



2016 Consensus Legislative Priorities

The Florida Coalition for the Homeless (FCH) is a dynamic organization whose membership includes the state's 28 Local Lead Agency Continuums of Care (CoCs), homeless advocates, local service providers, members of the faith-based community, formerly homeless persons, educators, attorneys, mental health professionals and policy makers statewide. This diverse group is committed to implementing programs that prevent homelessness and rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families to return them to self-sufficiency and productive lives.

The membership of the Florida Coalition for the Homeless has collaborated to establish the following 2016 Legislative Priorities to work toward ending homelessness in Florida and to increase the capacity of local CoCs to manage and deliver these important programs.

1. Reappropriate the FY 2014-15 \$1 million non-recurring increase in base operational funding for the State's 28 Local Homeless Continuum of Care Lead Agencies as recurring.

During the 2014 Legislative Session, the legislature provided \$2 million recurring and \$1 million non-recurring to support the local CoCs Staffing Grant. During the 2015 Legislative Session, the legislature did not re-appropriate the \$1 million in non-recurring appropriations. Only the \$2 million recurring allocation for Staffing Grants was fully funded. FCH is requesting that the Legislature increase the CoC Staffing Grant by appropriating \$1 million - \$35,714 per CoC. This request is supported by the Council on Homelessness Annual Report to the Governor. With this funding, each CoC will receive \$107,142 to invest in maintaining its viability and capacity to continue to draw down \$84 million in Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding annually for the state. The State of Florida supports this essential statewide system with the following funding:

- \$2 million recurring staffing grants -- \$71,428 per Continuum of Care lead agency.
- \$3.8 million in Challenge grants – with administrative fees that average \$5,000 per Continuum of Care lead agency. Challenge grants are competitively awarded.

This total of \$76,428 can be augmented by an individual CoC's ability to competitively secure an Emergency Solutions Grant award average of \$3,500 in administrative funding. As a result, a local CoC *may* receive \$79,928 annually, but only if it is a recipient of both Challenge Grant and ESG awards. Only \$71,428 in total administrative funding is guaranteed through the Staffing Grant.

2. Protect Homeless Challenge Grants

The Legislature created a \$4 million permanent revenue source for homeless Challenge Grant funding during the 2015 Legislative Session for use by the homeless designated lead agencies in each local homeless assistance Continuum of Care for the benefit of the designated catchment area. 420.644(4), Florida Statutes establishes the Challenge Grant Program and establishes criteria for local grant awards, competitively procured through the State Office on Homelessness. Challenge Grant funding is used by the Continuums of Care to meet emergency needs of the homeless and at risk individuals and families, especially those needs which cannot be met by any other program.

3. Affordable Housing Trust Fund

FCH is advocating for the legislature to use all of the Affordable Housing Trust fund monies for housing programs. SHIP and SAIL are highly leveraged, with private sector loans and equity providing \$4 to \$6 for every one dollar of state funding—thus greatly increasing economic impact. The appropriation of the estimated \$266.87 million in the housing trust funds during Fiscal Year 2015-16 into Florida's housing programs was estimated to create 24,950 jobs and \$3.1 BILLION in positive economic impact in Florida.