety of housing placement options for both interim and permanent housing. When making connections to housing, teams attempt to prioritize the needs and preferences of everyone they engage while balancing the types of housing resources available for referral. Successful alignment of these factors can be challenging, but MDTs have made strong impacts toward their housing placement goal. For the current fiscal year, 81% of non-permanent placements were traditional interim housing and crisis housing. For permanent placements, Metro MDTs have successfully reunited individuals with either their family or friends, which collectively account for 65% of the total placements. Figure 2 and Figure 3 below show the breakdown of interim and permanent placements from July 1 through December 31, 2024.

*Figure 2: Dispersion of Interim Housing Placements**Figure 3: Dispersion of Permanent Housing Placements*

A Note on Service Resistance

MDTs are actively outreaching across the rail and bus system seven days a week, with 24-hour coverage Monday through Friday. Despite their years of field experience and acute understanding of the population they serve, our partners continue to engage people who decline services or enrollment into programs. The term “service resistant” implies that people experiencing homelessness would rather remain in the streets than pursue shelter or permanent housing options, but the feedback received from a recent poll challenges this assumption.

Staff asked the six agencies who perform outreach on Metro's system to ask for the reasons why people might decline services, and to also provide their own first-hand experience with their offers of service being declined. The eight responses collected provide important insight into their perspective and their thoughts about homeless services:

Participant Responses:

1. People had only negative experiences w/ services or providers of services
2. Proximity of available services outside of the person's community
3. Overly strict rules or structural requirements to access services
4. Opposition to congregate settings, limitations on pets, or unable to cohabitate w/ partner/family, lack of privacy
5. Traumatic experiences
6. Overwhelming paperwork required for permanent housing, with lengthy placement times

Outreach Staff Responses:

7. Active drug use, preventing meaningful engagement
8. Actively experiencing mental illness, preventing meaningful engagement

All six agencies reported answers 1, 2, and 3 as the most common. The results highlight barriers to access and an inability for services to meet the unique needs of individuals. However, it is important to note that the types of shelter that MDTs have to offer are not always rejected; options such as hotels and motels are widely accepted due to their privacy and non-congregate nature. Additionally, Metro MDTs have been successfully placing individuals into interim and permanent housing year after year, demonstrating that many people's needs are being met with the resources teams have to offer. When selecting partnerships with interim housing providers, Metro focuses on locations and programs that practice low-barrier entry with a focus on safety, autonomy, and privacy.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Metro's efforts to address homelessness on the transit system through its homeless outreach program directly benefit unhoused individuals in LA County. Using a multi-layered deployment strategy that combines several departments, Metro strategically engages the most disenfranchised members of the community.

Metro's MDTs provide opportunities to receive a range of services, including connections to interim and permanent housing. Teams are deployed across the entire rail and busway system, allowing them to outreach to regions with dense populations of people experiencing homelessness. By connecting people with housing resources, mental health services, and other important interventions, the MDTs not only positively impact the overall goal of reducing homelessness across Los Angeles but also demonstrate Metro's investment in providing access to opportunities that people need to thrive.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT

reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

While this item does not directly encourage taking transit, sharing a ride, or using active transportation, it is a vital part of Metro operations, as it provides options for people who seek shelter on Metro helping improve riding conditions, cleanliness, and safety of the system. Because the Metro Board has adopted an agency-wide VMT Reduction Target, and this item supports the overall function of the agency, this item is consistent with the goals of reducing VMT.

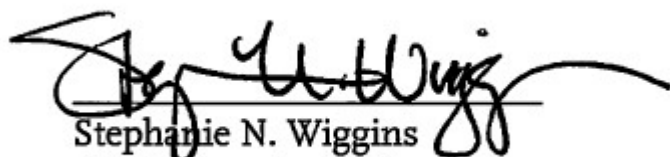
*Based on population Estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue to report quarterly on homeless outreach activity, outcomes and strategic initiatives that address the presence of people experiencing homelessness on Metro's system.

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Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Metro Homeless Outreach Management & Engagement (HOME)

Quarterly Update
February 2025



HOME Outreach Teams

- Began dedicated Metro homeless outreach in 2017
 - 3 outreach teams to serve the Red Line
- Current staffing and deployment
 - 24 total multidisciplinary teams (MDTs)
 - 23 active, 1 in recruitment
 - Deployed across entire rail & busway system seven days/week + 24hr coverage Mon - Fri
- MDTs strategically deployed based on regional knowledge and station data
- 80 Interim beds (all have 24/7 access)



Quarterly Performance

	Q1	Q2	Total
Enrollments	1660	1494	3154
Interim Housing Placements	594	615	1209
Permanent Housing Placements	72	113	185
Total Housing Placements	666	728	1394

Interim Housing Placement Types:

- Interim Housing (56%)
- Crisis Housing (25%)
- Recuperative Care (12%)
- Residential Substance Use Treatment (6%)
- Emergency Shelter incl. hotel/motel voucher (5%)

Permanent Housing Placement Types:

- Family Reunification (42%)
- Living w/ Friends, perm tenure (23%)
- Permanent placement, unspecified (19%)
- Rental w/ subsidy (13%)
- Rental without subsidy (3%)

Goals & Outcomes

Last Year

(Q1 + Q2)

Housing Goal: 966 placements

Total Placements: 805 (83%)

- Total Interim: 611

- Total Permanent: 194

2,429 New HMIS Enrollments

This Year

(Q1 + Q2)

Housing Goal: 1,800 placements

Total Placements: 1,394 (77%)

- Total Interim: 1,209

- Total Permanent: 135

3,154 New HMIS Enrollments

System Activity & Point In Time (PIT) Count

MONTHLY AVG	CURRENT FY	LAST FY	% CHANGE
PEH Engaged (Contact or Service Provided)	649	542	20%
PEH Enrolled in HMIS	526	454	16%
Interim Housing Placements	202	145	39%
Permanent Housing Placements	31	32	3%

PIT Count (January 2024)

Between 1,041 – 1,092 PEH counted on Metro property (stations, platforms, parking lots) excluding vehicles

PIT Count (February 20, 2025)

Count was rescheduled by HUD due to LA fires. All lines/stations/property will be counted in one night

Service Resistance

- MDTs engaged unhoused riders and inquired about reasons for declining services or enrollment in programs
- “Service Resistance implies that people would rather remain in the streets than pursue shelter or permanent housing – but feedback challenges this assumption
- Among the six MDT agency partners, respondents reported the following eight reasons:

Participant Responses

1. People had only negative experiences w/ services or service providers
2. Proximity of available services were outside of the person’s community
3. Overly strict rules or requirements to access services
4. Opposed to shelters due to congregate settings, anti-pet policies, lack of privacy, or unable to cohabitate w/ partner/family
5. Traumatic experiences
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Outreach Staff Responses

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Thank You