



## Ventura County Action Guide

“People don’t want to be homeless. It happens to anybody. A lot of people think homeless people don’t want a home. They want to put homeless people in one category... I would shake that.” – Daniel, *formerly homeless*



### 1) Be Informed

Understand Our Challenge: Our community is facing a homeless crisis that has been made worse by a housing crisis.

Understand Our Solution: Build new affordable and supportive housing for our homeless neighbors so we can end homelessness in Ventura County.

*Supportive Housing using the **Housing First** approach has been proven as an effective solution for persons with disabilities. The model ends homelessness by providing long-term housing stability with the services and support needed to improve health outcomes.*

Understand Our Responsibility: To end homelessness in our community, we all need to work together. **Your support and action are needed to end homelessness in Ventura County!**

### 2) Get Involved

Talk to Homeless People: Introduce yourself, ask them if they are getting help with housing or services. Give them information about organizations that can help them. Saying hello can **help restore dignity for them and for our entire community.**

*Did you know **Interface 2-1-1** staff are trained to assess and refer people to resources over the phone 24/7? The 2-1-1 staff are also connected to our coordinated entry system for referrals to supportive housing and shelters. Call 2-1-1 or text your zip code to 898211.*

Talk to Your Neighbors: Some people worry about what will happen if new affordable and supportive housing is built in their community. Help educate through individual conversations, family dinners, neighborhood meetings, and at religious or other community events.

Talk to Elected Officials: Many of the decisions about funding and construction of affordable and supportive housing are made by city, county, state and federal officials. Encourage your representatives to do all they can to help build the housing we need to end homelessness. **Your voice matters!**

### 3) Be Engaged

**Be Aware:** Subscribe to e-news from the following organizations to stay involved in the discussion about homelessness and affordable housing:

California Housing Partnership: [www.chpc.net](http://www.chpc.net);  
National Alliance to End Homelessness: [www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org);  
United State Interagency Council on Homelessness: [www.usich.gov](http://www.usich.gov);  
Ventura County Continuum of Care (VC CoC) Alliance: [www.venturacoc.org](http://www.venturacoc.org);  
Ventura County HOME: [www.vchome.org](http://www.vchome.org);  
Ventura County Housing Trust Fund (VCHTF): [www.vchousingtrustfund.org](http://www.vchousingtrustfund.org)

**Did you know?** Providing supportive housing is one of the most cost-effective ways to address homelessness, especially for those who are disabled and need the most help. A coordinated entry system is used to assess and prioritize the most vulnerable for housing.

**Be Social:** Your friends and followers on social media might not know the solutions we are working on together to end homelessness. Spread the word, participate online, share information and inspire others. #EndHomelessnessVC #VenturaCoC

### 4) Take Action

**Host a Dinner:** The best way to discuss homelessness and housing is around the table with the people closest to you. Why not invite your friends and neighbors over to talk about it? Provide information from the *National Alliance to End Homelessness* for the conversation. Discuss next steps, including one or two specific actions you will take individually and as a group.

Accurate information is essential to increase understanding of those experiencing homelessness in our community. **You can raise awareness** and correct misconceptions about homelessness and supportive housing in Ventura County.

**Host an Event:** The *National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness* have an awareness week every year during the first full week before Thanksgiving. Plan an outreach event to educate the public and donate to local charities. Add it to the national calendar at [www.hhweek.org](http://www.hhweek.org).

**Volunteer:** Contact your local homeless services organizations to find out how you can help or sign up for volunteer opportunities at [www.VolunteerVenturaCounty.org](http://www.VolunteerVenturaCounty.org).

**Donate:** Our local shelters and supportive housing partners need your support!

The City Center: <a href="http://www.thecitycenter.org">www.thecitycenter.org</a>	National Health Foundation: <a href="http://www.nhfca.org">www.nhfca.org</a>
Interface Children & Family Services: <a href="http://www.icfs.org">www.icfs.org</a>	Peoples' Self-Help Housing: <a href="http://www.pshhc.org">www.pshhc.org</a>
Gabriel's House Oxnard: <a href="http://www.gabriels-house.org">www.gabriels-house.org</a>	Project Understanding: <a href="http://www.projectunderstanding.org">www.projectunderstanding.org</a>
Gold Coast Veterans Foundation: <a href="http://www.gcvf.org">www.gcvf.org</a>	Salvation Army: <a href="http://www.ventura.salvationarmy.org">www.ventura.salvationarmy.org</a>
Harbor House: <a href="http://www.harborhouseto.org">www.harborhouseto.org</a>	Samaritan Center: <a href="http://www.samaritancentersimivalley.org">www.samaritancentersimivalley.org</a>
Help of Ojai: <a href="http://www.helpofojai.org">www.helpofojai.org</a>	Spirit of Santa Paula: <a href="http://www.spiritofsantapaula.org">www.spiritofsantapaula.org</a>
Lutheran Social Services: <a href="http://www.lsssc.org">www.lsssc.org</a>	Turning Point Foundation: <a href="http://www.tpf-vc.org">www.tpf-vc.org</a>
Many Mansions: <a href="http://www.manymansions.org">www.manymansions.org</a>	VC Rescue Mission: <a href="http://www.vcrescuemission.org">www.vcrescuemission.org</a>
Mercy House Living Centers: <a href="http://www.mercyhouse.net">www.mercyhouse.net</a>	United Way of Ventura County <a href="http://www.vcunitedway.org">www.vcunitedway.org</a>