

Funders Together

FOR HOUSING JUSTICE



Policy & Advocacy Post

What's Happening: White House Issues Executive Order Focused on Forced Treatment and Incarceration to Address Homelessness

Last week, President Trump [signed an Executive Order \(EO\)](#) that targets unhoused people by expanding the use of law enforcement, incarceration, and forced institutionalization as a response to homelessness. While the EO currently outlines directives for federal agencies, its implementation is expected to trigger the following outcomes:

- **Involuntary Commitment:** Expands the use of police and ability to institutionalize people with mental health or substance use disorders, undermining [Olmstead Act](#) protections for people with disabilities.
- **Criminalization:** Prioritizes government resources for states that actively punish unhoused people. This may pressure “friendly” jurisdictions to adopt harsher tactics to retain federal funding.
- **Defunding of Harm Reduction:** Targets programs like needle exchanges and health clinics for unhoused communities, mirroring dangerous state-level “drug-free zone” bills.
- **Defunding Housing First:** Calls for forced treatment and policing of service recipients. Also encourages health-related data sharing between service providers and law enforcement, raising major privacy concerns.

In addition to these directives, this EO helps to progress a larger strategy to redirect federal funds away from evidence-based solutions to organizations aligned with the Trump administration’s political agenda.

At its core, this is about the disappearing of unhoused people, not focusing on humane and dignified solutions to homelessness. What's more, this builds on the continued harmful rhetoric and actions that target and threaten Black, Indigenous, Brown, queer, disabled, and migrant communities the most.

Join Funders Together and [Fund for Housing and Opportunity](#) for our [next policy call on Wednesday, August 13 at 2:00pm ET / 11:00am PT](#) as we dive deeper into the discussion from our July 30 policy call on impacts from this EO, related implications for housing justice efforts, and what philanthropy needs to do in this moment.

Actions for Philanthropy

Philanthropic Mobilization

- Educate your foundation leadership, boards, and trustees on the [harm this EO will cause our unhoused neighbors](#), impacts it will have overall on community well-being, and the importance of continuing to support proven practices such as Housing First and harm reduction programs.
- Organize local philanthropy from across issue areas—such as immigration, disability justice, democracy, health justice, etc.—to coordinate how to move resources and other supports to community partners for meaningful cross-collaboration.
- Lead coordination with peer funders at all levels to scenario-plan and protect housing justice leaders, especially Black, Indigenous, and other leaders of color, who may be at risk of retaliation for mobilizing support for unhoused people and frontline organizations.

State & Local Resourcing

- Contribute to or create a response fund that supports legal support, communications strategy and implementation, and organizing infrastructure.
- Make the case to your foundation leadership to increase your grantmaking for the foreseeable future and make funds available through multi-year, unrestricted grants with minimal application and reporting processes. [Funders Together can provide assistance](#) in navigating these conversations with your leadership.
- When convening community partners and impacted people to understand current needs and how to block the harm this EO will cause, also invest in spaces to envision and build the structures and systems needed for a more just and liberated world as we engage in rebuilding all that is currently being dismantled.

Policy & Advocacy

- Encourage your foundation leadership, boards, and trustees to use their personal influence with other leaders to counter what this EO sanctions.
- Identify and resource local organizers and activists to champion proactive solutions and demand local and state policymakers [protect unhoused community members](#).
- Educate local and state policymakers on the [impact harmful policies and ineffective practices](#) have on our communities. Lift up real solutions that government funding should support, such as services and outreach rooted in harm reduction, housing that people can afford, and accessible healthcare.

Communications

- Invest in narrative strategy, public education, and coordinated messaging to counter the EO's framing and disinformation.
- Compile and share information from trusted sources to help community partner stay informed and combat inaccurate messaging from supporters of the Executive Order.

Litigation & Legal Strategy

- Invest in legal support funds for both national and local partners that resource legal strategy and capacity.
- Connect frontline and advocacy organizations with legal counsel when needed.

Policy & Advocacy Resources

Funders Together for Housing Justice:

- [Federal Administration Action Resources for Philanthropy](#)
- [Funders Together for Housing Justice Condemns the Trump Administration Executive Order Criminalizing Homelessness and Mental Illness](#)

Drug Policy Alliance:

- [From Crisis to Care: Addressing Addiction, Mental Health, and Homelessness through Health and Supportive Services](#)

InvisiblePeople:

- [Trump's Executive Order Targets Homeless Americans](#)

National Alliance to End Homelessness:

- [Punitive Policies Will Never Solve Homelessness: The Evidence is Clear](#)
- [CEO Corner: Week of July 28](#)

National Homelessness Law Center:

- [National Homelessness Law Center condemns Trump's misguided Executive Order on homelessness](#)
- [Housing Not Handcuffs Campaign](#)

National Health Care for the Homeless Council:

- [New Executive Order Calls for Arresting and Institutionalizing Unhoused People](#)

VOCAL-US:

- [Statement on the Executive Order to expand ticketing and arresting of people unable to afford housing](#)

In the News:

- [The White House is shifting the 'housing first' approach to combating homelessness](#) (NPR)
- [Trump to sign order pushing cities and states to remove homeless people from streets](#) (USA Today)

Funders Together for Housing Justice is always here to answer questions or provide additional thought-partnership as it relates to this or other policy developments and opportunities. Please feel free to reach out at any time.

In Partnership,

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[Funders Together for Housing Justice](#)



JOIN US

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