



**NATIONAL SURVEY
OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES**

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from the INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN AND POVERTY

Florida had an estimated 8,017 homeless families on a single night in 2010, with providers serving more than three times their bed capacity over the course of the year.¹ This brief summarizes some of the state's public and private initiatives to assist these families.

State Taskforce on Homelessness

Taskforce: The Florida Council on Homelessness (established by statute in 2001) develops and coordinates policies to reduce homelessness in Florida.

Governor's Appointee: Thomas Pierce, Director of the Office of Homelessness, has chaired the Council on Homelessness and managed state-funded homeless programs since 2001.



Demographic Summary and Overview of Regional Organization

	Florida	Miami-Dade County	Hillsborough County	Pinellas County	Orange County ²	Broward County
Persons in homeless families ³	21,813	1,317	3,366	485	1,345	650
Number of family shelter beds ⁴	8,955	1,637	489	528	1,053	700
Persons in homeless families (per 10,000 population in families) ⁵	37	15	78	20	20	10
Percent of families in poverty ⁶	15.03%	18.00%	15.82%	13.73%	12.69%	12.03%
10-year plan date approved or implemented	No plan	2004	2004	2006	2008	2005
10-year plan target population	No plan	All	All	All	All	All
Point-in-time count frequency	Annually	Biannually	Biennially	Annually	Annually	Biennially
Point-in-time count managing agency	Florida Department of Children and Families	Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust	Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County	Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless	Homeless Services Network of Central Florida	Broward County Homeless Initiative Partnership
Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) managing agency	Locally managed	Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust	Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County	2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares	Homeless Services Network of Central Florida	Broward County Board of County Commissioners
Main organizing agency or Continuum of Care (CoC) lead applicant	Florida Department of Children and Families	Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust	Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County	Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless	Homeless Services Network of Central Florida	Broward County Homeless Initiative Partnership

Affordable Housing Planning and Community Assistance Act

In 2001, a study commission comprised of legislators, agency representatives, advocacy groups, and homeless service providers issued a report to the Florida legislature outlining state strategies for homeless service delivery. This effort, led by then-Senate President John McKay, resulted in the Affordable Housing Planning and Community Assistance Act (*Florida Statutes*, Sections 420.601–609). This law established the Council on Homelessness and the Office on Homelessness within the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The Act also created state funding sources for homeless programs, authorized DCF to establish local homeless coalitions, instituted local continua of care, and promoted a housing first strategy.



The *National Survey of Programs and Services for Homeless Families* is an online resource for service providers, advocates, researchers, and public policy makers working in the field of family homelessness. The Web site provides a state-by-state snapshot of the interconnections between governmental and nonprofit work to end family homelessness. For additional information on Florida and other states, visit www.icprwb.org

State Funding Sources for Homeless Programs

Florida has devised state funding sources to assist homeless families and individuals. The Florida Office on Homelessness's Challenge Grant, created in 2001, provides localities with state-appropriated funds to accomplish the goals set forth in local plans to end homelessness, including providing emergency financial assistance to at-risk households and funding shelter operating expenses. The state awarded over \$2 million in competitive Challenge Grants to 28 local continua of care during the 2010–11 funding cycle and announced preliminary awards for 2011–12 totaling over \$2 million. This assistance will provide services to more than 35,000 homeless individuals and families.⁷ In addition to Challenge Grant funds, more than \$3 million in annual state Homeless Housing Assistance Grant (HHAG) monies help localities construct, renovate, and operate transitional and permanent housing with supportive services for homeless households. This was reduced from \$5 million awarded during the 2010–11 funding cycle. In 2010, six projects received competitive funding awards to create 348 housing units for homeless clients.⁸ Priority is given to localities on the basis of program quality, amount awarded from other funding sources, and overall degree of need. Since 2001, HHAG has contributed \$42 million to local continua of care, but no funding was allocated to the program for fiscal year 2011–12.⁹ The amount of state grant funding that exclusively serves homeless families remains unclear.

Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust

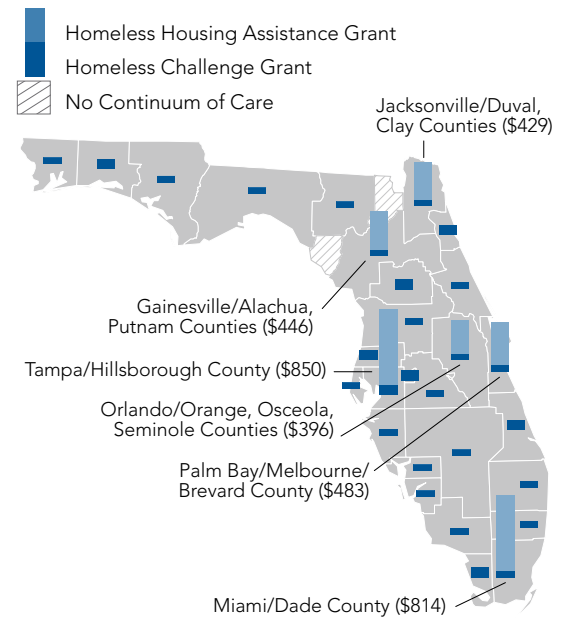
The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust is a public organization established by the county in 1993 to implement the Miami-Dade Community Homeless Plan, advise the Board of County Commissioners, and distribute state and federal funding. Since its inception, the Homeless Trust has supported the creation of 5,000 emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing beds.¹⁰ Additionally, the Homeless Trust contracts with a local nonprofit organization, Community Partnership for the Homeless, to operate two Homeless Assistance Centers, providing families and individuals with emergency shelter, basic-needs services, and referrals for additional support. Since 1993, the Homeless Trust has also distributed more than \$97 million in county restaurant food and beverage tax revenue.¹¹ Eighty-five percent of proceeds fund local homeless programs.¹² Specific information on how many homeless families the Homeless Trust serves is unavailable.

A Continuum of Planning and Services in Broward County

In 1993, Broward County's first homeless action plan recommended further coordinating the service delivery system, including developing emergency shelters, transitional and permanent housing units, and three Homeless Assistance Centers. In 2005, the county adopted a second ten-year plan, *A Way Home*, reinforcing the need for comprehensive data collection, homeless prevention, connecting clients to mainstream resources, street outreach, rapid re-housing, permanent affordable housing, and employment and income opportunities. Broward County's 2005 plan does not specifically focus on homeless families and has not been updated since its inception.

The three regional Homeless Assistance Centers continue to serve as initial points of contact for homeless families and individuals in the region. The Central Homeless Assistance Center/Huizenga Family Campus houses up to 40 family members for an average of 60 days.¹³ In addition to providing emergency shelter, the facility offers on-site medical, dental, and mental health care; substance abuse counseling; family therapy; childcare; and educational and life skills programs for households transitioning to self-sufficiency. Similar facilities, modeled after the Broward County centers, exist or are in development in central and southern Florida.¹⁴

State Homeless Grant Awards (2010–11) (by Continuum of Care in thousands of dollars)



Source: Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, 2010–11 Challenge Grant Profiles; Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, 2010–11 Homeless Housing Assistance Grant Award Summaries.

Endnotes

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD's 2010 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Homeless Populations and Subpopulations; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AHAR Exchange Public Reports: 2010 Comprehensive Report of Sheltered Homeless Persons.
- Statistics for Orange County include Osceola and Seminole Counties.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2010 Homeless Populations and Subpopulations.
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- Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, 2010–11 Challenge Grant Profiles; Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, 2011–12 Challenge Grant Award Notice.
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- Florida Department of Children and Families, Office on Homelessness, *Homeless Conditions in Florida 2010*; Florida Department of Children and Families, "Homeless Housing Assistance Grants," <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/homelessness/HHAGrant.shtml>.
- Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, *Miami-Dade County Community Homeless Plan*, December 2008.
- Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, "Accomplishments," <http://www.miamidade.gov/homeless/accomplishments.asp>.
- Florida Statutes*, Chapter 201.031 (2009); *Florida Statutes*, Chapter 212.0306 (2009).
- Broward Partnership for the Homeless, Inc., "Homelessness Assistance Center," <http://www.bphi.org/center.shtml>.
- Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, Inc. and City of Tampa, Department of Business and Community Services, *Hillsborough County Places for People, A 10 Year Community Response Initiative to End Homelessness*, 2004.