

# Healthcare in Our Community: Bridging the Gap in Respite Care for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

## Why does Cincinnati need a city-owned respite center?

Unhoused individuals that have been discharged from the hospital are at a critical point in their care. Follow-up appointments and continuity of care can be extremely challenging for those released back to the streets or shelters that are simply not staffed to provide appropriate medical care.

Medical respite centers significantly reduce hospital readmissions and inpatient days while improving housing outcomes. Unfortunately, the only respite center serving unhoused individuals in Cincinnati is the “Center of Respite Care”, a center with **only 20 beds** and **strict requirements on physical capabilities**.

A variety of factors, including rising rent prices (Cincinnati saw a 7.4% increase, the most of all Metro areas nation-wide) and stagnant wages has lead to an increase in unhoused individuals. Cincinnati Public Schools reported 4,300 homeless students in 2024; the total number of individuals experiencing homeless is much higher. Therefore, individuals that desperately need this service will only continue to grow.

Objective	Our Idea
Due to a lack of respite care available to those experiencing homelessness and an increase in the number of unhoused individuals, we are petitioning the City of Cincinnati to alter existing plans of a city-owned homeless shelter to include the development of a respite center. This is in the pursuit of improving healthcare outcomes of a marginalized population.	The City of Cincinnati has a \$5.5 million budget proposal for purchase of a building to be renovated into a day-time shelter serving 200 individuals.
	By collaborating with an organization experienced in providing healthcare to homeless individuals or adapting a business model with this goal in mind, our hope is that a portion of the city budget will be used for a post-hospitalization respite center.
	Existing Medicaid HCBS 1915(c) waivers can augment unmet funds and increase sustainable funding, facilitating an enduring and equally beneficial partnership between the city and the organization.

**By prioritizing access to healthcare and respite care within the new day-center, Cincinnati can take a bold step toward addressing the systemic inequities faced by our unhoused neighbors and build a model of compassionate, cost-effective, and community-rooted care.**

