



**SHELTER AND
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
TASK FORCE**

November 27, 2018

Dear Members of the Public Safety and Health Committee:

As you may know, the Shelters in Milwaukee are open 365 days per year providing emergency housing to those experiencing homelessness and fleeing domestic violence. In the winter months, we are thankful to be joined in these efforts by those providing warming rooms for our most vulnerable citizens.

Over the past two years, Milwaukee's CoC has made great progress towards our shared goal of ending homelessness. As a system, we have provided thousands of nights of shelter and warming, street outreach contacts and vital supportive services. Together, we have been able to move hundreds of chronically homeless individuals and families into safe permanent housing with case management. The January 2014 Point-in-Time counted 1,200 total homeless persons in Milwaukee County. In July of 2018, that number is down to 833 (613 in shelters and 220 living outdoors). Continued success towards ending homelessness means continued support of a full range of services.

Permanent Housing ends homelessness. Emergency shelters are a critical component in the process of moving individuals and families from the street to permanent housing. Shelters provide safety and case management while housing can be arranged and Chronically Homeless status verified, if needed. Shelters in Milwaukee are near or at capacity every night, serving 5,500 individual adults, youth, and children annually. Warming rooms are an essential service for those that are unwilling or unable to come into shelter. They not only save resources such as emergency and police response, but save lives.

People who are experiencing homelessness in our community are the most vulnerable, including women and children fleeing domestic violence, teens without a safe place to call home, and the mentally ill without a personal support system. They are the least, the last, and the lost of our society, and they deserve to have a safe, warm place to be housed.

If you need further data or would like to discuss this letter, please contact me at (414)389-3836 or wendyw@hopehousemke.org.

Sincerely,

Wendy Weckler
Chair, Shelter & Transitional Housing Task Force
Executive Director, Hope House of Milwaukee, Inc.

Donna Rongholt-Migan
Vice Chair, Shelter & Transitional Housing Task Force
Executive Director, Cathedral Center

Jenny von Helms
Secretary, Shelter & Transitional Housing Task Force
Grants & Contract Manager, The Salvation Army

Cathedral Center ♦ Guest House of Milwaukee ♦ Hope House of Milwaukee
La Causa ♦ Pathfinders Milwaukee ♦ Sojourner Family Peace Center
The Salvation Army ♦ Walker's Point Youth and Family Center

