



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Douglas County becomes the 88th U.S. community to meet the rigorous by-name data standards needed to make homelessness rare, brief and nonrecurring.

- Douglas County is part of *105 Inside: Built for Zero* Kansas, a statewide initiative based on a national initiative of more than 100 cities, counties and states working to measurably end homelessness, and is working to measurably reduce and solve chronic homelessness
- To understand the scope of the problem and implement strategies to reduce homelessness, Douglas County has achieved quality, by-name data for single adults experiencing homelessness
- By-name data is a comprehensive, real-time database of every single adult in their community experiencing homelessness

Douglas County, KS— Today, *105 Inside: Built for Zero* Kansas announced that Douglas County has met the rigorous by-name data standards needed to solve homelessness. This makes Douglas County the 88th community in the United States to reach this necessary and catalytic standard needed to measurably solve homelessness. Douglas County is the second community to achieve this standard for at least one population in the state of Kansas.

[By-name data](#) is a real-time, person-specific list of everyone experiencing homelessness — including those who are sheltered and unsheltered — that is updated in real time and provides communities with a full and up-to-date view of homelessness in their geography. Using information collected and [shared with their consent](#), each person on the list has a file that includes their name, homeless history, health and housing needs.

Molly Mendenhall, Director of Destination Home at the Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition said, “Homeless response system partners across the state recognized that our homeless population was being significantly undercounted during the annual Point-in-Time count. With support from the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, we have been able to transition four out of five Continuums of Care (CoC) on Homelessness to a common information management system in order to begin obtaining accurate data for our homeless community throughout the state. This will give the Kansas homeless response system real-time data to effectively strategize with our national, state and local partners for effective solutions so homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring.”

105 Inside: Built for Zero Kansas is a collaboration between the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS), Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition (KSHC), and all five CoCs in Kansas. This partnership seeks to reduce chronic homelessness across the state and align system improvement efforts across all homeless response systems in Kansas. This partnership uses the CoC’s relationships with community partners to identify needs and barriers along with KDADS’ relationships with state agencies to facilitate state-level systems change. We will use real-time, person-specific data to drive our system improvement and will share this data with key collaborators and partners across the state. This data will drive our strategies and system-wide approaches to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring for Kansans.

In April 2020 Douglas County joined Built for Zero, a national initiative of more than 100 cities and counties in the U.S. working to measurably and equitably reduce and end homelessness.

Douglas County began its improvement work with Built for Zero with a commitment to making chronic homelessness rare, brief and nonrecurring as a step toward those goals for all populations. Next, they coordinated a command center of all the agencies and programs that touch the homelessness sector to collaborate and share accountability for ending homelessness. Key agencies include Douglas County, City of Lawrence, Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center, Lawrence Community Shelter, Homeless Resource Center, Lawrence Family Promise, The Willow Domestic Violence Center, Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition, Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, and Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority.

Now with by-name data, Douglas County will be able to improve outcomes for individuals, understand if they are reducing homelessness and target investments for the largest impact.

By maintaining a by-name list, Douglas County has current and detailed information on every unhoused single adult. With this detailed information, they can better match housing solutions with the needs of the individuals. By-name lists often form the basis for [case conferencing meetings](#), where all the providers within the community meet to coordinate and advance housing solutions for people.

Douglas County will also be able to track the changing size, composition and dynamics of their homeless population. This information enables them to prioritize resources, test changes to their system and understand whether their efforts are helping to drive those numbers down toward zero.

Assistant Douglas County Administrator Jill Jolicoeur said, “Douglas County made the decision to join the Built for Zero movement in early 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning. While we didn’t know how the global pandemic would impact our community, we knew there was no better time to make a commitment to ending chronic homelessness in our community. I had no idea the road to quality data would be so long, but five years later I’m gratified to have been a part of this meaningful project. In addition to our agency partners, I want to thank our community members that are reflected in the quality data numbers for trusting our partners and our commitment to this work. We are committed to using this data to ensure [a place for everyone](#) in Douglas County.”

Ashley Arganbright, Housing First Project Coordinator at the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services said, “Douglas County is the first region in Kansas to reach quality data for all single adults, but *105 Inside: Built for Zero* Kansas is working with all 105 counties to achieve the same milestone. We expect a few rural regions to follow suit in this process within the next year.”