



2020 Year in Review

300+

People escaped homelessness and secured permanent housing, including 85 children

4,417

Unduplicated people served, aged newborn to 92 years old

889

Bed nights provided at our co-run COVID-19 Isolation, Recovery and Quarantine Site

63

Families prevented from falling into homelessness through prevention services and housing retention funding

Who We Are

Homeward Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit committed to ending homelessness in Northern Colorado. Homeward Alliance focuses on three primary efforts:

1. Operating a continuum of services for families, adults and seniors such as housing-focused case management, behavioral health and employment programs.
2. Overseeing the Murphy Center, the resource center in Larimer County for people experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
3. Leading and advocating for data-driven, collaborative solutions to homelessness.



Our Core Values

- **Best Practices:** We utilize evidence-based methods and programs.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** We challenge systems, ideas and policies that create inequity, oppression and disparity.
- **Collaboration:** We are more effective when we work together.
- **Passion:** We care deeply about creating positive change.
- **Vision:** We think BIG and we lead by example.

Homeward Alliance

The pandemic posed enormous challenges for our community, and our organization. In response, we redesigned our services to fulfill our mission: to empower individuals and families in Larimer County who face homelessness to survive, move forward and thrive. **Like the rest of the community—and the world—we had to be nimble, as we faced rapidly changing information, great uncertainty and limited resources.**

Our efforts included: launching new partnerships to ensure that historically underserved populations could access Homeward Alliance resources, as well as to fill community gaps in housing retention services and funding; expanding COVID-19 related residential programs; and adding Behavioral Health services to assist people with mental health and substance use disorders achieve their housing goals.



109

Jobs obtained, 265 career closet transactions recorded and comprehensive one-on-one support to individuals seeking employment-related assistance including resume building, document acquisition and more.



1,170

Children served through drive-thru Family Resource Fairs and our newly created Family Food and Children/Teen Closet. **71% of families reported that the pandemic had negatively impacted their financial stability.**



2,270

Non-congregate shelter bed nights provided for **36 unsheltered people at highest risk of COVID-19.** 100% have remained uninfected and all have a formal plan to exit to permanent housing within 90 days.



127

People served by Larimer County's official COVID-19 Isolation, Recovery and Quarantine site operated in partnership with the Health District of Northern Larimer County.

The Murphy Center for Hope

The Murphy Center is a Larimer County resource center and the “front door” to our community’s homeless services system. We reconfigured the building in line with health protocols to ensure that individuals and families could continue to receive services, and our staff and 20 partner agencies had a safe place to provide services. Digital offices were created for guests to access telehealth and other remote appointments, and outdoor space was transformed to meet basic needs (including hydration and hand washing stations, portable restrooms and propane heaters). **At a time when many community resources temporarily suspended services or switched to remote-only access, the Murphy Center never closed.**



44,846

Check-ins, providing basic need services including 7,454 showers, 1,419 loads of laundry and mail for 2,129 individuals.



133

Sessions of Winter Evening Shelter and Inclement Weather Day Shelter at three locations, **servicing 1,098 unduplicated people.**



408

Community Resource Referrals to 86 unique agencies for **63 unduplicated people** through our Peer Recovery Navigation program.



7

Resource Navigators hired to assist guests in navigating COVID-19 related barriers, including online service access, telehealth care and more.



James: Peer Support as a Key to Housing

When James was living on the streets of Fort Collins, he often thought, “This is how I am going to die. I’ll be found in an alley.” A friend connected him to our Peer Recovery Navigator, a trained specialist with lived experience, who, he said, “helped me see the possibilities in my life.”

Today James is housed and employed. And he volunteers: **“I want to be a witness to those still homeless that it is possible to get out of this mess.”**



Juan: Basic Needs as a Step Toward Housing

A Larimer County native and Veteran, Juan had been homeless for about six months. “Things hadn’t been normal for me since I got a divorce. Without my wife and daughter, I went off the rails.” **At the Murphy Center, he found his “go-to person”—his name for his case manager.** Juan now resides in a sober living home. He said, “I’m not happy about the time I lost being homeless” but he is glad to be working with a safe place to sleep each night and looks forward to his new grandbaby’s birth.



Gloria: A Safe Place to Isolate

For one mom and her kids, our IRQ site, co-operated with the Health District, was a safe place to stay after being exposed to COVID-19. The family lives in Loveland, doubled up with high-risk family members, without the financial resources to stay elsewhere. **After leaving, the mom sent us a note which said, “I would just like to say thank you to you all! I found out my kids are negative! Thank you for giving us a safe home to quarantine together. It was a true blessing.”** In total, the IRQ site served 127 individuals in 2020.



Casey: Shelter for those at Higher Risk

Casey had been homeless for four years, and was suffering from cancer when she was admitted to our non-congregate shelter. Within two weeks, staff helped Casey secure a permanent housing voucher. In a moment of exhaustion, she cancelled all her medical appointments and told her caseworker to give her voucher to someone else as “she was going to die.” Staff encouraged her to keep going and helped her reschedule all of her appointments. **Today Casey is in remission and told our staff: “I wouldn’t be here today if it wasn’t for you.”**

What We Learned in 2020

2020 challenged us in ways that we hope we are never challenged again.

It reminded us of the scope of the crisis that we exist to end—homelessness—and that, when it comes to society's injustices, people who are homeless almost always get the short end of the stick.

As our community and nation rallied behind stay-at-home orders in the face of a 100-year pandemic, people who were homeless had nowhere else to go other than the local congregate shelters. As protesters took to the streets in the summer, launching our country into a reckoning with systemic racism, the people we served were already living on the streets, disproportionately reeling from the devastation of that very racism.

But even in the horror, 2020 showed us what we can achieve.

We reinvented virtually all of our programs and never closed our doors. We helped oversee a massive, regional response to COVID-19, deploying relief funding to new initiatives that protected and saved lives. We expanded existing programs to help more people obtain medical care and housing. We advocated to City, County and State leaders for policy changes, space and new resources. **Perhaps most notably: We helped more people escape homelessness in 2020 than in any year prior.**

This year-in-review is a testament to those accomplishments and a thank you to all of you who made them possible.



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Thank You, Volunteers!

Volunteers have been the lifeblood of Homeward Alliance since we were founded as Homeless Gear in 2008. Many of our services—and especially those that help people meet their basic needs—depend largely, if not entirely, on the generosity of volunteers.

In early 2020, as the pandemic forced many of our older or immune-compromised volunteers to stay at home, we grew concerned. Would we have enough “boots on the ground” to continue our work?

We should not have worried.

Our community stepped forward immediately. New volunteers—younger and/or without underlying health conditions—jumped into the fray, and longer-term volunteers who are older or have underlying health conditions completed different tasks from home.

Others who had to temporarily step aside advocated from home and sent financial donations, food for guests, coffee for staff and cards of support.

Our community found creative ways to help us serve. We converted in-person Family Resource Fairs to drive-thru events, and dozens of community members helped. Volunteers picked up donations at the Food Bank and at local businesses. Others delivered meals. One volunteer fixed tents at home. Many fixed bikes. Groups provided property clean-up and gardening help at the Murphy Center, held (socially-distant) fundraisers and helped us set up our Inclement Weather Day Shelter. As always, volunteers sorted and distributed thousands of essential gear items, including winter coats, boots and more.

No matter your role, thank you for your steadfast support, hard work and courage.

Ways to Help

Visit www.HomewardAlliance.org/How-to-Help or follow us on social media:

 Homeward Alliance  Homeward Alliance  @homewardCO

“ I’ve never been fully satisfied with just writing a check. That’s why when it comes to Homeward Alliance, I’ve decided to put my money where my mouth is and make sure that my feet follow after as well. ”

David W., Donor and Volunteer

2020 financial information for Homeward Alliance will be available in March 2021.
To request a copy, please email Mandalee@HomewardAlliance.org.