

Summary of the Family Shelter Crisis

Waiting list for family shelter climbs:

- In the summer of 2007, there were **75 homeless families** on the wait list for shelter.
- As a result of the recession, there were **150 families seeking shelter** in the summer of 2008.
- On November 22, 2011, **267 families** were on the waiting list for shelter, an all-time high.

Families remain in unstable or unsafe conditions:

- Families are forced to couch surf, use overnight emergency shelters, or sleep in their cars, parks, etc... while waiting seven months or more for shelter.
- To keep any kind of roof over their children's head, a parent might stay with an abuser, live in substandard and unsafe conditions or send their children to live with a relative while they remain on the street.

More families seeking shelter have complex needs:

- Families with severe medical or mental health conditions or women in the last four weeks of pregnancy are given priority on the shelter waiting list. Families who have been on the waiting list for more than five months are also prioritized.
- On November 22, 2011, **53 families** were on the priority waiting list.
- **Prioritized families can expect to wait three months** or more for shelter placement, and expectant mothers generally wait until months past the birth of their babies to obtain a room in a shelter.
- A family **not** on the priority waiting list **can expect to wait six to seven months** for a four to six month shelter placement

No corresponding increase in resources:

- Compass Connecting Point, unlike residential programs, does not have a program capacity. The program serves any family who is homeless and waiting for shelter.
- Each case manager is responsible for an average **55 families** and the number of calls to the crisis hotline have tripled.
- Client assistance including bus tokens, diapers and non-perishable food items has been limited or in some cases discontinued.
- There are **59 shelter rooms available** in three city-funded family shelters including Compass Family Shelter.
- There are 13 fewer shelter rooms since 2008.