

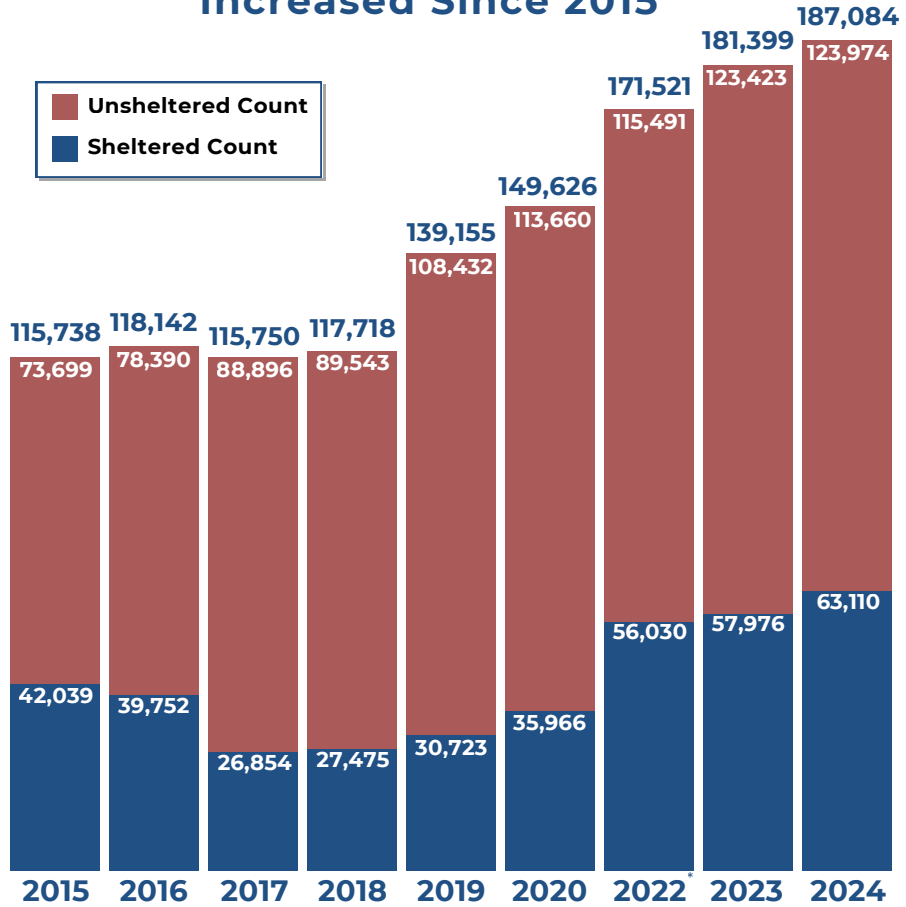
HEALTH BENEFITS OF IMPROVING

Housing First Services for People Experiencing Homelessness



1 Homelessness rose to a record high in 2024 across California and disproportionately affects people who inject drugs (PWID).

2 California's Population of People Experiencing Homelessness Has Increased Since 2015



Source: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) point-in-time (PIT) counts, Annual Homeless Assessment Report, and HUD memorandum.

* HUD waived the PIT count requirement for unsheltered homelessness in 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it required the count again in 2022.

3 IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY, THERE WERE AN ESTIMATED **10,604** PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN 2024.

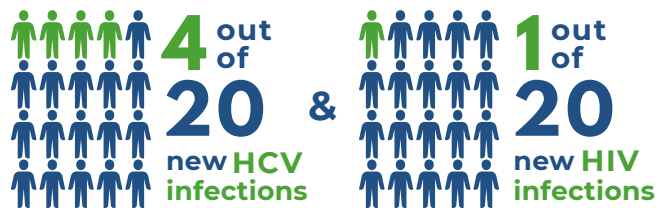
4 Stable housing can **REDUCE** the risk of **HIV** and **Hepatitis C (HCV)** among PWID.

5 **HOMELESSNESS MODEL**

We used epidemic modeling to examine how homelessness influences HIV and HCV transmission among PWID in San Diego.



Using epidemic modeling, we found that preventing entry into homelessness could prevent...



among PWID over the next **5 years** in San Diego.

6 **Housing First** is an approach where **unconditional, permanent** housing is offered as quickly as possible, including voluntary wraparound services for substance use.



7 **High-fidelity Housing First** programs mean the program is **staying true** to the original model.



High-fidelity = doing Housing First the way it was designed, not changing or watering it down.

8 California **requires** all housing programs use the Housing First model, but few operate at **high-fidelity**, where the core components are delivered consistently as intended.



9 **High-fidelity Housing First** programs **increase retention** in housing for PWID and could **reduce transmission**.

If all of the **Housing First programs** in **San Diego County** were to operate at **high-fidelity**, these programs could additionally **prevent...**



647 new HCV infections

&



27 new HIV infections

across 5 years.

10

HOUSING ISN'T A REWARD FOR RECOVERY — IT'S THE FOUNDATION FOR IT.

11

- California requires and supports Housing First initiatives, but many programs operate at **low fidelity** and/or are **underfunded**.
- Strengthening** and **expanding** statewide housing programs with **voluntary wraparound services, intensive case management, and peer support for substance use** is needed.
- There is a need for **improved support and trainings** for the workforce serving people experiencing homelessness who use drugs.



Harm Reduction Coalition of San Diego



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