


# Memorandum



**Date:** May 13, 2025

**To:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Daniella Levine Cava   
Mayor

**Subject:** Update #5: State Law Banning Public Camping/Sleeping and People  
Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness

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The urgency to address unsheltered homelessness is yielding results, with the support of all our municipal and community partners and the Board of County Commissioners (Board). The 2025 January Point-in-Time (PIT) census, conducted on January 23, 2025 by the Homeless Trust, enumerated 858 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness on a single night, a 17% year-over-year reduction in unsheltered homelessness in Miami-Dade County.

Significant decreases in unsheltered homelessness were recorded across all regions:

- City of Miami: 13% decrease
- City of Miami Beach: 31% decrease
- South Miami-Dade County (south of Kendall Drive): 43% decrease
- North Miami-Dade County (north of Kendall Drive to Broward County line): 6% decrease

It is important to note that while unsheltered homelessness was significantly reduced thanks to our continued efforts, sheltered homelessness rose 4%, with over 2,800 people living in temporary settings such as shelters and transitional housing. The housing crisis persists, particularly for extremely low-income households experiencing homelessness, many of whom are disabled and/or seniors.

At the same time, for the most part, Miami-Dade County and its municipalities are not arresting their way out of homelessness. According to statistics collected by the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, 165 arrests were made related to the state law banning sleeping/camping between January 1, 2024 and March 17, 2025; of those, 160 were attributed to the City of Miami Beach.

The Homeless Trust continues to work to accelerate progress on all possible pathways to scale up both short- and long-term capacity. Below is a summary of recent and ongoing efforts to address the housing and services needs of those experiencing homelessness.

## Permanent Housing

- Improvements have commenced at the transit-oriented hotel to housing conversion in Cutler Bay, which will provide 107 studio apartments for seniors 55 and over. Initial occupancy is underway and will proceed in phases.
- Capital improvements are ongoing at an 8-unit property in the City of Miami, which the Homeless Trust acquired on March 6, 2025.
- Design drawings are nearing completion on a property in west Miami-Dade, which will provide at least 112 single room occupancy units. Permitting is expected to commence in April.

- Additional improvements have commenced at an existing property for seniors 65 and over in North Miami which will add another 12 beds. Currently, we have a number of seniors sleeping on cots.
- Referrals have been made to affordable housing developments pending certificates of occupancy, including 42 units in unincorporated Miami-Dade and 14 units in a transit-oriented development in northwest Miami-Dade. Lease up was completed for an additional 58 referrals to a new property in Downtown Miami.
- A 10-unit property conveyed to the Homeless Trust in Cutler Bay by a private developer is at 90-percent occupancy.
- Approximately 30 households have been referred and are pending lease-up into rehabilitated public housing units which were previously offline. Another 70 referrals are anticipated as part of the Homeless Trust's partnership with Housing and Community Development.
- An item is being vetted and prepared for Board approval as the City of Miami seeks to convey a property with 6 units to the Homeless Trust.
- Due diligence continues to identify tiny home options, together with available land, that comply with building code and zoning regulations, are cost-effective, and can be delivered and assembled faster than a traditional build.

#### Temporary Housing

- The Homeless Trust negotiated 51 additional beds at The Salvation Army, effective October 1, 2024.
- A Navigation Center continues to operate at a hostel in Miami Beach, providing up to 150 beds. Clients have access to meals, case management, housing navigation, employment assistance, transportation, and health and behavioral health care, among other services. So far, operations continue without any major incidents, and the Trust continues to communicate daily with on-site service providers and hostel owners and to respond to any community concerns.
- Improvements are underway at a facility in unincorporated Miami-Dade to create another Navigation Center to serve approximately 80 individuals.
- A pilot project is underway at a hotel property in northwest Miami-Dade with 15 rooms to serve up to 50 special needs households annually.
- The City of Miami has also set aside \$2.6 million to support the Homeless Trust's efforts to scale up short-term capacity.

Additional properties and projects and unsolicited proposals are being assessed daily as the Homeless Trust aims to increase capacity to provide temporary housing to every household experiencing homelessness who wants it, while at the same time assisting individuals and families in identifying permanent housing solutions.

#### Outreach

Enhanced outreach and collaboration with municipalities and agencies that intersect with persons experiencing homelessness is another cornerstone of the Homeless Trust's efforts to address the new law criminalizing and banning overnight camping/sleeping.

A reporting tool was rolled out on January 1, 2025 to better connect those experiencing homelessness with resources. Here is a short summary of progress so far:

- Training has been provided to 22 municipal police departments, and more than 150 law enforcement officers.

- Access to the tool has been provided to Solid Waste Management, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, Regulatory and Economic Resources, Transportation and Public Works, Jackson Health Systems, and the Florida Department of Transportation. Training for 311 and select staff within People and Internal Operations is pending.
- Since January 1, 2025, 131 total records have been created using the tool. As of today, 103 of the 131 records have been closed/completed.
- To date, only one verified "official/formal" complaint was reported in Miami-Dade County, and it was resolved within the five (5) business day timeline required by state law.
- In addition to developing the tool, sample Municipal Police Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed and shared with all municipal police departments. Policies and procedures relating to the new state anti-camping law were also developed to assist Homeless Trust-funded homeless outreach teams.

#### Advocacy

With the 2025 Florida Legislative Session nearing an end, the Homeless Trust is working to maintain and secure new funding and push for policy changes that further address public camping and sleeping and reduce homelessness in Miami-Dade. Most recently, the attached letter was shared with Senator Jonathan Martin, as the Homeless Trust seeks to better target Florida Housing Finance Corporation housing resources for the homeless.

Appropriations to expand capacity are also being sought at the federal level, as we await further guidance from the Trump administration related to any funding opportunities for public housing, voucher programs, the Special Needs Assistance Program and other federal funding used to address affordable housing and homelessness.

We will continue to keep the Board informed of efforts to effectively address the new state law banning public camping and sleeping.

c:

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