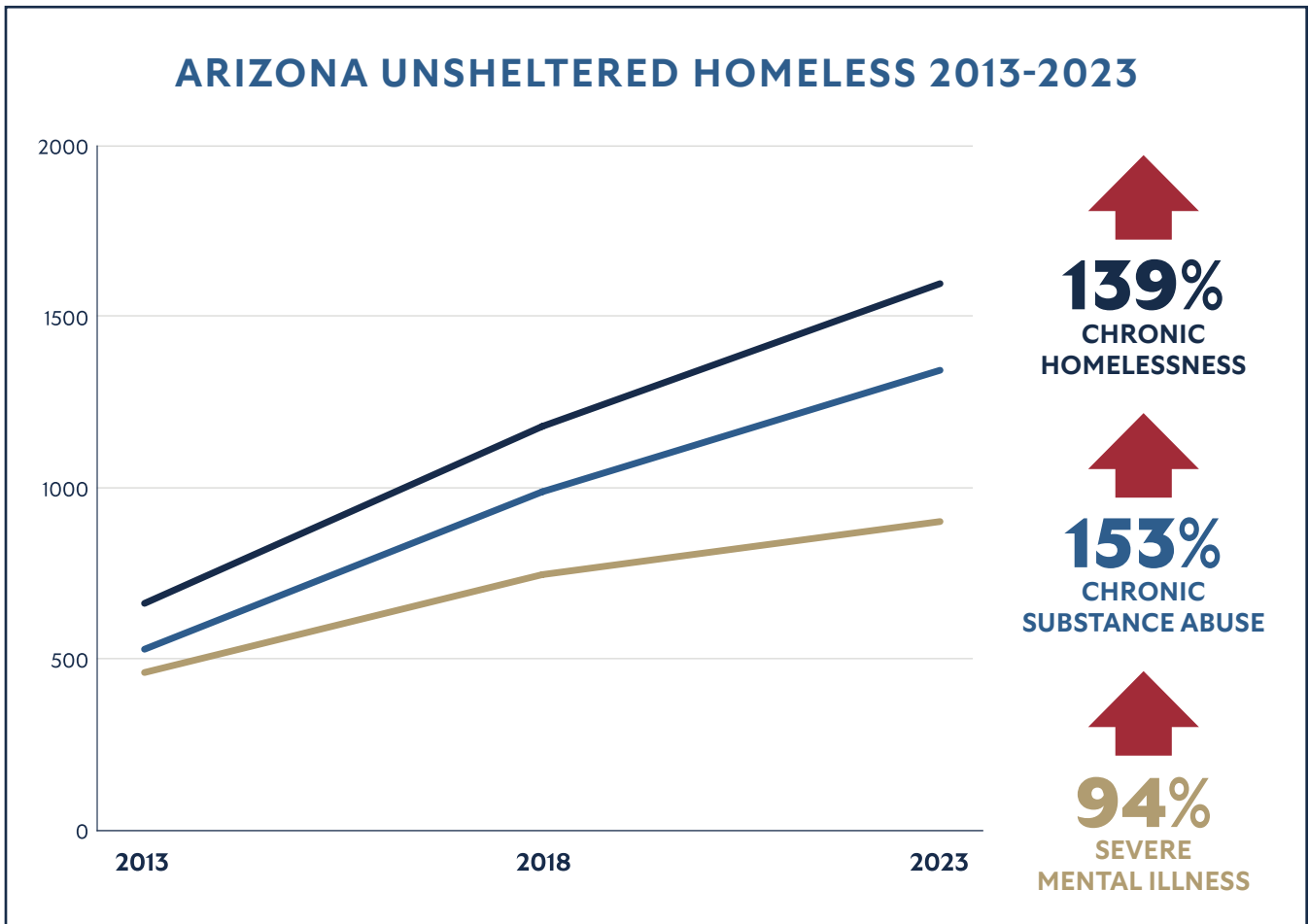


HOMELESSNESS IN ARIZONA: A Deepening Crisis

Arizona’s homeless crisis is among the worst in the country—outpacing states like California, Oregon, and Utah. The deepening chasm of despair over the last 10 years is staggering in scale.

In 2013, there were roughly 9,000 short-term beds available for approximately 10,000 homeless people in Arizona.

Today, the situation is unrecognizably different. **Total homelessness has grown at the 8th fastest rate in the country.** Unsheltered homelessness—the most vulnerable subpopulation that is encountered in tents and sleeping bags on the street—has more than doubled since 2013 and is up 87 percent since 2018.



The prevalence of severe mental illness and substance abuse has increased among all homeless populations, especially those who are unsheltered. **Since 2013, the number of homeless individuals with severe mental illness and substance abuse in Arizona has nearly doubled.** Among the unsheltered, they have increased by factors of roughly 10.



Over the same period, Arizona's capacity to respond to such a crisis was **gutted by Housing First policies** that deprioritized shelter and transitional housing in favor of "permanent" options that have long wait times and serve far fewer individuals.

Short-term shelter space has grown by about 40 percent since the moderately stable capacity between 2013 and 2018, but that growth has not kept pace with communities' needs. **The state has lost more than 60 percent of its transitional housing supply.** Subsidized permanent housing, however, has more than doubled over the last decade. The result has been a disaster for Arizona.

Today, a homeless individual in Arizona is 76 percent more likely to be unsheltered than ten years ago.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Housing First has failed the most vulnerable, highest-need individuals while spending an estimated \$1 billion annually.

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