

## **A NEW PATH HOME: RIGHT TO SHELTER**

Louisville faces an acute homelessness crisis, with street homelessness worsening significantly over the past five years. The first step to addressing this crisis is **to establish and fund a right to shelter**, ensuring that every Louisvillian has a safe place to sleep indoors every night.



### **PROBLEM**

**Louisville's emergency overnight shelters are underfunded and overwhelmed.** The city commits **\$1.5 million for annual operations of 750 general overnight shelter spots (about \$5 per person per night)**—a small fraction of their total funding need. An additional \$32,000 is provided for White Flag emergencies, when shelters open their doors beyond their normal capacity for 100+ more people during extreme weather. During the day, people can access help with laundry, case management, storage, and other needs by visiting a day shelter.

Overnight shelters are split into two types: family shelters (only 50 units total) and single shelter beds (split by gender). Emergency shelters for individuals only have enough funding to be open overnight, aside from St. Vincent de Paul's 50 single units for men, which received city funding in July 2022 to stay open 24/7. This means people sleeping in shelters must check in every evening to a room with many other people, and when they check out each morning, they must take their belongings with them. Hundreds of Louisvillians feel forced to camp outdoors rather than to go to an overnight-only congregate shelter.

**During the 12/24/22 winter storm, 1,188 people sought shelter.** Of those, 372 people went to temporary spaces opened for the storm—so **the unmet need in Louisville that night was at least 372 people.** (In 2022, over 11,000 people experienced homelessness in Louisville.)

### **SOLUTION**

**Louisville should pass a "Right to Shelter" ordinance that provides new funding for every unhoused Louisvillian** to access a well-staffed, trauma-informed shelter: one that removes barriers for entry and stays open 24/7, providing case management and housing navigation, storage for items, and stability. In year one, we should fund 375 more daily shelter options through a new shelter for 200 people (about \$8 million, likely through the purchase of hotels); annually, we must commit \$7.5 million to operate that shelter as well as to fund an additional 175 new short-term options (e.g., hotel stays), also meeting the same criteria.

### **RESULT**

**No Louisvillian has to sleep outdoors**—and while sheltered, everyone can access case management, medical care, and a path to housing.