



Response to Questions on the 2016 LOBs

Request By: Supervisor McKay

Relevant LOB(s): N/A

Question: What is the percentage of homeless individuals that refuse assistance?

Response:

The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness does not have data reflecting the percentage of homeless individuals that refuse assistance. It is generally perceived that this number is low. Refusing assistance is primarily associated with single adults who are unsheltered, have severe mental illness and, as a result, have difficulty trusting service providers who are offering assistance. Some of these individuals are rightfully suspicious, based on their experience, that the housing which fits their needs is readily available and will be offered without clinical prerequisites, such as completion of a course of treatment or evidence of sobriety. Typically community partners find that with persistence, and utilizing a Housing First approach and appropriate housing resources, initially resistant individuals can be persuaded to take advantage of assistance when offered.