

## ***Cicero Institute Statement on President Trump's Executive Order to Restore Order and Accountability in Homelessness Policy***

**AUSTIN, TX**—Cicero Institute proudly supports [President Trump's Executive Order](#) cracking down on encampments, defunding failed housing-first programs, promoting treatment for the homeless, and restoring authority to local leaders ready to act.

For years, federal policy has enabled lawlessness—protecting unlawful encampments, subsidizing addiction, and ignoring serious mental illness. This executive order is a direct challenge to the activist-led industrial complex that profits from permanent homelessness and blocks reform. It backs law enforcement, prioritizes treatment over tents, and sends a clear message: cities don't have to tolerate chaos.

"Cities shouldn't have to choose between public safety and compassion," said Devon Kurtz, Public Safety Policy Director at Cicero Action. "This order gives local leaders the legal tools and financial support they need to clear dangerous encampments and move people into real care."

The order directs federal agencies to withhold funding from jurisdictions that tolerate open drug use and squatting, encourages states to expand involuntary treatment laws, and allows cities to prioritize housing for women and children by separating them from known sex offenders.

These are the very reforms Cicero Action has championed in states like Kentucky, Texas, and Florida—where voters demanded bold action and courageous lawmakers delivered. This order gives other bold states the green light to follow their lead.

Cicero Action encourages governors, attorneys general, and state lawmakers across the country to use this moment. Build on this order. Strengthen civil commitment laws. Shut down illegal encampments. And stop sending taxpayer money to nonprofits that enable human suffering.

The public is done waiting. It's time to act.

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# Trump's Executive Order on Homelessness:

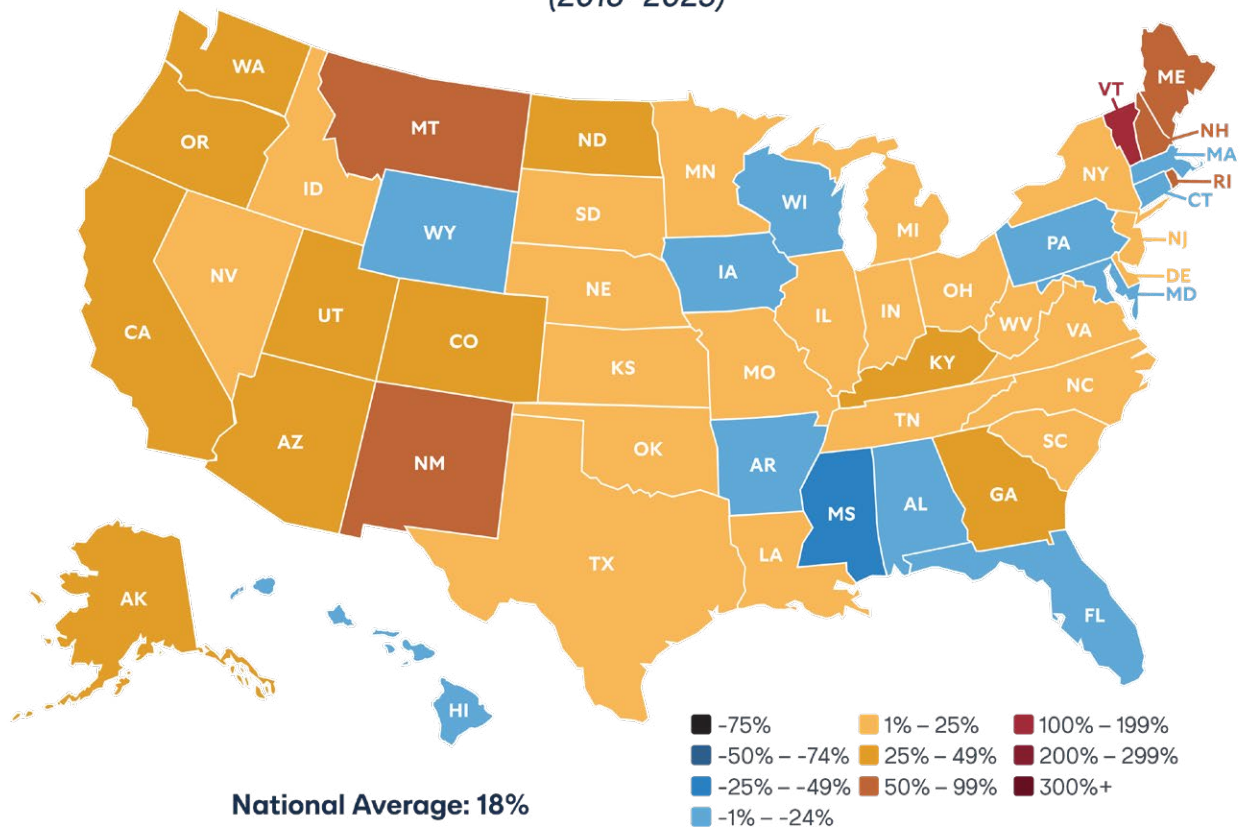
## *A Turning Point for Public Safety*

**Over the last 20 years, federal inaction and ideologically-driven programs have caused homelessness to surge, resulting in a public safety crisis.**

[President Trump's new Executive Order](#) delivers what Americans have demanded: a homelessness policy that demands accountability at the state level, and puts public safety and treatment ahead of failed "harm-reduction" and "housing-first" policies.

### Increase in Total Homeless

(2018–2023)



## WHAT THE EXECUTIVE ORDER DOES



### **Ends federal support for failed "housing first" policies**

These programs pour billions into expensive and slow-to-develop permanent housing while refusing to treat addiction or mental illness, leaving vulnerable people in crisis and streets more dangerous.



### **Blocks federal funding for "harm reduction" programs like needle exchanges and injection sites**

These programs enable continued drug use, punish accountability, and have failed to reduce overdose deaths. This EO redirects funds toward recovery, not surrender.



### **Prioritizes removal of homeless encampments from public spaces**

Encampments are not compassionate. They breed crime, spread disease, and make sidewalks, parks, and transit systems unsafe for families, businesses, and the homeless themselves.



### **Allows cities to separate sex offenders from children in homeless housing programs**

This EO protects women and children by restoring common-sense to local providers and supporting efforts to track and supervise high-risk individuals.



### **Encourages states to expand involuntary treatment laws**

This EO gives states the backing to intervene when individuals with untreated addiction or mental illness refuse to accept treatment.



### **Ties federal support to meaningful enforcement**

Cities that allow open drug use, squatting, and loitering near schools or businesses won't get federal dollars. The EO rewards leaders who protect public spaces and take action.

## WHY IT MATTERS

For years, cities have been told they can't enforce basic laws, intervene in obvious mental health crises, or prioritize public safety without risking federal funding. This EO changes that by positioning federal agencies as partners to communities that want order restored and lives saved. It gives local leaders the tools to act—and a mandate to do so.

## THE BOTTOM LINE:

This order marks the end of federally funded chaos. It puts the safety of families, the authority of local leaders, and the dignity of real treatment above the failed promises of housing-first. State leaders must use every tool in this order to shut down encampments, confront addiction, and take back their streets.



## Cicero Action on President Trump's Executive Order on Homelessness:

*"Years of policy have ignored the reality that registered sex offenders make up a significant share of the unsheltered homeless population—often residing in encampments near schools and playgrounds. Our research uncovered more than 21,000 registered offenders living on the streets in 41 states, and in eight states, they represent more than half of unsheltered individuals. [President Trump's Executive Order](#) provides officials with the tools to identify, monitor, and separate these high-risk individuals—the common-sense reform public safety experts have demanded."*

### **[Devon Kurtz](#)**

Public Safety Policy Director, Cicero Institute  
Author of ["Sex Offenders: An Overlooked but Significant Subpopulation of the Homeless"](#)



*"For too long, homelessness policy has prioritized activist-driven ideology over measurable outcomes. Our audits have exposed chronic waste and ineffectiveness in federal and nonprofit-funded homelessness systems. [President Trump's Executive Order](#) drives accountability, insisting services deliver results—not continued failure."*

### **[Paul Webster](#)**

Senior Fellow, Cicero Institute  
Former HUD senior advisor on homelessness



*"This is the strongest [federal action](#) we've seen in years to reverse the homelessness crisis. It ends the 'housing-first or nothing' mentality and puts enforcement, treatment, and public safety back at the center of the conversation—where they belong."*

### **[Bryan Sunderland](#)**

President, Cicero Action and Cicero Institute  
Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Governor of Kentucky



*"The American public is done being gaslit. They know what they see on their streets—and our [polling](#) confirms it. 72% of voters oppose dangerous, unchecked, homeless encampments, and 69% support requiring participation in treatment programs for housing benefits. [President Trump's Executive Order](#) affirms what the public knows: recovery requires accountability. This is a turning point."*

### **[Stefani E. Buhajla](#)**

Senior Director of Communications, Cicero Action  
Pollster, and Former VP of Communications at True Charity,  
a national leader in accountable homeless services



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## POLICY BACKGROUND

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# Trump's 2025 Executive Order on Homelessness: *Strategic Realignment of Federal Priorities*

## Overview

The July 2025 [Executive Order](#) reorients federal homelessness policy away from “housing first” orthodoxy and toward a performance-based model that emphasizes public safety, treatment access, and accountability. It is the first meaningful federal shift in two decades to allow for behavioral requirements in homelessness services—and to support encampment removal as a legitimate public policy tool. This EO does not create new programs or funding streams. Instead, it restructures how existing federal dollars are distributed and monitored, allowing state and local governments greater flexibility to implement evidence-based alternatives.

## Key Provisions and Their Policy Impacts

### Eliminates Housing First as a Preferred Framework

Previously, HUD's Continuum of Care Program and related federal grants gave formal preference to providers that rejected entry conditions such as sobriety, workforce training, or participation in services. The EO instructs federal agencies to remove that preference and restore parity among models that include conditional shelter access, structured programming, or participation requirements.

**Policy impact:** States can now pursue shelter-first or treatment-first models without penalty in the federal grant scoring process.

### Directs Agencies to Support Law Enforcement-Led Encampment Closure

Agencies must coordinate with local governments to provide assistance in clearing illegal encampments—particularly those near schools, parks, and transit corridors. This provision aligns with Cicero Institute research showing high concentrations of sex offenders and repeat violent offenders in unsheltered encampments.

**Policy impact:** Local leaders now have federal cover to enforce public camping bans without facing funding threats or civil rights litigation from federally funded intermediaries.

## Conditions Federal Homelessness Funding on Measurable Outcomes

The EO requires agencies to develop and apply performance metrics—such as reductions in recidivism, successful program exits, and treatment compliance—in grantmaking decisions. Ideological alignment is explicitly deprioritized.

**Policy impact: Grantees must now demonstrate impact with hard data, not just adherence to housing-first dogma.**

## Establishes Interagency Oversight and Audit Authority

A formal working group will coordinate audits of existing federal homelessness funding to identify programs that lack fiscal transparency or fail to achieve outcomes. The Office of Management and Budget is instructed to review current homelessness-related spending for duplication, waste, and inefficacy.

**Policy impact: Opens the door to federal defunding of underperforming or noncompliant NGOs.**

## Affirms States' Legal Authority to Act

Language in the EO reinforces state rights to enforce local ordinances, remove encampments, and attach conditions to services without running afoul of federal guidance. The EO positions itself as a shield against legal action by third-party advocacy groups.

**Policy impact: Strengthens state litigation posture and discourages federal intervention on behalf of activist lawsuits.**

## Why This Matters Now

The federal government has not reexamined its homelessness posture since the Obama-era push for “housing first.” During that time, homelessness increased, addiction deaths surged, and encampments became entrenched. This EO rebalances federal priorities: it elevates treatment and enforcement, lowers the compliance burden on state-led programs, and incentivizes actual results.

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

# Cicero's Groundwork for a Better Homelessness Strategy

President Trump's 2025 Executive Order marks a long-overdue course correction in federal homelessness policy. For years, Cicero has warned that "housing first" mandates reward failure, weaken public safety, and ignore public demand for accountability. Our research—across states, populations, and policy frameworks—provides the evidence base behind this policy shift.

### Policy Solutions: Treatment, Not Tolerance

- Drug-Free Homeless Service Zones
- Mandated Diversion Programs
- Involuntary Civil Commitment
- Inpatient Care for the Seriously Mentally Ill
- Public Camping Ban Toolkit

**KEY FINDING:** States don't need to wait. Model policies exist that balance civil liberties with enforcement and recovery.

### Housing First: Expensive, Ineffective, Unaccountable

- Why Housing First Failed
- States Can Reject Housing First
- HUD Oversight Failures
- Ending Drug Dens
- Reform HUD's Continuum of Care

**KEY FINDING:** The federal government's funding structure punishes accountability and rewards ideology. The EO dismantles that dynamic.

### Sex Offenders in Encampments: A Public Safety Crisis

Encampments aren't just unsanitary—they're dangerous. Cicero's original research uncovered alarming concentrations of convicted sex offenders among unsheltered homeless populations:

- Wisconsin
- Iowa
- National overview

**KEY FINDING:** These individuals often reside near schools, transit hubs, and shelters with no consistent oversight.

### Public Demands Change—And Fast

- 2024 National Poll
- Wisconsin
- Iowa
- Indiana

**KEY FINDING:** Across states, 3 out of 4 voters support encampment bans, treatment requirements, and enforcement-driven policy.

## THE BOTTOM LINE:

Cicero's research exposes the risks, measures the failures, and points toward a better way. This EO gives states the legal, political, and funding flexibility to act—and our research shows they should.



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## CALL TO ACTION FOR STATE LEADERS

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# Use This Federal Shift to Reform Homelessness Policy at the State Level

President Trump's Executive Order has cleared the way for meaningful reform. States are no longer bound by failed federal mandates. Now is the time to act.

☒ **Enforce Encampment Bans**

Pass or strengthen laws that prohibit public camping—especially near schools, parks, and transit corridors. The EO gives political and legal cover to clear encampments without risking federal penalties or litigation threats.

☒ **Prioritize Treatment-First Shelter Models**

Shift state and local funding toward programs that require addiction treatment, mental health recovery, or work participation as a condition of shelter access. Stop subsidizing providers that resist accountability.

☒ **Increase Oversight of Service Providers**

Audit homelessness-related spending and contracts. Cut ties with nonprofits that refuse to measure outcomes or fight enforcement efforts. Require providers to track job placements, participation in work-readiness programs, and reductions in repeat service use. If they aren't helping people exit homelessness, they shouldn't be funded.

☒ **Pass Legislative Reforms Now**

Consider model policies that align with the EO:

- Public camping bans
- Conditional shelter access tied to treatment or employment
- Sex offender screening and registration requirements
- Expansion of involuntary treatment authority when appropriate

☒ **Promote Transparency and Public Reporting**

Require agencies to publish data on program outcomes, overdose incidents, and housing exits. Increase public visibility into where money is going and what results are being delivered.

### THE BOTTOM LINE:

Washington has finally removed the ideological roadblocks. It's up to state leaders to follow through. Use this momentum to fix what's broken—before more communities pay the price.

*Contact Cicero Action about advancing legislation, refining policy proposals, or messaging initiatives in your state.*

