



# 2023 Legislative Priorities

Nearly 20,000 Minnesotans experience homelessness on any given night, and individuals identifying as Black, African American or Native American are disproportionately impacted. Our state has an opportunity to make bold investments and reforms to disrupt trends in homelessness and help individuals achieve stable housing that is foundational to their health, education and employment success. It is our mission at Catholic Charities to serve those most in need and to advocate for justice in our community. Our 2023 legislative priorities focus on supporting our direct service programs and addressing systemic inequities in housing.

## Public Funding for

### Catholic Charities' Safety Net Programs

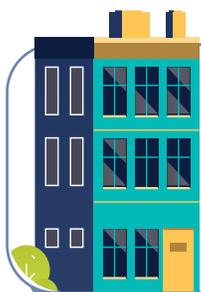
Catholic Charities seeks dedicated public funding for its safety net programs, like Homeless Elders and our emergency day services, which play a unique role in the regional homelessness response system.

Catholic Charities Twin Cities is a leading provider of emergency services for individuals experiencing homelessness. Our staff provide daytime shelter, overnight sleeping areas, hot meals, daily essentials, and connections to housing, finance and employment resources



to more than 10,200 adults and youth experiencing homelessness each year, with unique programs supporting a growing senior population and individuals who are chronically homeless with long-term substance use or mental illness. Public funding pays for less than 5% of all operating expenses for these daytime shelter

services—a trend that has continued throughout the pandemic, even while demand for services has increased. Catholic Charities is seeking direct public funding to continue its safety net programs that strengthen the regional homelessness response system, with a focus on its Homeless Elders program and emergency day services.



## Less than 5%

of funding for Catholic Charities' emergency day shelter operations come from public sources.

## Strengthening the

### Statewide Housing Support Program

Catholic Charities supports Housing Support reforms that address inequities causing individuals with disabilities and veterans to pay as much as 90% of their income toward housing, and that re-envision Minnesota's definition of long-term homelessness.



Housing Support is a permanent supportive housing program that pairs housing assistance (e.g., rent, bed and linens, laundry, meals) with case management. It serves low-income seniors, veterans and adults with disabilities who are at risk of homelessness in all corners of the state. Inequities in how the state captures disability and veterans benefits causes some eligible individuals to choose homelessness over enrollment, however, and limits housing and financial independence for others. Reforming Housing Support income calculations would improve housing and homelessness outcomes while putting money back in the pockets of the lowest income Minnesotans. And rethinking the definition of long-term homelessness would ensure we aren't telling our highest-risk neighbors that they "aren't homeless enough" to qualify for support.

## Flexible Funding for

### Shelter Operations

Catholic Charities supports ongoing investments in the Emergency Services Program and Homeless Youth Act that meet the scale of the homelessness crisis and provide balanced public support to stabilize shelter operations and our workforce.

During a time of historic budget surplus, our state continues to face a homelessness crisis that threatens not only the health and safety of Minnesotans but the financial stability of emergency services providers that serve our state's most vulnerable. Shelter providers like Catholic Charities have relied on private donations and reserves to fund shelter operations at an unsustainable rate, and the impact of the pandemic, inflation and workforce challenges have escalated today's funding challenges. Dedicated yet flexible funding is needed to stabilize shelter operations and our workforce and ensure Catholic Charities can help those in need not just survive but thrive as they work to achieve stable housing.

Addressing Housing

## Discrimination & Barriers to Renting and Homeownership

Catholic Charities supports reforming eviction processes, prohibiting income discrimination in housing, and reforming expungement processes to ensure all individuals have access to stable housing options in their community



Poverty and homelessness are inextricably linked. So, too, are the experiences of incarceration and homelessness. Reforms are needed to better balance landlord and tenant rights in the eviction process and prevent unnecessary evictions on renters' records that will limit future housing options. Reforms

to criminal expungement processes also are needed to ensure individuals exiting the corrections system have a fair second chance to find housing and work that will allow them to thrive in their communities.

# 1,000 units

Catholic Charities manages more than 1,000 affordable housing units for single adults and older youth.



# 90%

Housing Support tenants who receive SSI or veterans benefits could pay up to 90% of their income towards housing costs under current state law.

Increasing the Supply of

## Deeply Affordable & Accessible Housing

Catholic Charities supports state investments in deeply affordable and accessible housing for individuals and families at or below 30% of the area median income.

A lack of affordable housing is the number one challenge for individuals trying to exit homelessness. Minnesota must produce 2,500 new homes each year to meet the needs of the state's lowest income households, yet there were just 150 homes built in 2021 for these individuals and families. Finding affordable and accessible housing is even more difficult for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

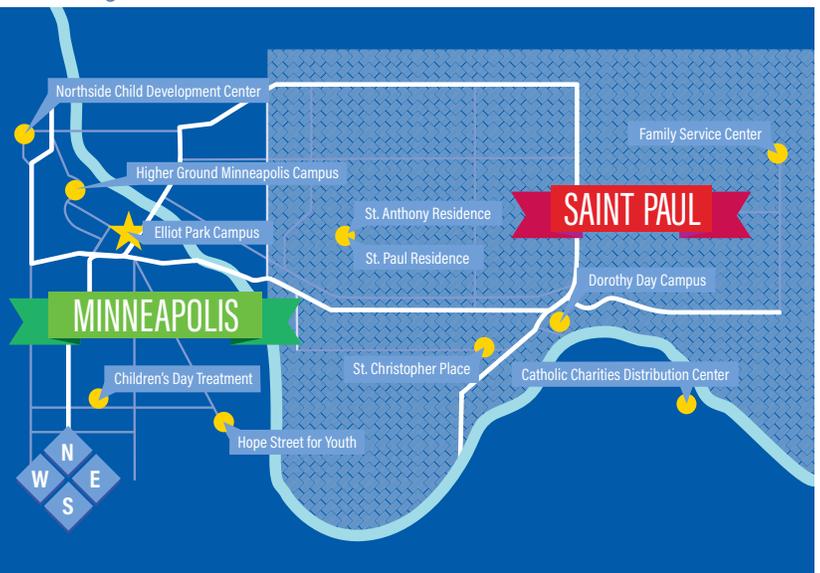


## About Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities Twin Cities serves those most in need and advocates for justice in the community. We are a nonprofit, regional leader of social services, supporting more than 20,000 children and adults each year in the areas of housing, emergency shelter, children and family services, and aging and disability services. We are uniquely focused on housing justice and creating opportunities for individuals to thrive by addressing systemic inequities that perpetuate poverty.

## Who We Serve

60% of those served identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color. About half are 55 years of age or older.



## For More Information

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
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