

WINTER FLEX FUNDING REPORT

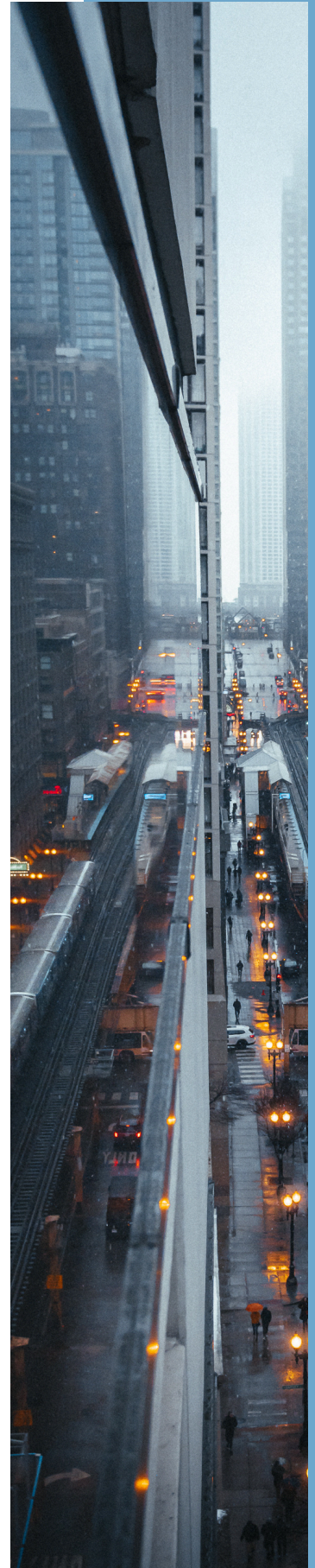


WINTER 2024-2025



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03

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This past winter, House Everyone STL (HESTL) responded to an urgent and dangerous reality. As the St. Louis region endured prolonged stretches of freezing temperatures—many days falling below zero—we mobilized quickly to ensure our most vulnerable neighbors had access to safe, warm shelter. Emergency response is a core part of our mission to solve homelessness. In moments of crisis, it saves lives. In the long term, it strengthens the system needed to ensure housing for all.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the dedication of local partners, HESTL disbursed \$187,000 in emergency funds to 15 frontline organizations. These funds supported shelter operations, extended hours, transportation, supplies, and staffing. This winter also saw the deployment of the Warming Bus—a mobile solution that offered immediate safety on the coldest nights when shelters were full or unreachable. The pages that follow share the impact of this work. The data tells a story of a region that came together to protect lives. At HESTL, we know homelessness is solvable. Our focus is on building a coordinated, resilient system that not only meets urgent needs, but leads to lasting change.

We thank every shelter provider, partner, and donor who made this life-saving effort possible. Your support meant that hundreds were not left out in the cold. HESTL remains committed to ensuring that everyone in our region has a place to call home—no exceptions.

With gratitude,



Samantha Stangl
Executive Director



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS:

With Deep Gratitude to Our Winter Flex '24 Supporters:

- **THINK BIG ST. LOUIS**
- **COMMUNITY TRUST BANK**
- **ST. LOUIS SENIOR FUND**
- **ST. LOUIS MENTAL HEALTH BOARD**
- **PURINA**
- **THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES RESOURCE BOARD**

Together, these generous donors made it possible to respond quickly, collaboratively, and effectively to winter's harshest nights—saving lives and strengthening the safety net for our most vulnerable neighbors.

Think BIG is a transformative initiative focused on ending homelessness through systemic change, collaborative leadership, and expanding access to affordable housing. It operates as a component fund of the St. Louis Community Foundation and is led by Jay Shields, whose vision is informed by successful models from across the country.

Thank you to all of the donors that made this important live saving work possible this winter!

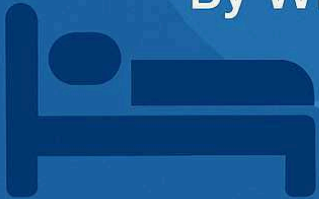


05

SHELTER PROVIDED

430+
SHELTER BEDS
SUPPORTED

By Winter Flex Fund



HESTL worked with nine agencies that provided shelter beds when needed for inclement weather, this resulted in a regional effort to help support shelter for those in need. Through this cross collaboration we were able to provide 430+ beds many used for 25 plus nights of activation.

06

TRANSPORTATION

Warming Bus Outreach: 1432 Encounters Over 39 Winter Nights



39

Nights of Operation

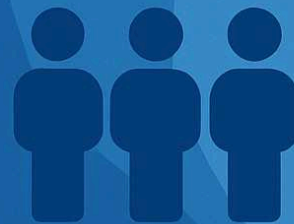
Average Encounters per Night: 37



Each night, dozens sought warmth,
safety, and connection.

5,500+ BUS PASSES DISTRIBUTED

In partnership with
Winter Flex Fund



Because of an immense amount of work put in, there were only two nights that not all individuals who took the warming bus were able to be placed in shelter.

07

MEALS SERVED

During the harshest nights of winter, access to a warm meal can mean everything. Thanks to our partners and volunteers, thousands of meals were served to our unhoused neighbors as part of our emergency weather response offering not only nourishment, but also dignity and care.

30,507+ MEALS SERVED


COMMUNITY-
SUPPORTED
HOT
MEALS
DAILY
FAMILIES &
INDIVIDUALS
REACHED

4,500 SNACKS WERE DISTRIBUTED



08

SUPPLIES PROVIDED



As part of the efforts with Winter Flex both Tent Mission and an encampment were funded and provided with supplies like winterized tents, propane tanks, tarps, heaters, toilets, warming supplies, bus passes and other means to help keep folks who were not interested in going to shelters warm outside during inclement weather.

09

OUTREACH



400+ Volunteers.
700+ Hours.
One Shared Mission.

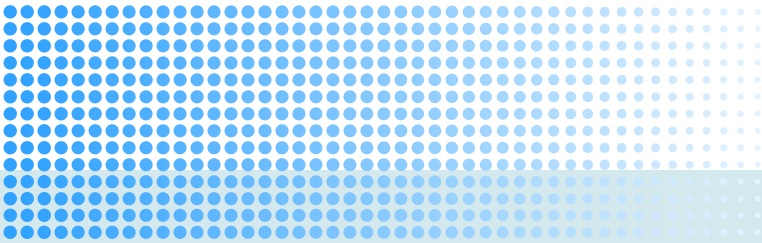
 **400+** |  **700 h**

Thank you to everyone who supported our partner programs this winter – your time and heart made a difference.

With the help of our partner agencies, we delivered compassionate care and critical services throughout the region: regular wellness checks at local encampments, delivered warming supplies, built trust and spread awareness of the Winter Warming Bus as well as connecting individuals directly to available shelter and vital services. Also provided was peer support counseling and referrals for recovery, housing, and healthcare. Clothing, bus passes and hygiene supplies were distributed, and access to laundry, WiFi/computer access, phone charging, and showers were provided. Also provided were weekly life skills classes, job readiness training, support obtaining vital documents, including birth certificates and Missouri state IDs.

This winter, our outreach efforts extended far beyond shelter: meeting people where they were, listening to their needs, and providing wraparound support to help our unhoused neighbors survive and move forward.

10 PIT COUNT FOR THE REGION 2024:



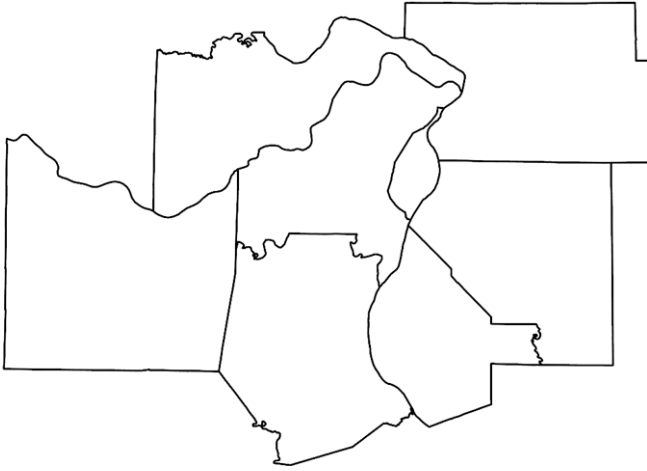
The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a federally mandated annual census of people experiencing homelessness, conducted in late January. It captures both sheltered (in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or safe havens) and unsheltered individuals on a single night, providing communities with a snapshot of local need.

While HUD sets the guidelines, each Continuum of Care (CoC) conducts its own PIT count, often relying on volunteers and weather-dependent outreach.

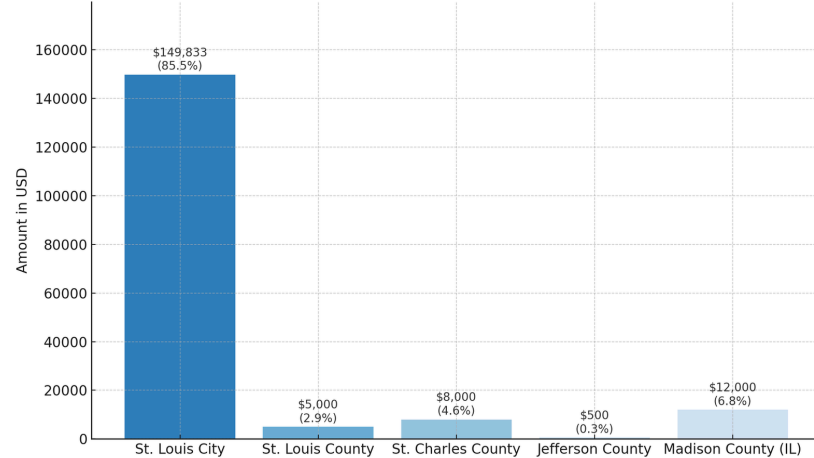
This past winter, in partnership with Winter Flex Funds, over 430 emergency shelter beds were made available, more than 30,000 meals were provided, and 1,400+ individuals rode the Warming Bus to safe shelter—demonstrating the power of coordinated community response in supporting our unhoused neighbors.

Region	Total Unhoused	Total Unsheltered
St. Charles	422	115
Franklin	33	33
Jefferson	92	35
St. Louis County	452	92
St. Louis City	1235	154
Madison County	121	60
East St. Louis, Belleville	237	19
Totals	2592	508

11 REGIONAL IMPACT:



Winter Flex Fund Contributions by Region



TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS: \$175,333

ST. LOUIS CITY: \$149,833 (85.5%)

AMERICORP:	\$8645
CENTENNIAL /KALEIDOSCOPE:	\$39,000
CITY HOPE:	\$7,500
FIELD OF HOPE	\$7,500
HEALING ACTION:	\$5,000
ST. PATRICK'S CENTER:	\$20,000
TENT MISSION:	\$10,000
UNFAILING LOVE:	\$12,188
URBAN CITY:	\$25,000
WINTER OUTREACH:	\$10,000
WELLSTON LOOP:	\$5,000

ST. LOUIS COUNTY: \$5,000 (2.9%)

INEXCELCIUS:	\$5,000
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ST. CHARLES COUNTY: \$8,000 (4.6%)

COMMUNITY COUNCIL:	\$8,000
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JEFFERSON COUNTY : \$500 (0.3%)

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL:	\$500
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MADISON (IL): \$12,000 (6.8%)

OWL OVERNIGHT WARMING LOCATIONS	\$12,000
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*SERVICES NOT PROVIDED TO ST. CLAIR AND MONROE COUNTY ILLINOIS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY, MO AS NO APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED FOR SUPPORT

12 TESTIMONIALS

InExcelsis

Thanks to a Winter Flex Fund grant from House Everyone STL, last week Winter Safe Haven by InExcelsis took 13 families to LaQuinta Suites at Westport to shelter them from the cold. Life saving! While most shelters only provide for men, Winter Safe Haven by InExcelsis is one of the few shelters that provides for women and children. Thanks to a Winter Flex Fund grant from House Everyone STL, parents, kids and their puppies had a warm place to sleep this week when the second cold snap hit St. Louis.



The OWL's

We received the Winter Flex '24 funds from House Everyone STL (HESTL), and they really made a difference. Thanks to Winter Flex, we were able to open three Overnight Warming Locations (OWLs) instead of two. At the depth of the deep freeze it was below 0F and we had 112 people sheltered from the cold. We have OWLs in churches in Alton, Edwardsville and Granite City. The one in Granite City almost didn't open. But when the thermometer dropped and it looked like people could freeze, the host church led the way and brought along public officials, business partners, and residents to make it happen. The mission of the OWLs is Get Inside, Get Connected, and Get Well. Thanks to HESTL, it was much much easier to execute on those priorities this year.

Winter Outreach

This winter was the worst in several years. We activate when the temperature falls below 25F, and we operated a record number of 30 days this winter. Thanks to our pop up partners like Americorps, Urban City Outreach, Peter & Paul Community Services Sidney Street, Centenary Methodist Church/Kaleidoscope and others, we counted 314 beds that kept the unhoused from the cold. Without House Everyone STL grants this just wouldn't have happened. Things would've been so much worse if HESTL hadn't provided the funding to open additional beds on such short notice. Thanks to them, we were able to provide beds and warming supplies successfully to all that needed them.

13

FINAL REFLECTIONS ON WINTER FLEX FUND



As we look back on the 2024–2025 cold season, it is clear: Winter Flex Funding was an essential part of our region’s emergency response.

This effort was not without its challenges, but it also taught us valuable lessons and illuminated powerful strategies for moving forward.

- Agencies that coordinated before weather events through shared calendars, common intake forms, and transportation protocols were significantly more effective. This level of planning helped manage capacity, streamline services, and reduce duplication.
- Smaller grassroots groups with flexible staffing models were often the first to respond and the quickest to adapt.
- Investments in micro-grants, mobile units, and community-based hubs allowed services to pivot with the weather and the need.

To build on this momentum, we recommend the following steps:

- Continue the Winter Flex Fund as an annual effort and start fundraising well before the next cold season.
- Invest in small-capacity shelters and church-based warming centers, especially in underserved areas.
- Formalize a Regional Coalition of Winter Response Partners, with quarterly meetings to share best practices and plan for coordinated activations.
- Create a Resource Hub with real-time capacity listings, standardized forms, volunteer protocols, and trauma-informed training modules.
- A standardized intake tool and shared data system would greatly improve response efforts and resource deployment. Despite the dedication of over 400 volunteers contributing more than 700 hours, staffing remained our biggest challenge.
- We recommend the development of centralized, trauma-informed training on shelter expectations and population-specific care, as well as a strategy that reduces reliance on volunteers for core operations.

We are so grateful to every volunteer, caseworker, and shelter staff member who stood in the gap during frigid nights as well as the generous donors and foundations whose support made this possible. We are thankful to the city and county leaders who issued timely activation orders and provided support. And most of all, the resilient individuals who trusted us enough to walk through our doors.

13,587

support touchpoints

made in partnership with

Winter Flex Fund

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR WINTER FLEX FUNDING PARTNERS AND OUR GENEROUS DONORS

WINTER FLEX FUNDING RECIPIENTS

CENTENARY UMC

Awarded funding for over night 24 hour warming shelter and supplies for three weeks for 60 people

AMERICORPS ST. LOUIS

Awarded funding for outreach and to host site staffing for 64 beds for 10 nights

WINTER OUTREACH

Awarded funding for shelter, outreach staff, and supplies

UNFAILING LOVE CHURCH

Awarded funding for shelter and services for approximately 35 people

TENT MISSION

Awarded funding for survival resources for 135+ individuals for 35 nights

CITY HOPE

Awarded funding for a pop-up shelter serving 25 to 30 single men/women

FIELD OF HOPE

Awarded funding for warming shelter and supplies

COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ST. CHARLES

Awarded funding for warming and shelter stays

THE OWLS- MADISON COUNTY

Awarded funding for program expenses for overnight program that served 150 guests in winter 2023-24

THE WARMING BUS - URBAN CITY SERVICES

Awarded funding to equip and operate a warming bus and a shelter run by urban city services

HEALING ACTION

Awarded funding for shelter and services for 15 young people

OUR LADY CATHOLIC CHURCH - ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FESTUS

Awarded funding for shelter and services

INEXCELSIS

Awarded funding for shelter and services

WELLSTON LOOP CDC

Awarded funding for a pop-up shelter serving 20 individuals

ST. PATRICK CENTER

Awarded funding for an overnight warming shelter and for support of older adults

