

Transparency in Homelessness Program Funding

The amount of taxpayer money dedicated to helping the homeless has never been greater.



\$2.3 billion was appropriated, committed, or spent on homelessness programs in Los Angeles from June 2020 to June 2024.¹

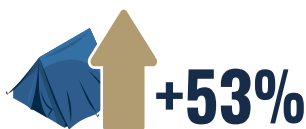


California allocated **\$24 billion** to homelessness and housing from FY 2018–19 through 2022–23.²



Arizona committed approximately **\$1.26 billion** in federal and state funds in 2023.³

Yet, more homelessness exists than ever before.



More than 180,000 Californians were homeless in 2023, a **53% increase** from 2013.⁴



More than 75,000 people were homeless in Los Angeles County in 2023⁵, an **increase of nearly 14%** from 2020.⁶



More than 14,000 Arizonans were homeless in 2023, a **29% increase** from 2020.⁷ Unsheltered homelessness is **up 87%** since 2018.⁸

That's because:

- **Oversight is consistently inadequate:** From unverified payments to missed site inspections, all jurisdictions fail to enforce program standards.
- **Data systems are fragmented or flawed,** hindering informed decision-making and transparency.
 - **Strategic planning is either missing or poorly aligned** with statutory goals.
 - **Grantee accountability is weak,** with rare or inconsistent corrective actions.
 - **Service access remains inequitable** across vulnerable populations.

THE SOLUTION

States should take action to scrutinize homelessness programs, track their finances, and report the results to the public. **Washington, California, Arizona, Louisiana, and Georgia** have conducted state-wide audits (as have individual cities such as Los Angeles) and found significant issues surrounding homelessness programs.



This demonstrates that audits and transparency are critical in identifying problems.

WHY IT MATTERS

Reducing waste and improving program performance means more vulnerable homeless people can be helped and more communities can become cleaner and safer. In addition, increasing program transparency informs the public about where and how their tax dollars are being spent.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

Homelessness spending needs to be reviewed to reduce waste and reform poorly performing programs. Lives are on the line when homelessness programs fail to deliver.

SOURCES:

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