

Implementing the Housing-Focused Street Outreach Framework



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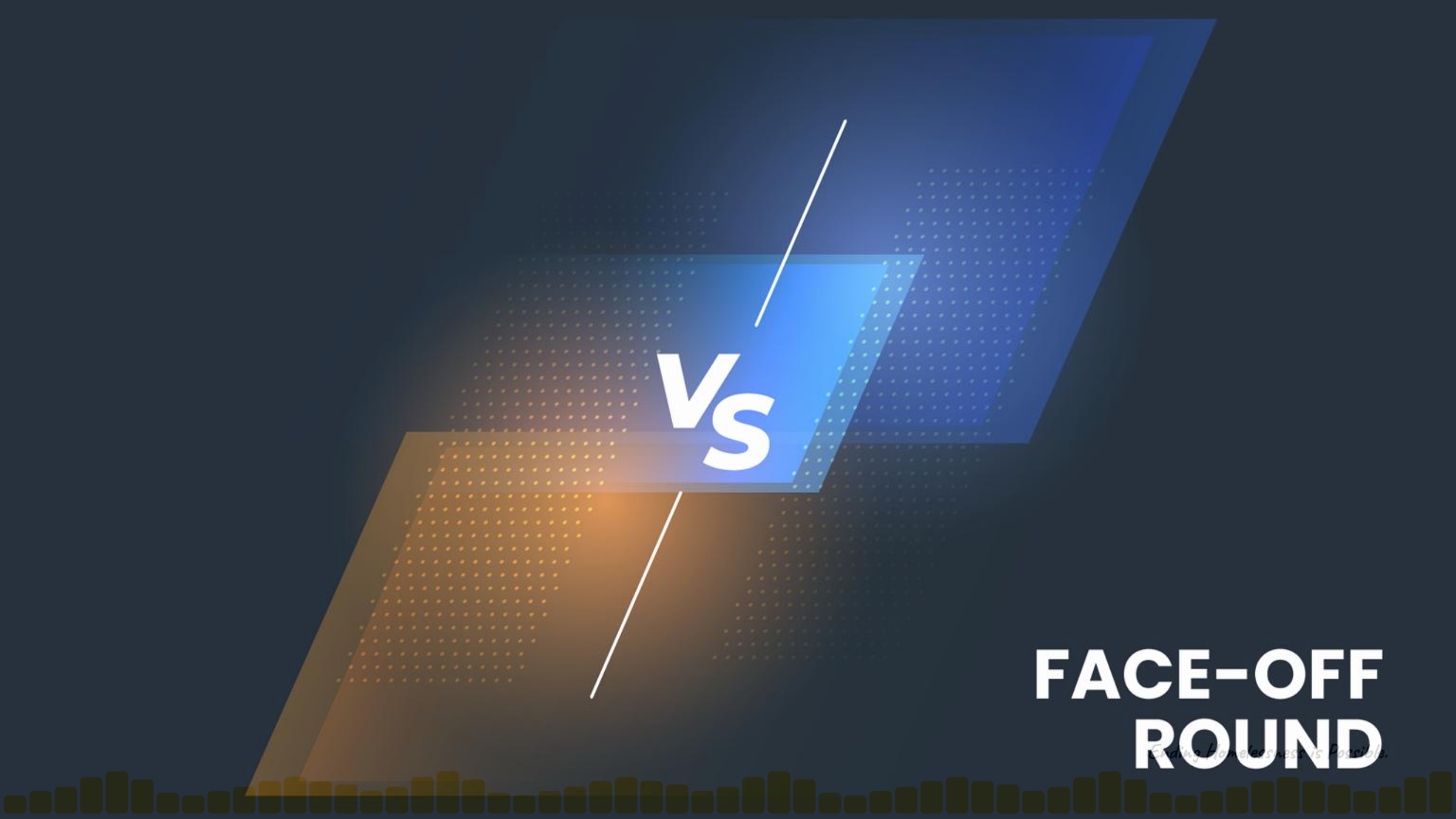
Come learn about the Alliance's Housing-Focused Street Outreach Framework to understand how both current and future street outreach providers can ensure their work is grounded in a housing-focused approach. Hear from a range of experts in the field on effectively connecting individuals and families experiencing unsheltered homelessness to long-term housing solutions.





Ending Homelessness is Possible.





Vs

**FACE-OFF
ROUND**

Ending Homelessness is Possible.

**Housing-Focused
Approach**

35

**Community Health &
Safety**

10

**Strategic Collaboration
& Partnerships**

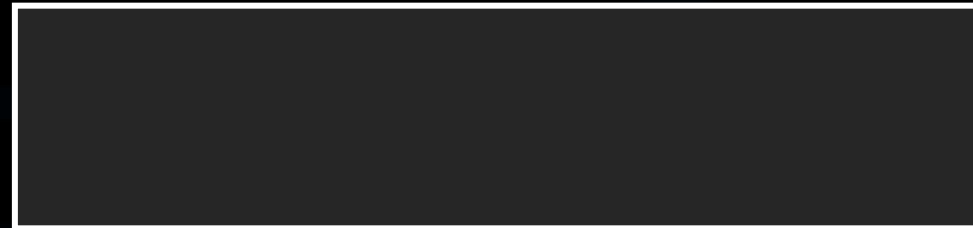
25

Data & Impact Analysis

10

**Person-Centered
Engagement**

20



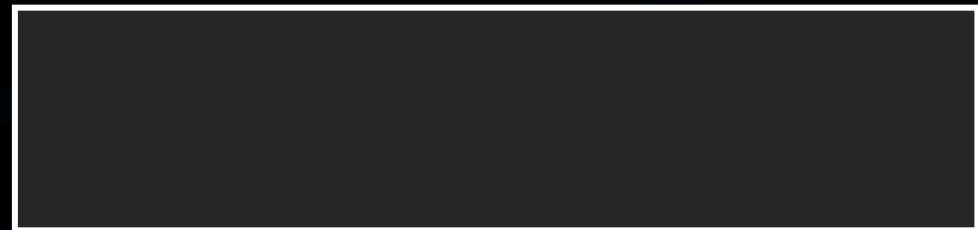
Trauma-informed care 30

Harm reduction 15

Cultural responsiveness 25

Relationship-building 10

Respect for autonomy 20



**Track outcomes over
time**

25

**Measure housing
placements**

15

**Identify service
disparities**

20

Support equity analysis

10

**Inform geographic
deployment**

20

**Integrate with
Coordinated Entry**

10

Prioritize permanent housing

30

Use flexible financial supports

15

Avoid preconditions

30

Connect directly to housing providers

10

Offer housing problem-solving

15

De-emphasize shelter as end goal

10

FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

Player 1

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FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

**What's one thing that makes
outreach *housing-focused* instead of
service-focused?**

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FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

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**Name something outreach workers need
to do to build trust.**

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FAST MONEY

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**What kind of data helps outreach teams
improve?**

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FAST MONEY

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**Name one partner that should be part of
effective outreach collaboration.**

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FAST MONEY

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**What's one thing a housing-focused
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FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

FAST MONEY

Player 2

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FAST MONEY

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Our Core Values

1. All facets of society have a responsibility to ensure access to housing for all. Everyone deserves access to safe, stable housing. It is not a privilege and should not be commoditized.
2. Homelessness is not just a housing issue—it's deeply tied to systemic inequalities and discrimination. And if we ignore the impacts of injustice, we risk creating surface-level solutions that blame individuals instead of systems and reinforce inequalities.
3. Homelessness is a complex, multi-system issue that cannot be solved in silos. Solutions should prioritize those most impacted due to system failures and injustice and challenge the systems that create them.

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Our Core Values

4. People with lived experience must have meaningful leadership, decision-making power, and compensation in all homelessness responses. Lived experience shifts the conversation away from charity or saviorism toward co-governance, power-sharing, and justice.
5. We seek to shift the conversation from charity to justice, influencing how policies are framed and funded. Systems and programs should empower individuals, not control or coerce them. They should not be based in punishment or suspicion.
6. If we do not dig deep to explore if and how we personally have benefited from unjust systems and how our privilege shapes our worldview, we cannot create and sustain equitable and just programming.
7. We truly value everyone's experience in this space and are committed to continuous learning...even if it's difficult and painful at times. Creating safe spaces rooted in inclusion is of vital importance.

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UNDERSTANDING THE HOUSING FOCUSED STREET OUTREACH FRAMEWORK



Why a Housing Focused Street Outreach Framework?

Need for
Universal
Guidance

Current Reality
Must Change

Addressing
Adverse Effects

Scarce Shelter &
Housing
Resources

Outreach Serves
the Most
Vulnerable

Coordinated
Approach
Amplifies Impact

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Goal of a Homeless Response System that is Effective, Efficient, and Equitable

House people as quickly as possible and
Divert people from imminent homelessness whenever possible

So that, experiencing homelessness is Rare, Brief and One-time.



Effective, Equitable and Efficient Homeless Response System: **APPROACH**

Use a systemic approach

to align interventions and resources across programs in a coordinated way around this common goal





HOUSING- FOCUSED STREET OUTREACH *Framework*



DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT *for Street Outreach Providers*

endhomelessness.org/outreach



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What is Housing Focused Street Outreach

Housing-Focused Street Outreach (HFSO) is an engagement strategy that prioritizes connecting people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to lifesaving, person-centered, culturally responsive services and resources while actively working towards securing stable and permanent housing solutions. This approach is characterized by five distinct core elements:



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Effective Outreach Creates System Flow and Performance

- Systemic Alignment and Coordination of Practice Across Outreach
- Analysis of Why Some People Do Not Engage
- Engage and Listen to People with Lived/Living Experience of Homelessness

And...

Before adding more outreach, look at what you currently have in your system. What are barriers? Is Outreach coordinated?

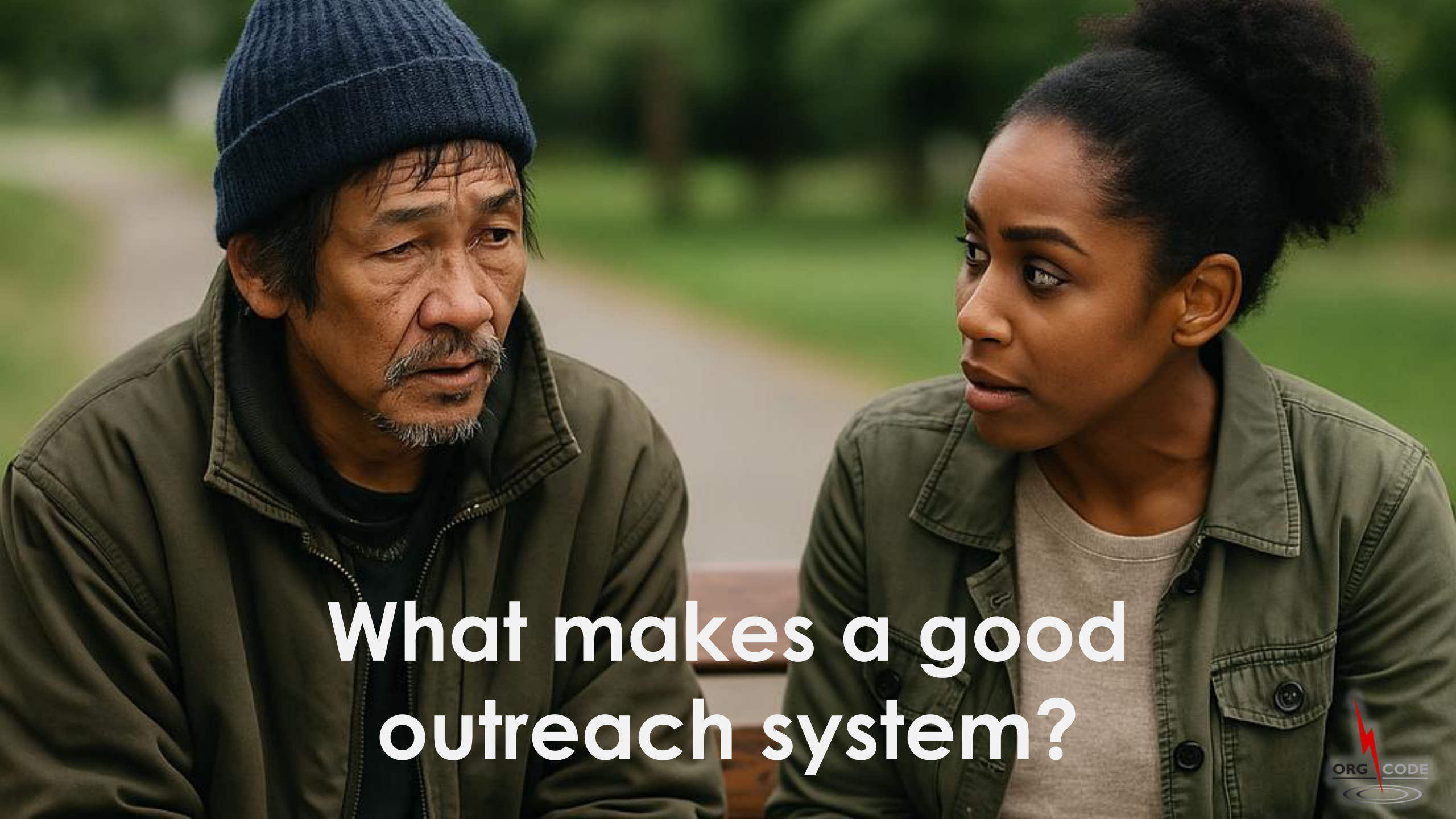
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**Remember Outreach is
about ending someone's
homelessness**

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A man and a woman are shown from the chest up, sitting outdoors. The man on the left is wearing a dark blue knit beanie and a dark olive green jacket over a black shirt. He has a grey goatee and is looking towards the woman. The woman on the right is wearing a dark olive green jacket over a grey t-shirt. She has her hair pulled back and is looking towards the man. The background is a blurred green field.

**What makes a good
outreach system?**

Shift the mindset from charity and containment to strategic housing-focused engagement.



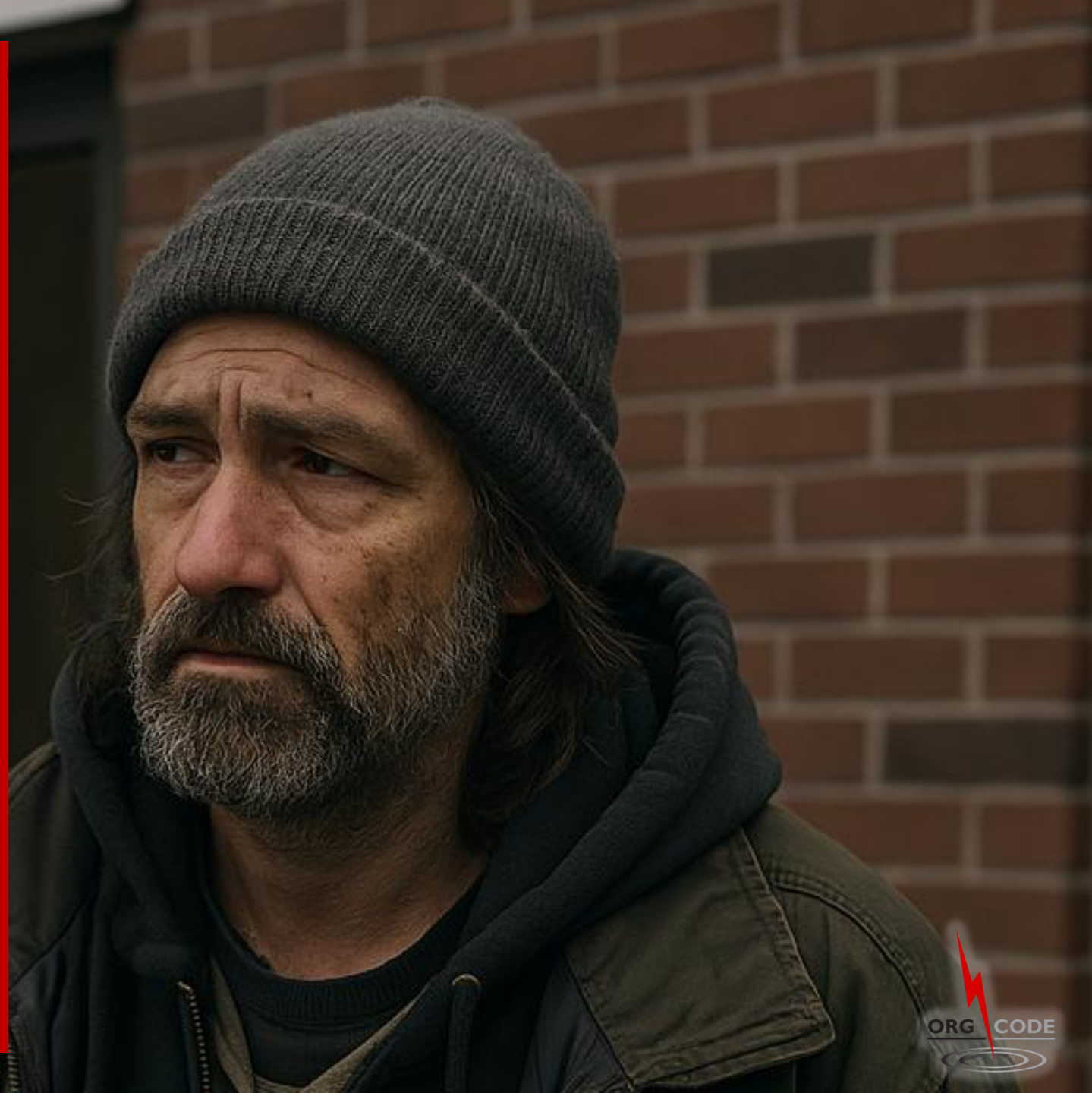
What Good outreach is:

Housing-First at its core: every interaction leads toward housing.

Data-driven and coordinated: outreach informed by by-name lists, hot spot data, and performance metrics.

Person-centered: trust-building, consistent, and culturally responsive.

Equity-informed: tailored to reach BIPOC, LGBTQ+, women, and other underserved groups.



A photograph of a Black man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a dark beanie and a dark jacket. He is sitting against a light-colored, textured wall, looking off to the side with a serious expression. His arms are crossed.

KEY INGREDIENTS OF A STRONG OUTREACH SYSTEM:

STRATEGIC DEPLOYMENT: RIGHT PEOPLE, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME.

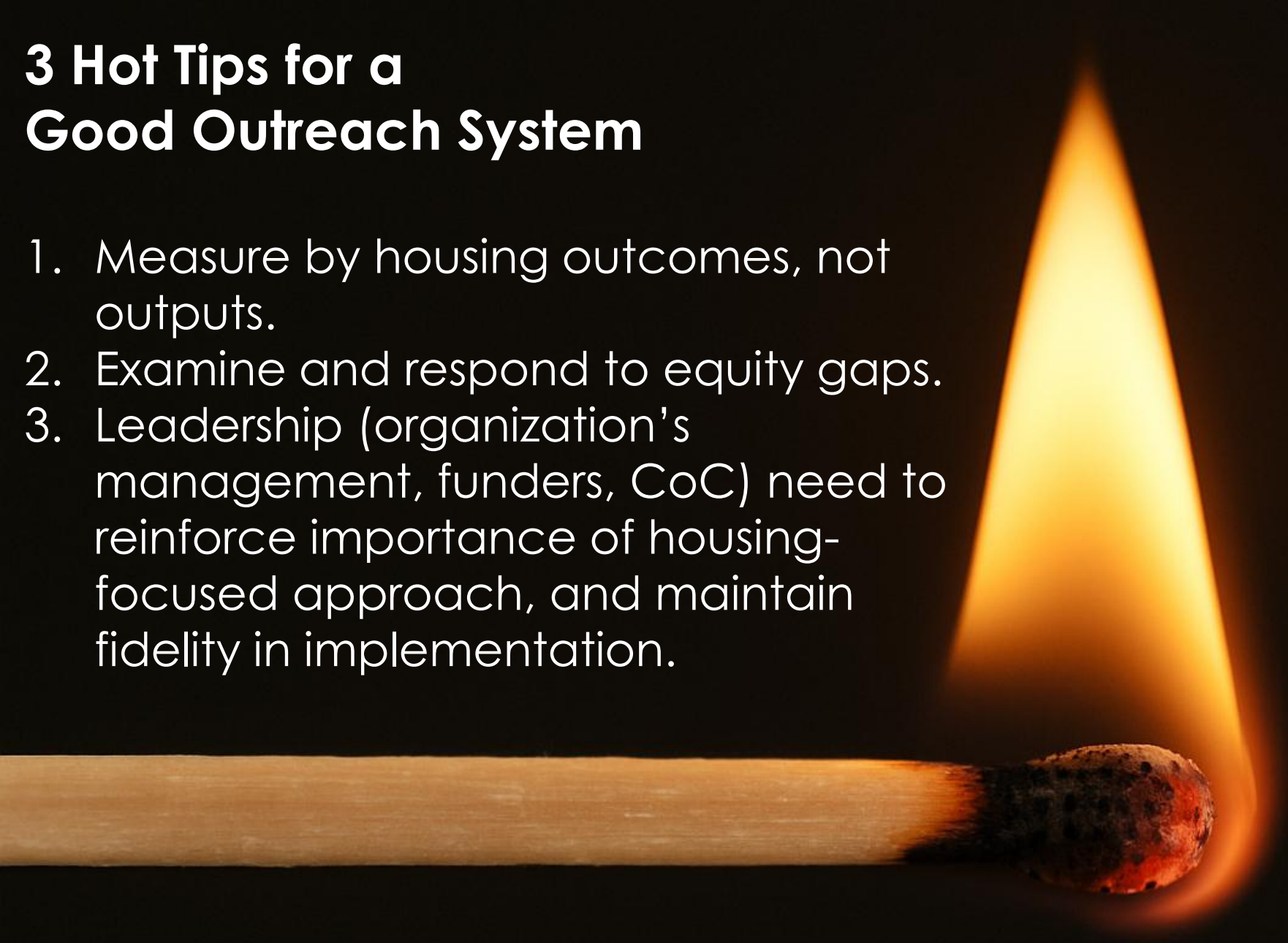
INTEGRATION WITH HOUSING ACCESS: COORDINATED ENTRY ISN'T OPTIONAL.

SKILLED, SUPPORTED TEAMS: BLEND OF LIVED EXPERIENCE, CLINICAL KNOWLEDGE, HOUSING EXPERTISE.

CLEAR PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS: HOUSING PLACEMENTS > ENGAGEMENT COUNTS.

3 Hot Tips for a Good Outreach System

1. Measure by housing outcomes, not outputs.
2. Examine and respond to equity gaps.
3. Leadership (organization's management, funders, CoC) need to reinforce importance of housing-focused approach, and maintain fidelity in implementation.





**#SHIFT
HAPPENS**

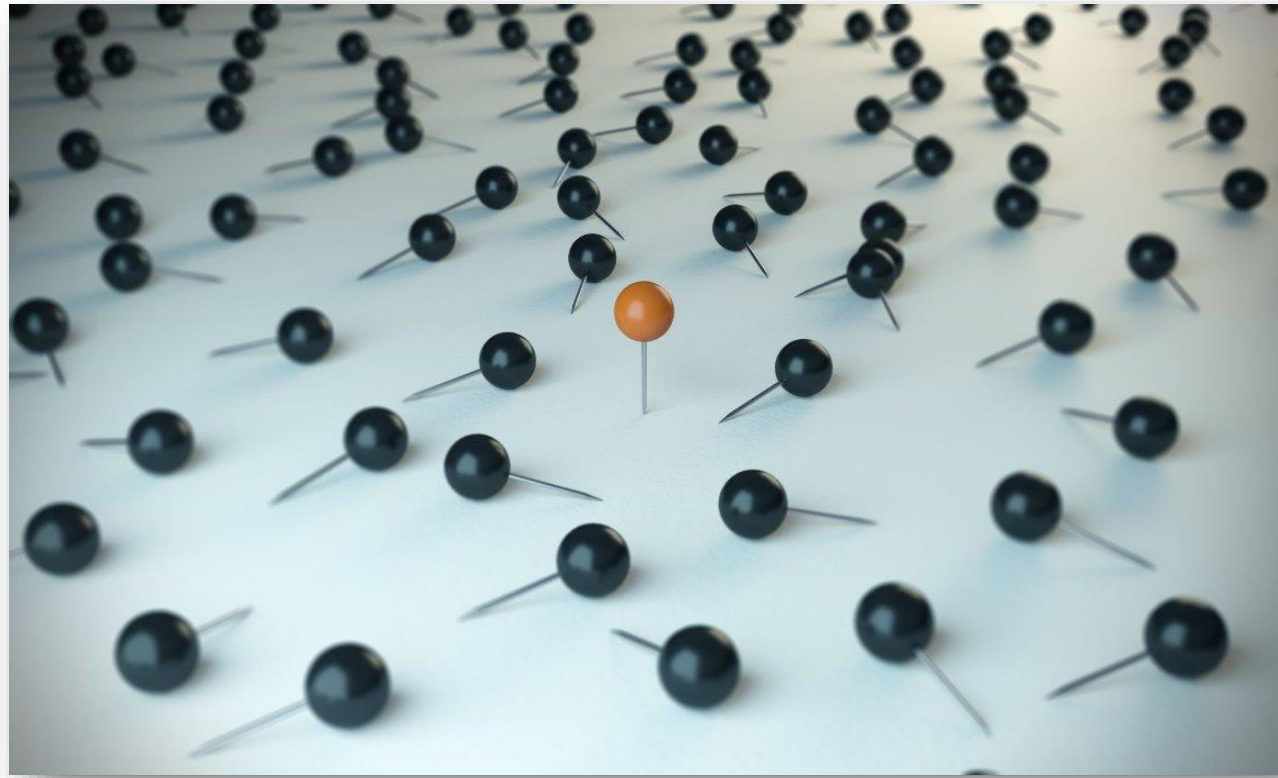
Making the Provider Level Shift



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Making the Systemic Shift



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**USING DATA AND IMPACT
ANALYSIS TO INFORM
DECISION-MAKING**



**STRATEGIC
COLLABORATION
AND PARTNERSHIPS**



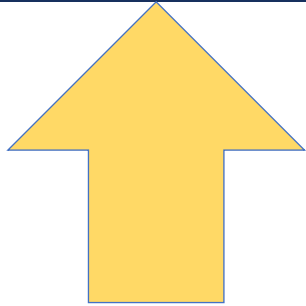
**PERSON-CENTERED
ENGAGEMENT**



**PROMOTION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH
AND SAFETY**



**HOUSING-FOCUSED
APPROACH ANCHORED
IN HOUSING FIRST**



Sustaining Impact Through Data

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Data...

What is Data?

Information for use at a program and system level to understand who is experiencing homelessness, what the needs are, what is currently in place, and to monitor performance

How to use the data you have

- Data Quality process and standardization
- Review regularly (define regularly!)
 - Individual
 - Program
 - System
- Hennepin County Streets to Housing

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Technology

- Staff should have tablets/wifi in the field to collect data in real time
- Does your HMIS work the way you want it to? Pressure your vendor for a high functioning tool.
 - Street outreach workflow
 - By Name List
 - Who has a CES Assessment, who is CH, who is a Veteran, who has/needs case management, who has a housing referral, who is also utilizing shelter...etc.
 - Who is NOT on the BNL and creating a pathway for engagement



Performance Measures – Staying Housing Focused

- Using data in program and system coordination – service coordination – use BNL
- Exit households out of street outreach if they move to any other system component with clearly outlined expectations for attempted engagement prior to exit
- Contact/update CLS within 90 days or exit for no contact – can reopen if reconnect but keeps data UTD
- Outcomes not Outputs
 - Total number served – look for and reduce duplication, only have unsheltered folks
 - Number of people engaged – those with 'Date of Engagement' (how is this defined?)
 - Number/% of those exiting unsheltered homelessness into a safe alternative to sleeping outside (treatment, shelter, TH, etc.)
 - Number/% of those exiting into a permanent housing destination
 - How long from first engagement to positive exit (Length of Time)
 - Returns to Homelessness
 - Decreases in subpops responding to disparities – Native, CH, youth, Veterans, etc.
 - % of CES vs. other

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How to use the data you have

- Data Quality process and standardization
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 - Individual
 - Program
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Hennepin County Streets to Housing

Streets to Housing

- Launched August 2022
- Lessons learned from 2021
- Highly specialized and housing focused team
 - Program Manager
 - Supervisor
 - 6 System Navigators
 - 1 OUD specialist





Best Practices in Action

- Housing Focused
- Trauma Informed
- Assertively Engaging
- Engagements are site and street based, are intentional, transparent, and in authentic partnership with people with lived experience
- Community partnerships
- Using real time data



Hennepin County Streets to Housing Program: Current Connections

Report refreshed
on: 6/23/2025



368 Residents currently connected with Streets to Housing

Residents currently connected with Streets to Housing



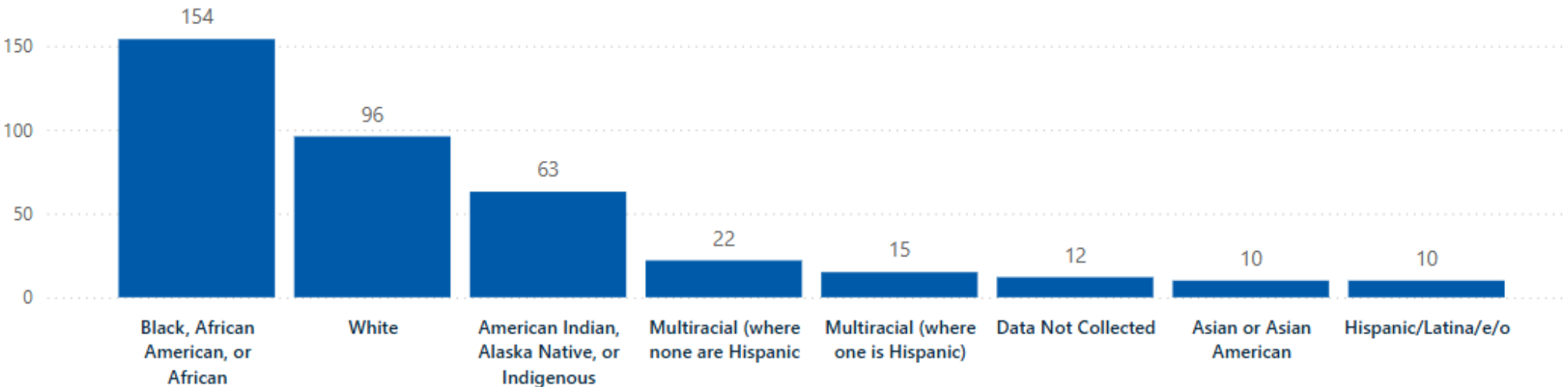
74 Residents known to have experienced unsheltered homelessness in the past 30 days

34 (9.2 %) Current Streets to Housing participants meet the definition of chronically homeless

17 (5 %) Current program participants are youth (≤24 years old)

<10 Current program participants are veterans

Primary race, residents currently connected with Streets to Housing





450 (48.7 %) Streets to Housing participants attained permanent housing (of those with a known exit destination) ⓘ

Streets to Housing exit destinations (known destinations only) ⓘ



Definitions

Institutional: Jail, prison, juvenile detention facility, long-term care facility or nursing home

Permanent: Permanent housing or rental, including public housing, permanently staying with family

Shelter: Emergency shelter including hotel/motel paid for with voucher, host home shelter, transitional housing

Temporary housing: Hotel/motel paid for without voucher, temporarily staying with family or friends

Treatment facility: Substance abuse treatment facility or detox center

Unsheltered: Place not meant for habitation

2220 Residents have exited Streets to Housing since it began in August 2022

924 have a known exit destination ⓘ
Hennepin County

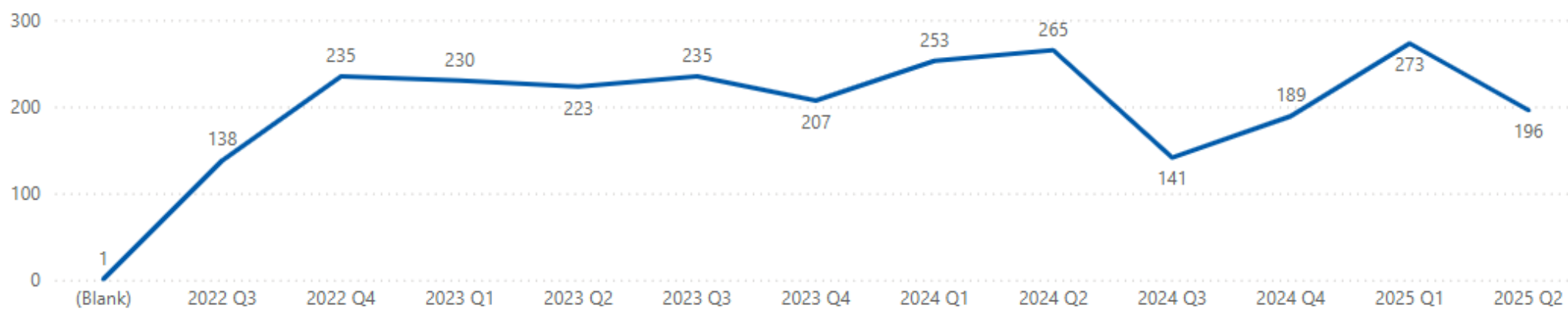
290 (31.4 %) Exited to shelter, of residents with a known exit destination

58 Program participants used a shelter in the past 7 days. Staying in shelter while participating in Streets to Housing indicates crossover between housing programs

Streets to Housing entries ⓘ

61
Average # residents
entering Streets to
Housing per month

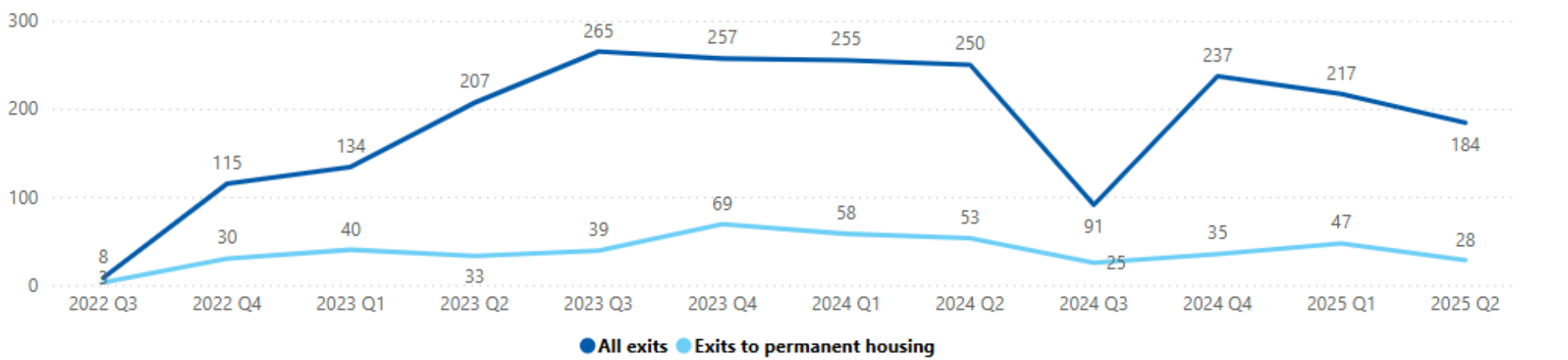
Residents entering Streets to Housing by quarter



Streets to Housing exits

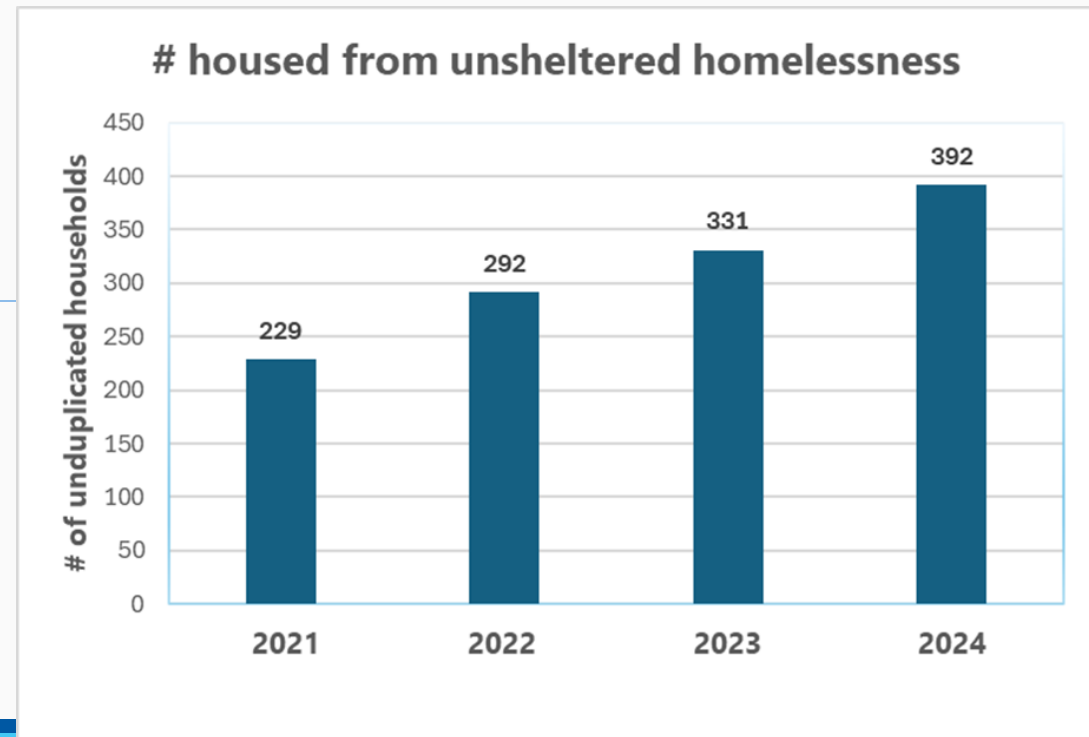
63
Average # residents
exiting Streets to
Housing per month

Residents exiting Streets to Housing by quarter



System Data

- 25% reduction in unsheltered homelessness since 2020
 - Used HMIS for PIT count
- Beyond the PIT we can see from day to day who is unsheltered, who has a referral, who needs a CM, who is CH or a Vet so eligible for population specific resources, etc.
 - Enhanced service coordination
 - Housing focused
- % returns to homelessness xxx





USING DATA AND IMPACT
ANALYSIS TO INFORM
DECISION-MAKING



STRATEGIC
COLLABORATION
AND PARTNERSHIPS



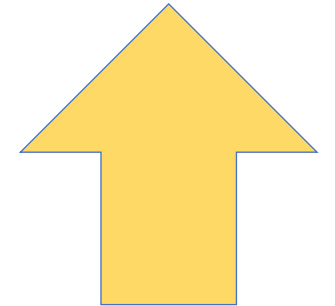
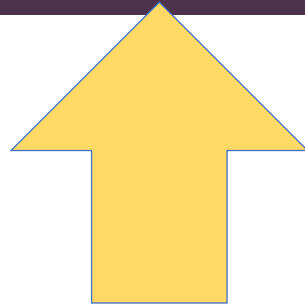
PERSON-CENTERED
ENGAGEMENT



PROMOTION OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH
AND SAFETY



HOUSING-FOCUSED
APPROACH ANCHORED
IN HOUSING FIRST



Advancing coordinated outreach through intentional, cross-sector partnerships and strategic collaboration to ensure effective pathways to housing and holistic care

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**USING DATA AND IMPACT
ANALYSIS TO INFORM
DECISION-MAKING**



**STRATEGIC
COLLABORATION
AND PARTNERSHIPS**



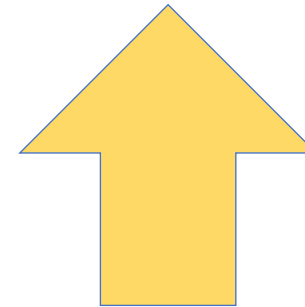
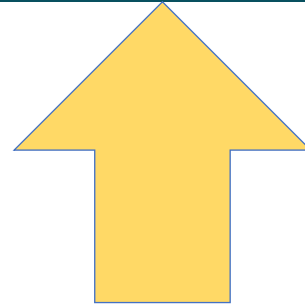
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What makes a good outreach worker?

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A close-up portrait of a middle-aged man with a grey beard and a dark beanie, smiling warmly. He is wearing a dark jacket. The background is a blurred city skyline at sunset, with the CN Tower visible on the right. The lighting is warm and golden.

What makes for a good street outreach worker?

The core role of street outreach?

Reduce unsheltered homelessness by connecting people to permanent housing.

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ORG CODE



Key functions of housing-focused street outreach:

- Engagement and trust-building
- Documentation
- Housing navigation
- Coordinated Entry support
- Advocacy across systems

5 Essential Qualities of an Effective Street Outreach Worker

1. Housing-Focused Mindset

- Every conversation should move someone closer to housing.
- Outreach is not about indefinite relationship-building. It's purposeful engagement.

2. Consistency and Follow-Through

- Trust is built when outreach workers do what they say, show up regularly, and follow up on leads.

3. Cultural Competency & Equity Orientation

- Understanding the impact of racism, ableism, transphobia, etc.
- Using disaggregated data to ensure outreach is reaching the most marginalized.

4. Trauma-Informed and Person-Centered Approach

- Empathy without rescuing. Boundaries without being clinical. Choice and voice respected in each step.

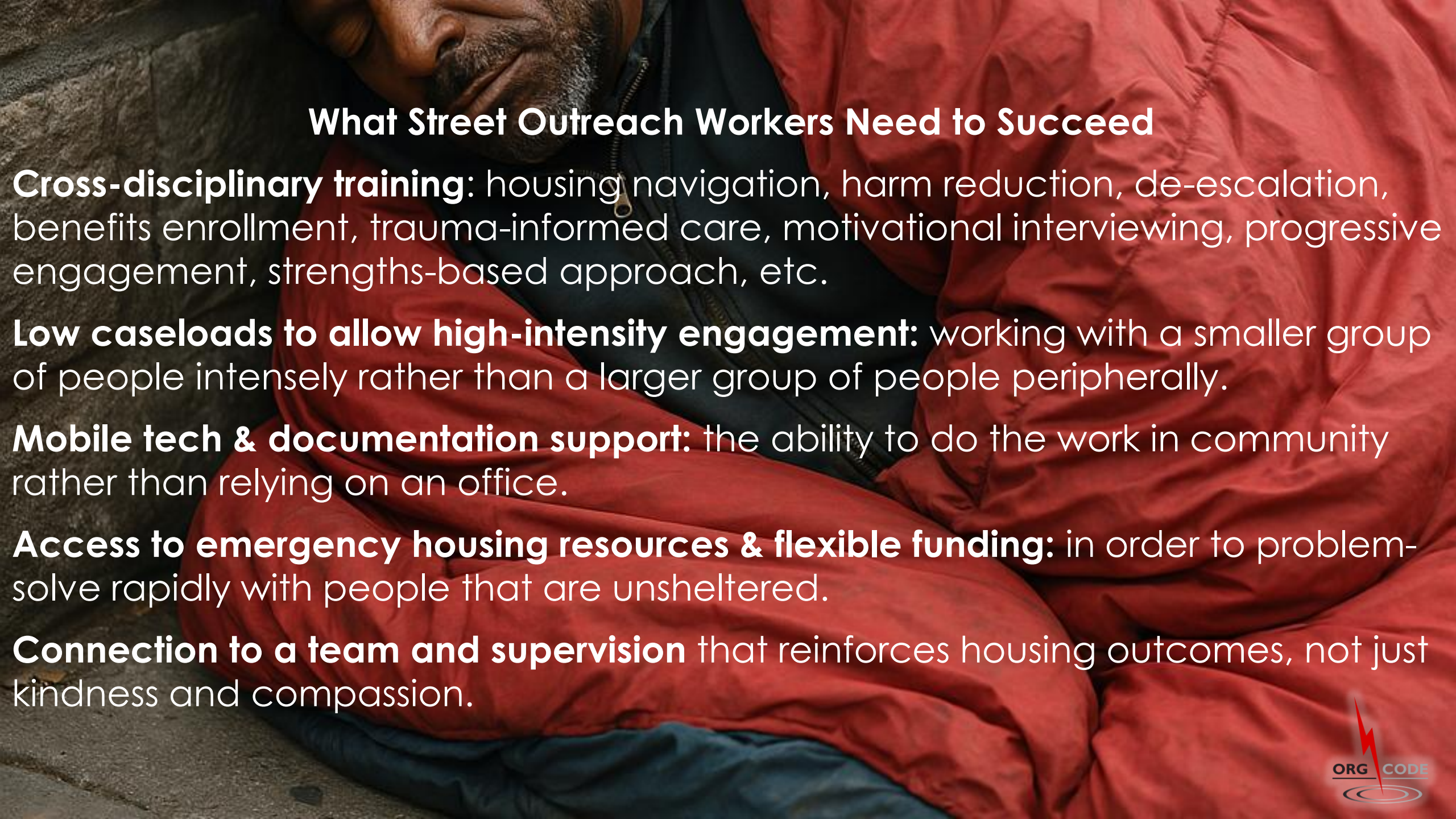
5. Accountability to the System and the Person

- Not just engagement numbers: how many people are housed?
- Uses data tools, contributes to by-name lists, and supports coordinated entry.

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ORG CODE



A photograph of a person with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark jacket, sleeping on a sidewalk. They are covered by a large, crumpled red blanket. The background is a rough, grey concrete wall.

What Street Outreach Workers Need to Succeed

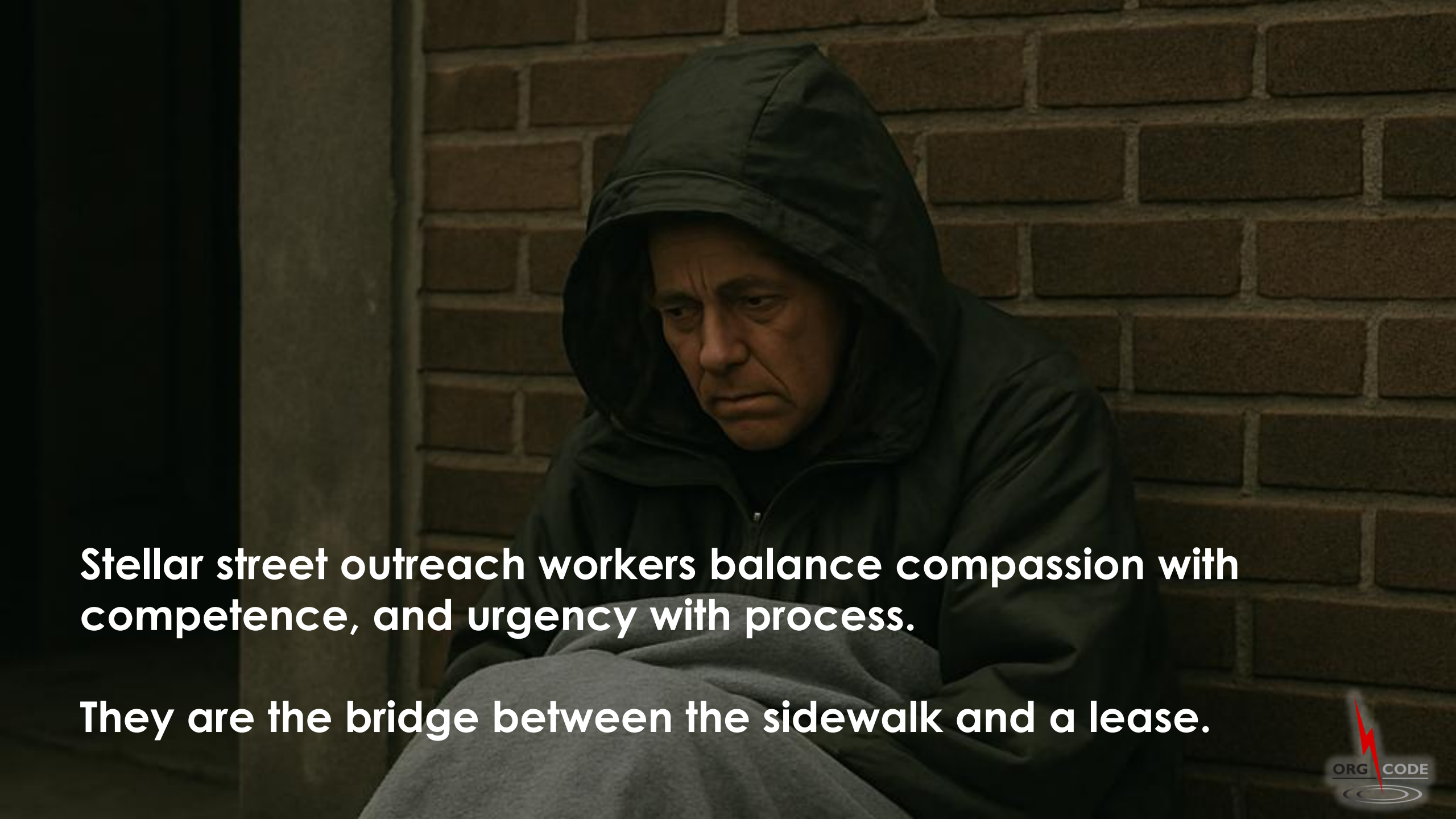
Cross-disciplinary training: housing navigation, harm reduction, de-escalation, benefits enrollment, trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, progressive engagement, strengths-based approach, etc.

Low caseloads to allow high-intensity engagement: working with a smaller group of people intensely rather than a larger group of people peripherally.

Mobile tech & documentation support: the ability to do the work in community rather than relying on an office.

Access to emergency housing resources & flexible funding: in order to problem-solve rapidly with people that are unsheltered.

Connection to a team and supervision that reinforces housing outcomes, not just kindness and compassion.



Stellar street outreach workers balance compassion with competence, and urgency with process.

They are the bridge between the sidewalk and a lease.



A man with dark hair, wearing a blue t-shirt, is shown in profile, leaning his head against a red brick wall. His eyes are closed, and his expression is one of distress or exhaustion. His right hand is pressed against the wall near his chest.

What street outreach is NOT:

- Volunteers with granola bars
- Armchair therapists
- Friends
- Cops without badges
- Crisis managers without a housing path
- Solely distribution of goods
- Having good trust and rapport, but no actions directly related to resolving their homelessness

A photograph of two men, one Black and one white, both with grey beards and wearing knit beanie hats and heavy jackets. They are standing outdoors in a park-like setting with trees and a tent in the background. The man on the left is gesturing with his hand while speaking to the man on the right.

Engagement Exercise: Making the Connection

IN ROOM OUTREACH

On the next page I am going to put up 12 statements.

Your job is to find people in this room that meet those statements.

You can only use a person once for a statement.

When you are done, let me know and that person will be declared the winner.

SYSTEM
NAVIGATOR



1. Find 3 people with 3 or more tattoos.
2. Find 1 person that knows all the words to a Taylor Swift song – and make them prove it.
3. Find 1 person who can do the Running Man or Worm dance moves – and make them prove it.
4. Find 3 people that have lived in another state at some point.
5. Find 1 person where this is their first time in DC.
6. Find 1 person that has been on a horse in the last two years.
7. Find 2 people that have been on a motorcycle in the last year.
8. Find 1 person who claims they have seen every episode of Friends, Brooklyn 99, Grey's Anatomy, or Fresh Prince.
9. Find 2 people that have eaten tofu in the last 30 days.
10. Find 2 people that are military veterans.
11. Find 2 people that have been to Canada.
12. Find 1 person with a good “dad joke” and make them tell it to you.



5 P's OF ENGAGEMENT

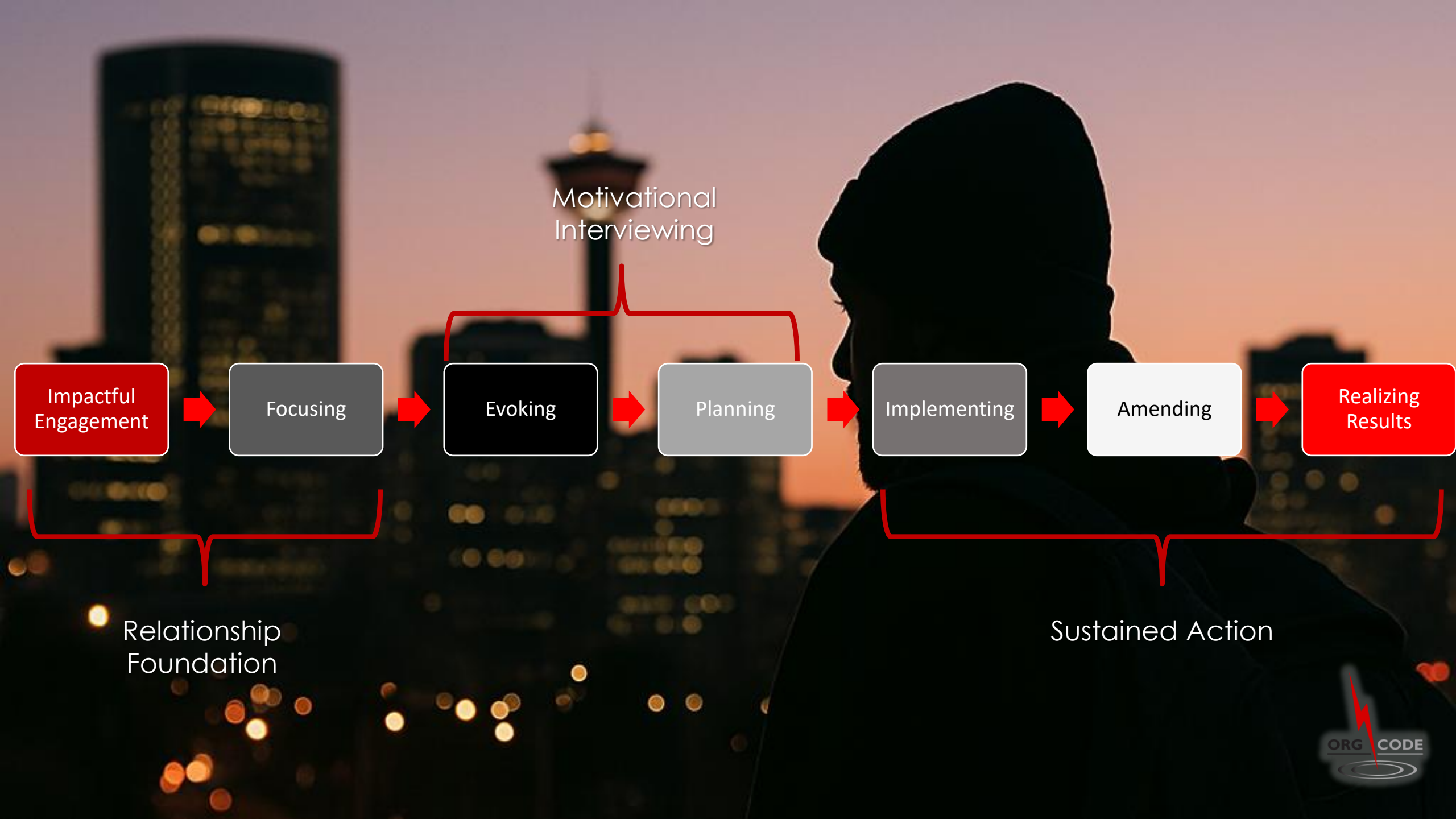
Prepared

Present

Proximate

Professional

Patient



Motivational
Interviewing

Impactful
Engagement

Focusing

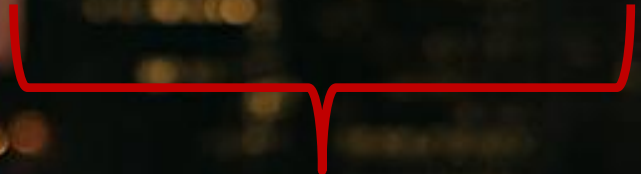
Evoking

Planning

Implementing

Amending

Realizing
Results

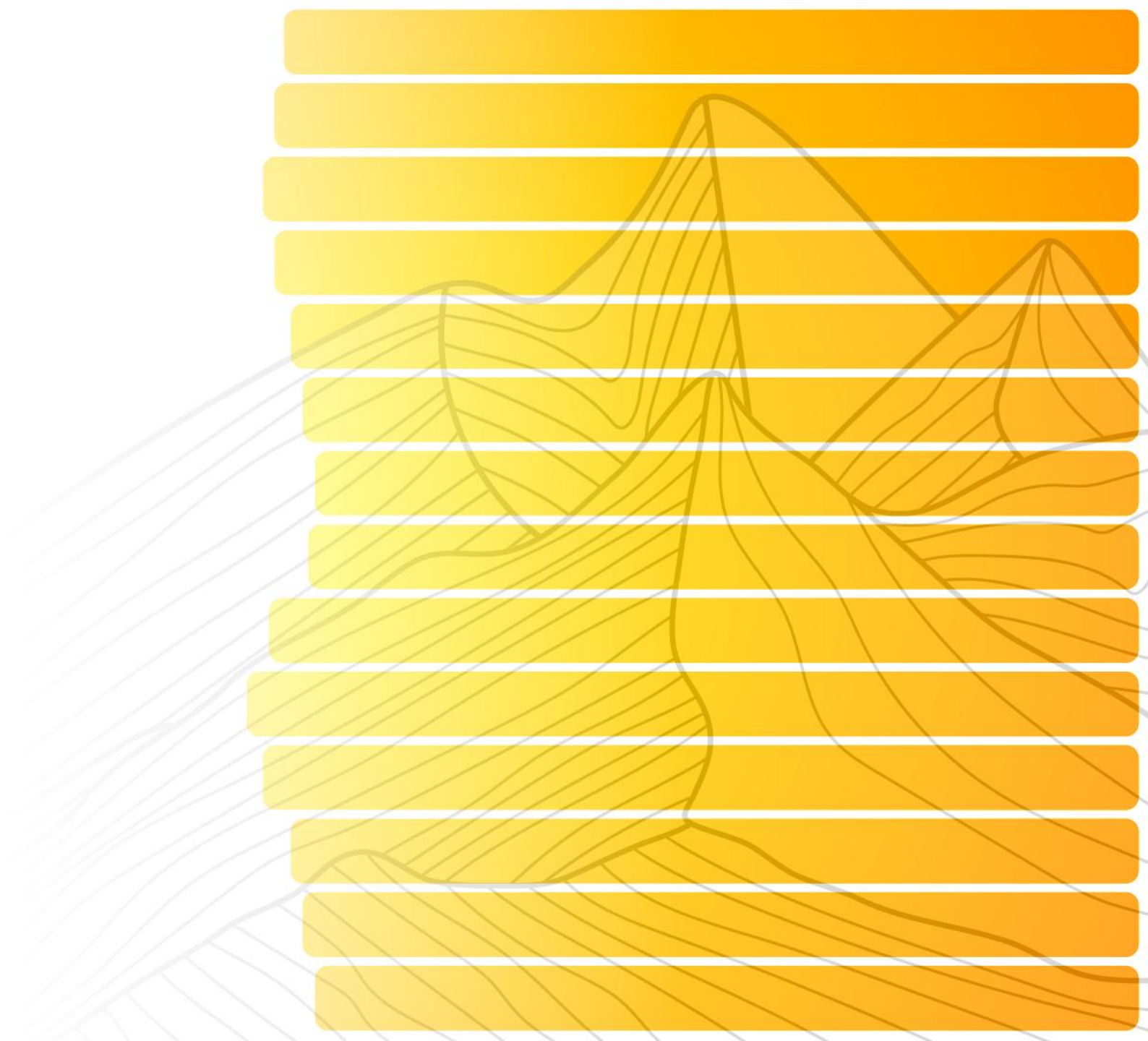


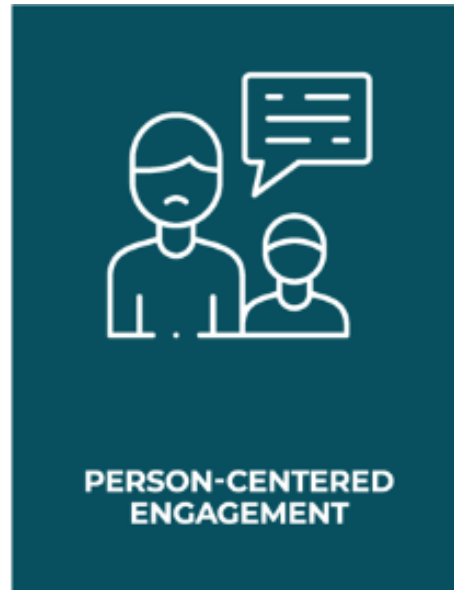
Relationship
Foundation

Sustained Action



Measuring and Monitoring





Questions

- How does your community or programs use street outreach data to improve services?
- How important is collaborate with other providers and ensure outreach coordination?
- How do we ensure honesty, transparency, and participant choice in engagement?
- What are the resources or guidance staff are equipped with to ensure safety?
- How do you ensure a housing focus through all efforts or approaches?

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Q&A



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Thank You
