

Reentry Housing in Montgomery County

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Why Housing Matters for Reentry

1 in 3 adults has a criminal record and 95% will return home

- **Cost Savings**

- Secure housing is key component of preventing the jail-homelessness cycle

- **Public Safety**

- Studies indicate lower likelihood of recidivism for those with secure housing

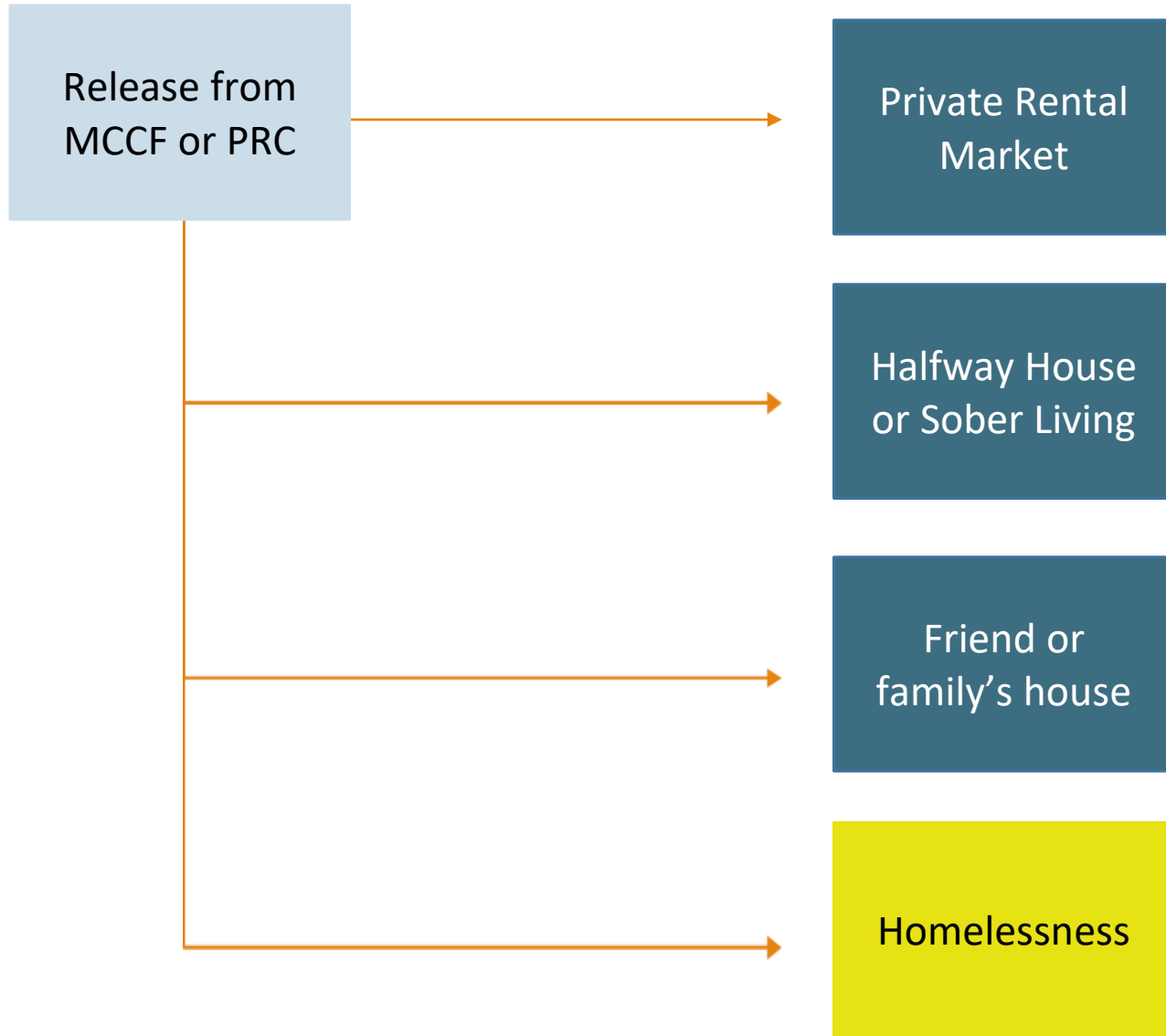
- **Housing For All**

- In alignment with County's commitment to ensure that housing is a basic human right (Thrive 2050)

Homelessness and Justice-Involvement

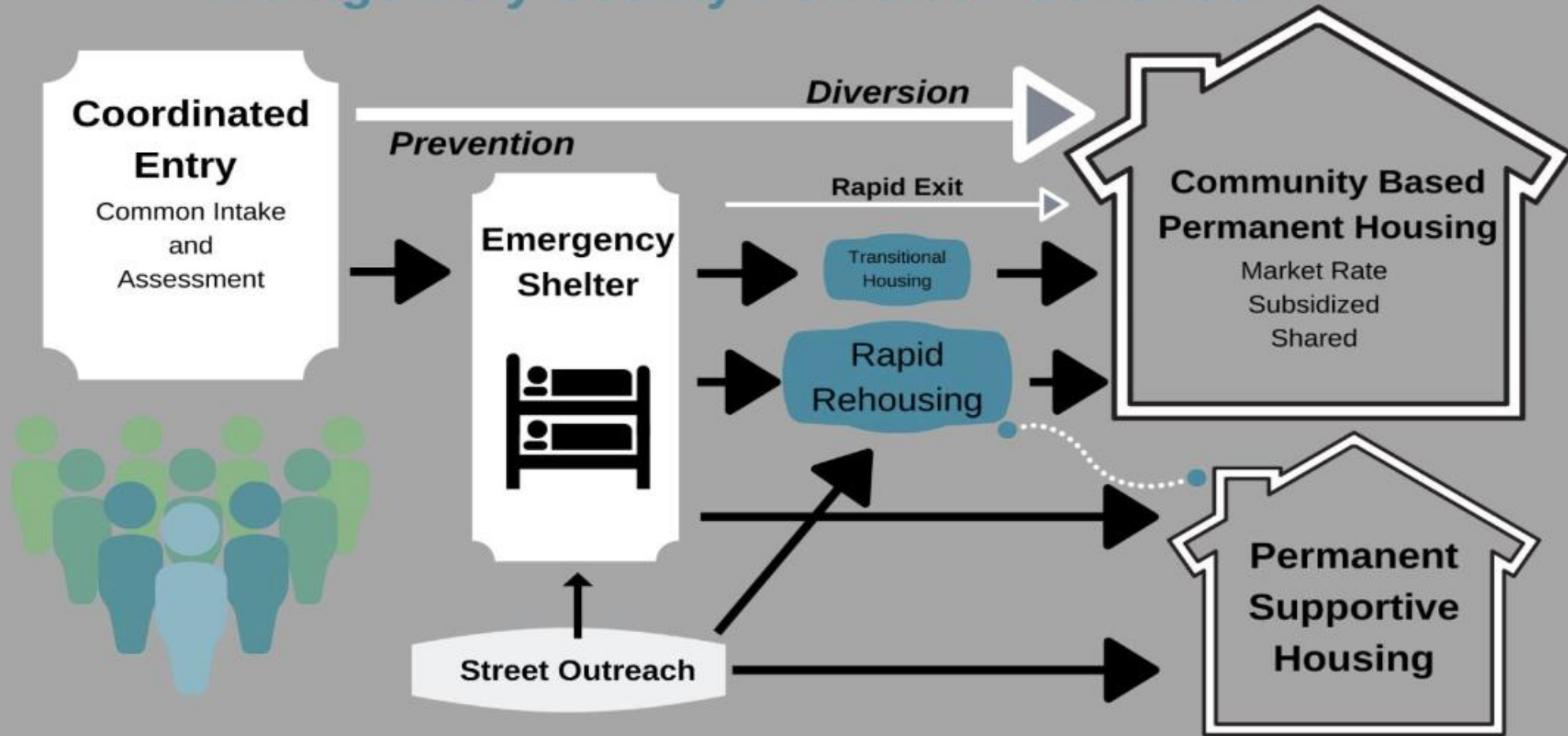
Key Finding: Lack of data collection by HHS, DOCR, and other agencies on the housing status of returning residents in the County

- **National:** Returning citizens are 10x more likely to be homeless than the general public
- **Racial Disparities:** Black residents are 18% of the county population and 61% of the shelter population (FY23)
- **DC:** 57% of the homeless population was previously incarcerated (2019)



Housing Pathways for Returning Residents

Montgomery County Homeless Continuum



Current Limitations

The lack of affordable housing impacts everyone in the County, but returning residents are impacted by these additional challenges:



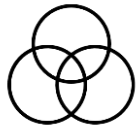
Difficulty entering the private market due to weak enforcement of Housing Justice Act



No targeted housing programs or vouchers for the reentry population



Sober living and halfway houses are unnecessarily restrictive for some populations leaving incarceration



Agencies and organizations that support reentering residents are siloed with little to no coordination across systems

Promising Models for Reentry Housing

Transitional Housing

Comprehensive Reentry Project (CORP) in Montgomery County

- 2-year transitional housing program for returning residents with co-occurring disorders
- Provided intensive case management, housing location services, and connection to health care
- Partnership with MCCH and DHHS from 2016 to 2018, funded under federal Department of Justice grant

Permanent Supportive Housing

Justice Involved Supportive Housing (JISH) in NYC

- PSH for individuals who are homeless with behavioral health needs and have history of cycling through CJ system
- Shown to save \$16,000 per individual in annual jail, shelter, and emergency room costs
- Partnership with Mayor's Office and nonprofit housing providers

Model for Reentry Collaborative

Reentry Council of the City and County of San Francisco

- Coordinates local efforts to support local justice-involved and formerly incarcerated people through information sharing, planning, and engagement among private and public stakeholders
- Council has dedicated staff members and has representatives from DOCR, HHS, Dept. of Homelessness & Supportive Housing, law enforcement, nonprofits, and formerly incarcerated persons
- Direct Action Subcommittee focuses on services that the reentry population needs, including housing



Recommendation #1: Establish a formal reentry collaborative to increase communication and coordination across the various sectors and key players involved in reentry

- This can be done through a joint subcommittee between the County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission and the Interagency Commission on Homelessness or establishing a separate Reentry Council to address the needs of returning residents in Montgomery County

Recommendation #2: Establish data collection processes for the justice-involved population and MOUs to enable data sharing

- Improved collection and sharing of data is necessary for:
 - Better understanding of the problems DOCR, HHS, and other agencies face when interacting with the justice-involved population
 - Improved collaboration among these agencies

Recommendation #3: Re-institute upstream coordinated entry for adults in custody at MCCF



- Renewed partnership between MCCH and DOCR and the hiring of a Homelessness Diversion Outreach Specialist
- DOCR and MCCH train and allow case managers within MCCF and the PRC to run intake assessment into the Coordinated Entry System (CES)
 - Hire additional housing navigators to support housing placement

Recommendation #4: Expand housing assistance for reentering residents at multiple levels

- Individuals with lower support needs would benefit from investments in voucher set-asides and rental assistance through SHARP
- Individuals with higher support needs would benefit from supportive housing options- both transitional such as CORP and permanent supportive housing such as JISH

Thank you!

