2025 Homelessness Report

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Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary 3

II. Report Background 4

III. Definitions 4

IV. Data Analysis – Method & Limitations 6

V. 2025 Homelessness Data 8

VI. Implementation of the Homeless Mitigation Plan: Progress, Steps Taken and Challenges ... 15

VII. Conclusion 19

I. Executive Summary

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) collected and analyzed data on releases from Minnesota Correctional Facilities (MCFs) in 2025. Between January 1 and December 31, 2025, the DOC released 4,813 individuals, and approximately 13 percent of those releases were homeless to known or unknown locations. With 75 fewer homeless releases compared to 2024, this represents a continued decline in homelessness upon release from incarceration. Since 2021, releases to any form of homelessness have decreased by 43 percent, and releases to homeless unknown locations have fallen by 53 percent.

Several factors are associated with this decline:

- **Housing Stability Investments**: Legislation enacted in 2023 expanded rental assistance and housing stability services and provided additional staff to support this work. In 2025, the DOC spent $500,000 in appropriated dollars and directed an additional $169,592 to rental assistance to alleviate homelessness. In addition to rental assistance, the dedicated funding for staff provided the DOC with a base for streamlining all housing services. The two positions funded through these investments now coordinate the DOC's halfway house and other agency-contracted housing programs, leading to more efficient use of these resources.
- **DOC Policies to Reduce Homelessness**: In 2022, the DOC updated academy curriculum and revised the release planning policy to incorporate housing-focused priorities. Policy changes included language to guide case consultations, referral processes, and release planning. In 2025, DOC housing coordinators conducted on average two case consultations per week and completed 799 referrals for housing support services.
- **Training and Professional Development**: The DOC offers training to help staff with finding resources for their clients. Through the Community Stability Team, the DOC offered sessions in *Resources Made Simple* and *Making Effective Referrals* in 2025 to 125 corrections professionals: 30 DOC, 82 Community Corrections Act counties (CCA), and 13 County Probation Offices (CPO) staff attended.
- **Collaboration and Coordination**: Partnerships with state agencies, Tribal Nations, and community providers continue to expand access to inclusive housing resources. For example, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (MLB) hired a case manager who has been connecting with American Indians releasing from incarceration and making connections for resources and housing in their communities. In another effort, the DOC worked with lived experience consultants to launch housing connections services—services designed *for* impacted people *by* impacted people.

Having adequate housing upon release is the foundation for successful reentry. The research is clear in connecting housing instability and higher recidivism rates.[1] Justice-involved people are more likely to disengage from future criminal behavior when they have a place to call home. While the numbers of homeless releases continue to decline, the DOC expects a flattening of the curve in the future. Critical concerns for upcoming years

[1] Duwe, G. & Clark, V. (2023). The Concurrent and Predictive Validity of a Needs and Responsivity Assessment System. Corrections: Policy, Practice and Research, 10(1), 41–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2023.2298807.

are based on the rising complexity of people's needs and the barriers for justice-involved people. Sizeable barriers include streamlined access to benefits, waivered services pre-release, and predatory-offender residency restrictions and site-based limitations for program access. As research links stable housing to better health outcomes for individuals and the community, it is paramount that Minnesota continues to address these barriers.[2] Addressing housing instability enhances public safety and strengthens community well-being statewide.

II. Report Background

In May 2021, the Minnesota Legislature created annual reporting requirements for the DOC related to homelessness and homeless releases (Laws of Minnesota 2021, Reg. Sess. Chapter 24, Section 3). Minn. Stat. § 241.068, subd. 2 requires the DOC to submit a written report to the legislature each year on data related to homelessness and releases from Minnesota state prisons.

The report must include:

1. The total number of individuals released to homelessness from Minnesota Correctional Facilities (MCFs);
2. The total number of individuals released to homelessness by each MCF;
3. The total number of individuals released to homelessness by county of release;
4. The total number of individuals under supervised release, intensive supervised release, or conditional release following release from an MCF who reported experiencing homelessness or lack of housing stability.

III. Definitions

Data is central to understanding the issue of homelessness and its impact on individuals exiting prison. The DOC developed definitions based on feedback from impacted persons and community partners. The definitions below are different from those used by state or federal programs, but more closely capture their homelessness and housing instability from carceral settings. Listed below are these phrases and their definitions:

Impacted Person: A person involved in the corrections system within a Minnesota prison or in the community, along with their parents, caregivers, or children.

Homeless Releases to Known Location*:* Individuals released from prison (regardless of length of time incarcerated) to a temporary living arrangement. This includes temporary housing as well as hotels and motels paid for by a community service provider or by federal, state, local or Tribal governments. This does not include self-payment, as outlined in the exclusions below.

Homeless Releases to Unknown Locations: Individuals released from prison (regardless of length of time incarcerated) who do not know where they will stay the night of their release. This

[2] Hernández, D., & Swope, C. B. (2019). Housing as a Platform for Health and Equity: Evidence and Future Directions. *American journal of public health*, *109*(10), 1363–1366. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305210.

includes, but is not limited to, release plans that identify an individual be released to the "county of commitment," "agent's office," "homeless," or an "emergency homeless shelter." Shelters are included in this category because access cannot be guaranteed prior to release.

The Homeless Management Information System[3] in Minnesota includes many descriptions of homelessness. Minnesota defines homeless as "A household lacking a fixed, adequate nighttime residence. This includes: shelters, outside, places not meant for inhabitation, hotels or motels, staying with friends or family ("doubled up"), couch hopping, leaving institutions with nowhere to go, fleeing domestic violence."

Minnesota defines an individual, unaccompanied youth, or family as "*Long-Term Homeless*" if they are:

- Without a home for a year or more, OR
- Have at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. Any period of institutionalization (including transitional housing, prison/jail, treatment, hospitals, foster care, or refugee camps) shall be excluded when determining the length of time the household has been homeless. [4]

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)[5] defines four categories of homelessness:

Literally Homeless: An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;
- Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organization or by federal, state, and local governments); or
- Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution. [6]

Imminent Risk of Homelessness*:* An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

- Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
- No subsequent residence has been identified; and
- The individual or family lacks the resources or support network needed to obtain other permanent housing. [7]

Homeless Under other Federal Statutes*:* Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families

[3] What is the difference between how HUD and MN define homelessness? December 12, 2025. Institute for Community Alliances. https://hmismn.helpscoutdocs.com/article/2943-hudmnhomelessnessdifference

[4] Ibid.

[5] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, https://www.hud.gov/.

[6] HUD Exchange, "Category 1: Literally Homeless", CoC and ESG Homeless Eligibility - Category 1: Literally Homeless - HUD Exchange.

[7] HUD Exchange, "Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness", CoC and ESG Homeless Eligibility - Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness - HUD Exchange.

with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless as defined above, but who:

- Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
- Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement for permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
- Have experienced constant instability, measured by two moves or more during the past 60 days; and
- Can be expected to continue in this status for an extended period due to special needs or barriers. [8]

Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence: An individual or family who:

- Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence;
- Has no other residence; and
- Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. [9]

IV. Data Analysis – Method & Limitations

Method: The data source for this report was the individual's release plan information within the calendar year of 2025 from the DOC Correctional Offender Management System (COMS). Analysis included a line-by-line review of the release location, then cross-referencing it with case note documentation and other corrections data systems to determine the final release plan on their date of release. This process provided data on the experience of individuals initially following their release from a MCF.

Limitations: Homeless data for this report reflects releases and not unique individuals. The DOC may release some people multiple times within a year. The DOC conducts this analysis manually, and limitations are primarily due to the outdated COMS program. The DOC is planning for improved accuracy and efficiency in future years with a new data and information management system in 2028. Despite the limitations, the analysis offers valuable insight into where individuals go upon release, which counties and communities experience the greatest need, and the pathways of community transition for individuals.

Additional Release Analysis: While outside of the mandatory reporting requirements, the DOC provides other information to more fully describe housing placements. In addition to Homeless—Known Location and Homeless Unknown Location, the agency include placements to Residential Services and Private Residences, which are defined below.

Residential Service: The "Residential Service" category includes permanent and temporary placements supported by a variety of funding streams and service models. These settings often include support funded through the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), housing and homeless services systems, or income assistance programs. The DOC tracks eight subcategories:

- **Civil Commitment:** Civil commitment is a legal process through which individuals with mental illness, chemical dependency, or developmental disabilities can be mandated to receive treatment, often in custody.[10]

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] *See* Minn. Stat. Ch. 253B (2024).

- **Group Congregate Living – Special Services:** Residences funded through Housing Supports[11] where other funding resources, such as waivers and long-term homeless supportive services funds, are used to fund specific services to support the needs of residents. Examples include board and lodge and customized living settings.[12]
- **Group Congregate Living:** Residences funded through Housing Supports.[13]
- **Healthcare Residential Setting:** Includes, but not limited to, Crisis Respite, assisted living,[14] and other residential settings that provide a nursing level of care. To receive services within these settings, individuals would need to receive a MnCHOICES Assessment and be approved for waiver services.[15]
- **Hospital:** Admission to a hospital immediately following release.
- **Transitional Housing:** Short-term and/or temporary housing as identified by the entity and/or funding resource that supports the operational costs of the housing resource. Examples include but are not limited to the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) transitional housing[16] and Tribal Nation transitional housing programs.[17]
- **Treatment – Mental Health:** Short-term and/or acute treatment resources with a residential component that serves to promote and provide a pathway for stabilizing mental health concerns. An example is an Intensive Residential Treatment Service.[18]
- **Treatment – Substance Use Disorder:** Residential settings that focus on providing substance use disorder treatment levels of care.[19] Examples include, but are not limited to, residential treatment, intensive outpatient treatment with lodging, and intensive outpatient treatment with room rental stipend.[20]

Releases to Private Residences: This category includes releases to a home or apartment either owned or rented by the released individual or by others. However, many arrangements are temporary or unstable – for example, "couch-hopping." Because most individuals leaving prison do not hold leases or own homes, private residence releases often mask underlying housing instability.

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[11] "Housing programs and services", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/economic-assistance/housing/programs-and-services/.

[12] "Customized Living (Including 24 Hour Customized Living)", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_DYNAMIC_CONVERSION&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&dDocName=id_001787.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] "Medical Assistance (MA) coverage for home and community based services through a waiver program", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/health-care/health-care-programs/programs-and-services/ma-waiver-programs.jsp.

[16] "MACV's Housing for Veterans", MACV Ending Veteran Homelessness, https://www.mac-v.org/our-services/housing/

[17] "Housing programs and services", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/economic-assistance/housing/programs-and-services/.

[18] "Intensive Residential Treatment Services", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://mn.gov/dhs/partners-and-providers/policies-procedures/adult-mental-health/intensive-residential-treatment-services/.

[19] "Alcohol, drugs and addictions: programs and services", Minnesota Department of Human Services, https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/health-care/alcohol-drugs-addictions/programs-and-services/.

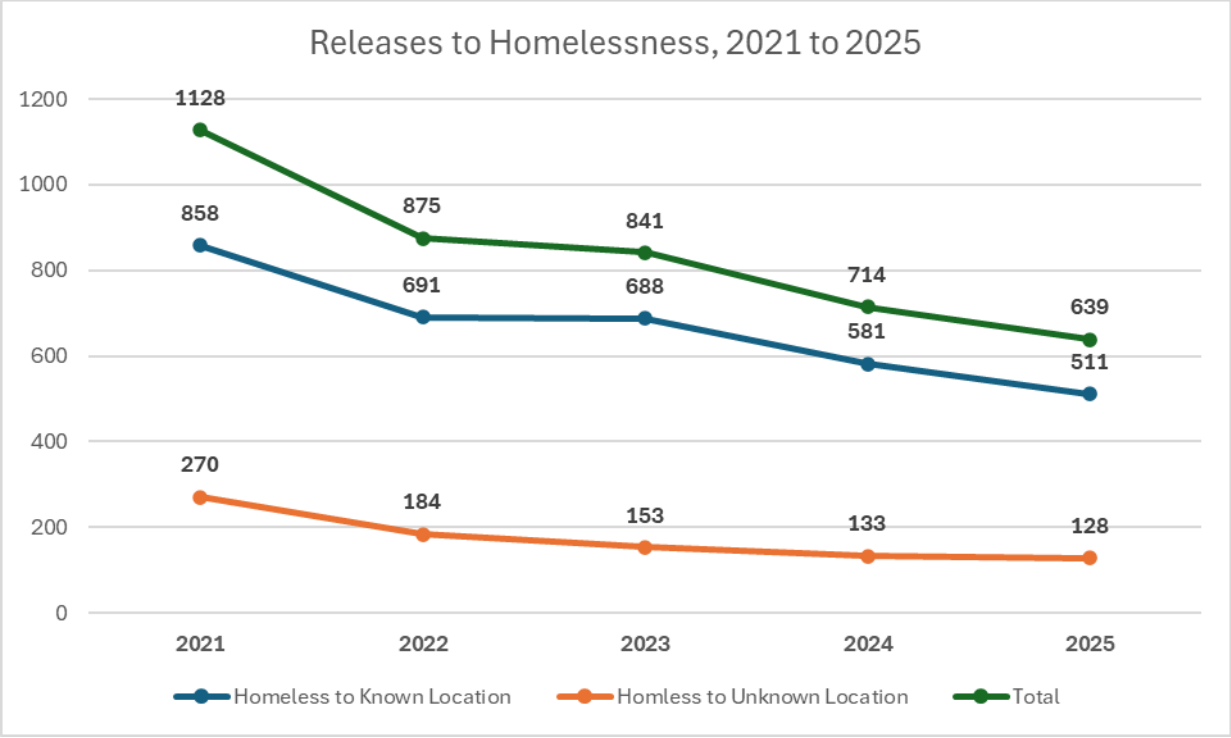
[20] Substance use disorder outpatient treatment with a room rental stipend in a MN Association for Sober Homes residence partner discontinued on August 1, 2025.

Releases excluded from analysis: The following types of releases are excluded from this analysis:

- **Releases to detainers, transfers of custody to other states or the federal government:** This exclusion includes detainers where an individual could be released from the detainer, or the detainer resolved on the same day of release or a short period of time thereafter. The current data system and lack of integration of data systems prohibit seeing the full picture of an individual's prison release to the community where detainers are concerned.
- **Work release and interstate compact supervision releases:** Work release is excluded because a person not yet considered released but serving their incarceration period while in a community setting; these individuals are not counted until they transition to their first placement after work release. Interstate supervision is excluded because these individuals are under correctional supervision in another state and fall outside the scope of this report.
- **Releases at the time of termination of a sentence:** The analysis excludes individuals when they have completed their full sentence and are no longer under correctional supervision. While some individuals in this group release into homelessness, they are no longer under the custody of the Commissioner of Corrections and fall outside the scope of this report.

V. 2025 Homelessness Data

1. Releases to Homelessness



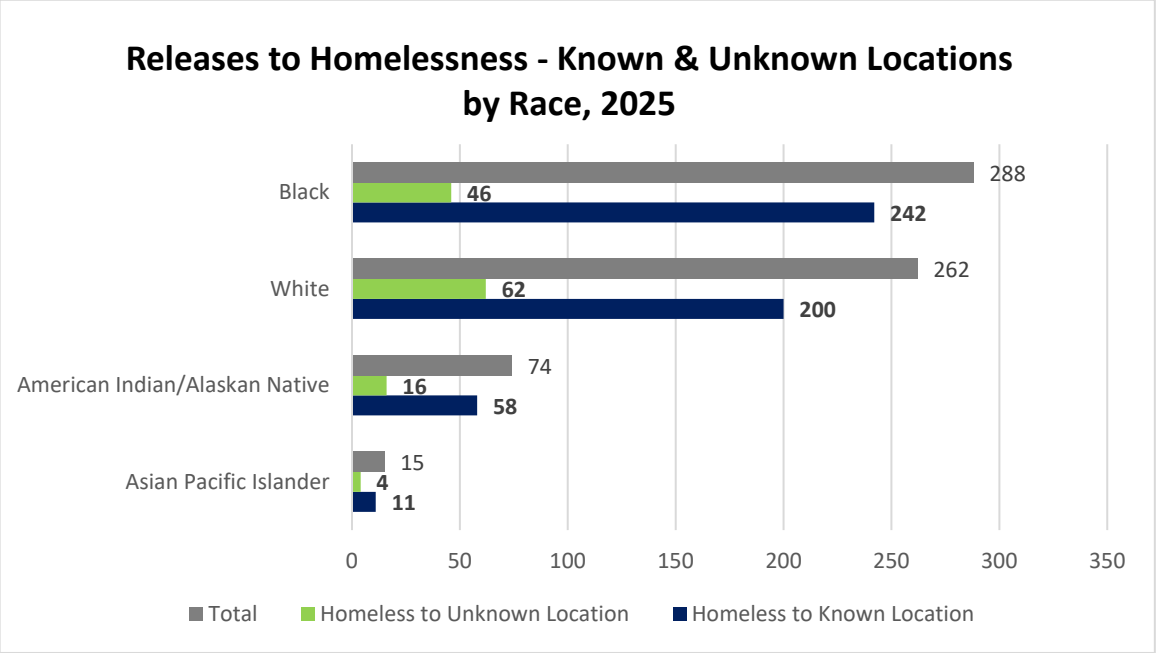
Milestones

Below lists significant 2025 events or investments which impacted homeless releases and the ability to track and share information:

- **Continued financial investments:** Rental assistance provides quick access to housing for those without options. The total rental assistance needed annually exceeds the $500,000 appropriated by the legislature. The DOC limited the eligibility criteria for rental assistance to more closely align with available funding. At the same time, the agency streamlined the referral process and placement for people releasing from prisons who would otherwise be homeless. DOC Policy 205.130 Adult Halfway House/Rental Assistance Use was put in place to guide professionals in accessing resources and assigned decision-making approval for placements to the Community Stability Team of the Reentry Services Unit. While the policy appears to limit the pool of people who receive rental assistance, the streamlined approach contributed to the reduction in homelessness overall**.** The DOC is accessing a wider array of existing resources rather than relying more heavily on rental assistance.
- **Increased professional capacity:** Professionals involved in release planning and providing supervision are developing internal knowledge about housing benefits, placement options and community resources. This milestone is reflected by the increase in case consultations and the decrease in general referrals. Staff are reaching out on troublesome releases while individually handling traditional releases with options.
- **Transparent and Accessible Data on Homeless Releases:** The DOC collects and analyzes data quarterly, rather than annually. The data is available on the DOC's Public Website.[21]

[21] "Housing Stability & Supports," Minnesota Department of Corrections, Housing Stability & Supports / Department of Corrections.

2. Releases to Homelessness – Known and Unknown Locations by Race



In 2025, 59 percent of all homeless releases identified as BIPOC, slightly higher than the reported 55 percent in 2024. There is a slight increase in the numbers of releases for Black individuals to unknown locations. The DOC attributes some of this increase to the elimination of the sober housing room rental stipends that were previously available in the Metro Area.

3. Releases to Homelessness, Known and Unknown Locations by Facility

Facility	Known Location	Unknown Location	Total
MCF-FRB	142	29	171
MCF-STW	71	14	85
MCF-SCL	68	38	106
MCF-LL	57	17	74
MCF-ML	44	4	48
MCF-RC	64	6	70
MCF-TOGO	19	1	20
MCF-WR	21	2	23
MCF-SHK	18	12	30
MCF-OPH	7	2	9
MCF-RW	0	0	0
	511	**125**	**636**

MCF-Faribault (FRB) is DOC's largest correctional facility and has the greatest number of releases. The numbers

of homeless releases are not a reflection of the professionals who provide release planning but rather the sheer volume of release instances. MCF-Red Wing (RW), while primarily a juvenile facility, also has a separate, small population of adult males. The number in the chart reflects only adult releases from RW..

4. Releases to Homelessness, Known and Unknown Locations by County

Top 10 Counties

County:	Known Location:	Unknown Location:	Total:
Hennepin	165	33	198
Ramsey	80	12	92
Olmsted	32	4	36
St. Louis	30	7	37
Stearns	22	3	25
Anoka	14	3	17
Clay	14	17	31
Beltrami	11	4	15
Polk	10	8	18
Dakota	9	4	13

As the two most populous counties in Minnesota, Hennepin and Ramsey counties continue to account for the highest numbers of releases and, therefore, have the highest volume of *homeless to known* or *unknown locations*.

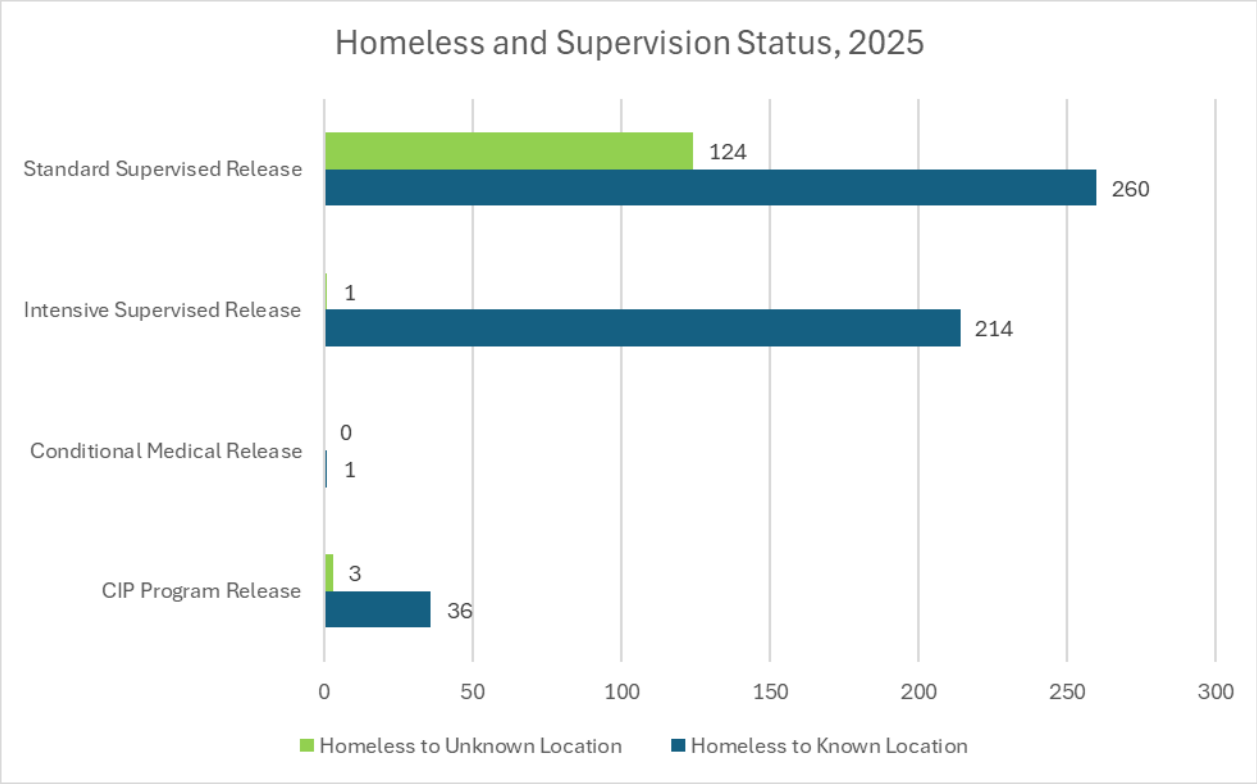
Other Counties

County:	Known Location:	Unknown Location:	Total:
Douglas	9	1	10
Steele	6	1	7
Becker	5	0	5
Cass	5	0	5
Crow Wing	5	0	5
Kandiyohi	5	0	5
Lyon	5	0	5
Blue Earth	4	3	7
Carver	4	0	4
Chippewa	4	0	4
Pine	4	1	5
Redwood	4	0	4
Scott	4	0	4
Wright	4	3	7
Itasca	3	1	4
Martin	3	0	3

County:	Known Location:	Unknown Location:	Total:
Mille Lacs	3	1	4
Mower	3	3	6
Waseca	3	0	3
Aitkin	2	0	2
Carlton	2	0	2
Chisago	2	0	2
Freeborn	2	1	3
Goodhue	2	0	2
Le Sueur	2	1	3
Mahnomen	2	0	2
McLeod	2	0	2
Nobles	2	0	2
Rice	2	2	4
Wadena	2	1	3
Winona	2	1	3
Yellow Medicine	2	0	2
Benton	1	2	3
Clearwater	1	0	1
Cottonwood	1	1	2
Grant	1	0	1
Houston	1	0	1
Hubbard	1	0	1
Isanti	1	1	2
Kanabec	1	0	1
Nicollet	1	0	1
Otter Tail	1	0	1
Pennington	1	0	1
Roseau	1	0	1
Sibley	1	0	1
Stevens	1	0	1
Washington	1	1	2
Brown	0	1	1
Fillmore	0	1	1
Faribault	0	1	1
Koochiching	0	3	3
Lac qui Parle	0	1	1
Swift	0	1	1

Counties not listed had no homeless releases in 2025. The releases reflect only the county to which people were released and do not reflect the county of commitment or the county and/or correctional entity assigned supervision.

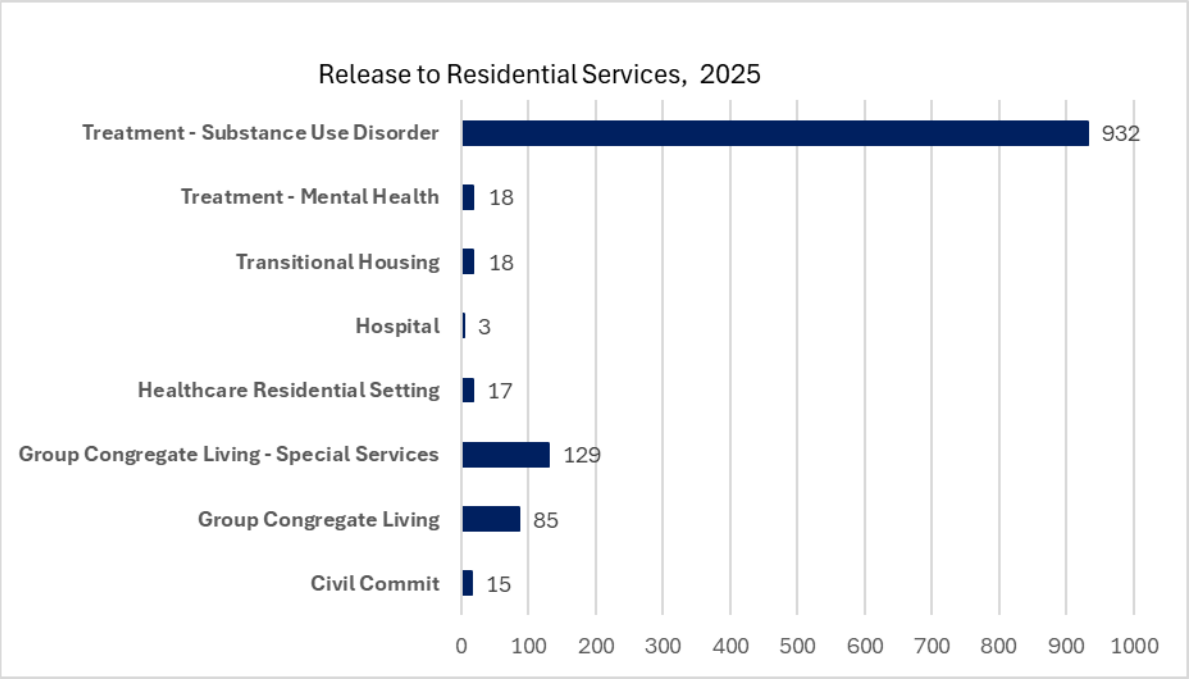
5. Homelessness and Supervision Status



Statutory and policy requirements mandate that individuals in the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) and those on Intensive Supervised Release (ISR) release to "suitable and available residences".[22] As a result, there are a higher number of these release types to *homeless to known location*. Many individuals on ISR have long histories of criminal justice involvement, high criminogenic needs, histories of homelessness, and mental health or substance use disorders that present challenges to find housing.

[22] *Intensive Supervised Release Supervision Standards*; DOC Policy 203.018, *Agent Assignment and Release Planning;* all DOC policies are available at https://policy.doc.mn.gov/DOCPolicy/.

6. Release to Residential Services



Releases to residential services are the second most common release location. The above data outlines releases from prison to residential services, especially to substance use disorder treatment. The data reflects only the location on the first night of release and not their housing situation post-treatment. Individuals releasing to these locations may face further housing instability when they are ready to transition from these services. Residential services may be temporary in nature and not a long-term solution to their homelessness.

VI. Implementation of the Homeless Mitigation Plan: Progress, Steps Taken and Challenges

The DOC views the agency's 2022 Homeless Mitigation Plan[23] as the foundation toward building an effective response to homelessness and housing instability within the corrections system. The plan included several recommendations for the DOC and the Legislature toward the goal of eliminating *releases to homeless unknown locations*. This section details progress toward those recommendations. As several of these goals are now complete, a future report will include new, expanded goals for further efforts toward curbing homelessness.

Recommendations for the DOC:

1. **Conduct equity reviews on all DOC policies**

In Progress: The goal is to promote consistency across the department and equitable access to transformational services and support for incarcerated people and people on supervision. The DOC established a policy review process, documented in DOC Policy 100.100 - Policies, Operating Procedures, and Post Orders.[24] A primary focus is on removing unnecessary barriers for incarcerated people to access services, privileges, and/or incentives, and to encourage leaders to provide insight into how the policies and policy revisions can contribute to success. All policies are scheduled to be reviewed under the new process by FY 2028.

2. **Design and implement training of the revised release planning policy**

Complete: The DOC implemented policy changes in 2022 to provide procedural direction to corrections employees on preventing experiences of homelessness at the time of release from Minnesota Correctional Facilities. DOC Policy 203.018 Agent Assignment Release Planning is the standard practice for corrections professionals in determining suitable and available housing options or deploying case consultations for assistance.

3. **Implement a Collaborative Case Consultation process across all MCFs and Community Corrections Act (CCA) agencies**

Collaborative Case Consultation creates opportunities for corrections professionals to brainstorm options and services and to address challenges for complex releases. This solution-seeking consultation process can be used for a variety of needs, including housing, medical, or critical mental health needs, as examples.

In Progress: With the updated Agent Assignment Release Planning Policy, the DOC and partners instituted case consultations as a standard practice. The DOC offers training to all new corrections

[23] "Homelessness Mitigation Plan", Minnesota Department of Corrections, https://mn.gov/doc/assets/DOC%20Homelessness%20Mitigation%20Plan_tcm1089-551803.pdf.
[24] "Policy Manual", Minnesota Department of Corrections. https://policy.doc.mn.gov/DOCPolicy/.

professionals to help them in identifying community resources for their clients. This training is part of Agent Academy and offered as a refresher for others.

Measures: The numbers of case consultations in 2025 involving housing coordinators quadrupled. In June 2025, DOC housing coordinators started formally tracking this process as part of a streamlined referral process for housing assistance; this will be reported in future reports. To continue increasing capacity for placements, Community Stability Staff provided *Resources Made Simple* and *Making Effective Referrals* training in 2025 to 125 corrections professionals; 30 DOC, 82 Community Corrections Act counties (CCA), and 13 County Probation Offices (CPO).

Challenges: The increase in demand for case consultations continues to affect the Community Stability Team's workload. With the end of Housing Stabilization Services as a Medicaid reimbursable service, there were no immediate options for many released people. DOC anticipated an overall increase in the annual numbers of homeless releases but found that the team was able to quickly and creatively respond to the increase in referrals for assistance. Minnesota continues to lack adequate housing resources for elderly individuals leaving incarceration, predatory offender registrants, and those with significant medical needs. These present particularly difficult cases to identify solutions.

4. Implementation of Self-Reported Assessment (SRA) across Minnesota Correctional Facilities.

In Progress: Implementation began in November of 2023 and is fully operational at intake for new admissions to Shakopee and St. Cloud, the state's only intake facilities. A process is underway to have all incarcerated individuals admitted to MCFs prior to November 2023 complete an SRA to support effective case planning. More than 5,400 incarcerated individuals have completed the assessment as of December 2025.

Measures: The SRA and resulting *Assessment Summary Report* inform professionals of a person's housing stability needs, among other issues and challenges. The tables below show housing need levels for men and women upon intake by recidivism risk.[25]

[25] Source: DOC and Performance Unit; Duwe, G. (2024). Evaluating bias, shrinkage, and the home-field advantage: Results from a revalidation of the MnSTARR 2.0. Corrections: Policy, Practice and Research, 9(1), 20-42 https://doi.org/10.1080/23774657.2021.2011802.

Male (3,981)	Housing Need Level	--	--
MnSTARR Risk Level	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Low	46.81% (674)	34.34% (444)	22.36% (279)
Medium	30.49% (439)	35.03% (453)	37.02% (462)
High	13.82% (199)	18.02% (233)	21.88% (273)
Very High	8.89% (128)	12.61% (163)	18.75% (234)
Total	100% (1,440)	100% (1,293)	100% (1,248)

Female (459)	Housing Need Level	--	--
MnSTARR Risk Level	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Low	64.00% (64)	60.39% (93)	48.29% (99)
Medium	30.00% (30)	28.57% (44)	31.71% (65)
High	4.00% (4)	5.84% (9)	9.76% (20)
Very High	2.00% (2)	5.19% (8)	10.24% (21)
Total	100% (100)	100% (154)	100% (205)

Challenges: SRA implementation for all incarcerated individuals takes considerable coordination and supervision. Incarcerated people complete the SRA on a computer within the facility and there are limited numbers of terminals to accomplish this task. Additionally, the DOC has limited means to compel individuals to complete the assessment. While estimated to be low, the numbers of refusals are higher among those in close or maximum custody facilities. These facilities often have people with very complex needs. Regardless of the refusals, the DOC will also not reach 100 percent of all incarcerated participating, as some people are not within the DOC's custody. They may be dually committed to other jurisdictions and without access to the internal online assessment.

5. **Allocate Permanent Funding to the DOC for temporary rental assistance.**

Complete: The legislature allocated $500,000 each biennium to the DOC for rental assistance. In 2025, the DOC exhausted that funding and prioritized an additional $169,592 from other existing resources.

6. **Invest in culturally specific, trauma informed housing, resources, and services that are inclusive of individuals exiting jail, prisons, and treatment facilities.**

In Progress: For the past two years, the DOC has coordinated with Tribal Nations on many endeavors. Related to homelessness, they developed a Joint Powers Agreement with the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (MLB) to provide housing connection services and culturally responsive housing. The Community Stability Team continues to meet monthly with the MLB to further develop and refine referral process. In late 2025, the MLB hired a full-time reentry case manager to connect with American Indian persons prior to release from incarceration to understand individual needs and connect to needed resources.

Measures: Once executed, the contract includes outcome reporting on behalf of the MLB for numbers served and service type. In FY25, the DOC dedicated $94,000 to the MLB for the development and implementation of Culturally Responsive Transitional Housing Models.

Challenges: DOC and MLB spent several months negotiating and finishing contract terms yet have not yet executed the agreement. This year brought many challenges for human services agencies and organizations which left little priority for new work. MLB did launch other reentry-related work, mentioned above, but it is outside of any contractual requirements nor compensated through a DOC agreement. While the numbers of American Indian people leaving homeless from prison is down, there is an increase in Black individuals to homelessness. The DOC and partners must increase these efforts to understand and reduce this disparity, as well.

7. **Fund two full-time Housing Coordinators within the DOC.**

Completed: Two full-time housing coordinators support referrals, case consultations, and direct placements to combat homelessness and provide continuity of care for hard-to-serve populations, expanding the DOC's outreach to potential housing vendors.

8. **Provide resource gap funding to connect individuals exiting MCFs with Housing Stabilization Services Medicaid benefit.**

In Progress: The legislature invested funds to design a pathway to Housing Stabilization Services (HSS) for people releasing from MCFs until they can access the service through Medicaid. In 2025, the Department of Human Services ended HSS as a reimbursable Medicaid service. Prior to the HSS program end, the DOC partnered with Tribal Nations representatives, lived experience consultants and others to develop a request for proposals (RFP) for Housing Connection Services to mirror HSS and fill the gap. DOC is implementing Housing Connection Services on a much smaller scale with three select organizations, serving a small number of individuals each month to help them with finding stable housing and long-term stabilization plans. The contractor's efforts will provide promising practices and recommendations for the future of this work.

Measures: DOC selected three vendors for Housing Connection Services and initiated services in November 2025. The 2026 report will include information about the impact and effectiveness of these contracts and the process level evaluation with MMB.

Challenges: Housing Stabilization Services is no longer a Medicaid reimbursable service. The funding provides a prototype to provide these services with justice-impacted individuals on a much smaller scale.

9. **Invest in data systems to connect the DOC to other state and federal systems.**

In Progress: The 2023 legislative session provided investments to improve, secure, and modernize the DOC's data management and analysis systems. Designs for this new system, known as PRISM, are underway. DOC expects PRISM to launch in 2028 and will include improvements in capturing homeless data. The system's promising plans give the DOC better

ability to track homelessness releases and responses.

Measures: The Reentry Services Director takes part in the project steering committee meetings and delegates team members to serve on various planning groups. This ensures that housing coordinators serve as subject matter experts to capture critical housing and homelessness-related data. The DOC continues to use ad hoc data collection to review our progress toward goals in reducing homelessness.

Challenges: The DOC continues to manually process data from the existing system, reviewing each release, to code the type. Until there are concise ways to capture and report the data within the system, analysis takes considerable time and is subject to human error.

VII. Conclusion

The DOC and partner agencies/organizations continue to support the decline in homelessness for individuals releasing from MCFs. This decline is made possible by financial investments in available rental assistance, staff capacity to oversee and streamline referrals and placements in contracted housing, and changes in policies aimed at reducing homelessness. The expanded capacity at the DOC also increased the ability for meaningful collaboration with community programs and Tribal Nations. This contributed to increasing housing placements and stability for American Indians releasing from DOC facilities. Increased capacity also provided the agency with the ability to quickly respond to the changes in Medicaid reimbursable services and finding alternative solutions. However, those solutions and housing placements are limited.

While the homeless trend continues downward, it will be critical to reduce the barriers for people leaving facilities with complex issues including medical, mental health, aging services, and those with predatory offenses. There are likely no new programs or funding to point toward developing special services to meet their needs. Access to existing services must be clear to include justice-involved people to continue the downward trend.