

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND YOUTH IN CARE ANNUAL REPORT



Illinois Board of Higher Education
May 2025

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This report contains information on students experiencing homelessness and youth in care as required of the Illinois Board of Education (IBHE) under the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act (110 ILCS 131/10). This is the second annual report which covers FY 2024 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024). The report includes information on the implementation of the law by IBHE as well as public and private institutions of higher education, except for community colleges. Under the law, the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is charged with overseeing this law at the community colleges.

Key Findings

- About 77% of institutions (98 institutions) completed the required annual HOUSE Liaison reporting template for this period, up from 68% in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.¹
- 46 institutions reported a total of 1,471 homeless students enrolled in their institutions in FY 2024. This is a 31% increase in institutions reporting homeless students and a 231% increase in the number of homeless students reported in FY 2023.
- 25 institutions reported a total of 390 youth in care² enrolled in FY 2024. This is a nearly 14% increase in institutions reporting youth in care on their campus and a 43% increase in the amount of students reported in FY 2023.
- Over half of institutions still record having zero students experiencing homelessness or youth in care enrolled.
- In FY 2024, 115 institutions out of 128 required to report to IBHE designated a HOUSE Liaison, but only 86 of those institutions' HOUSE Liaisons returned their required annual training certification to IBHE.
- During the second year of implementation of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, many institutions are still struggling to meet all the requirements for HOUSE liaisons outlined in statute, particularly those related to data and tracking.

There is more work to be done to provide for students experiencing homelessness and youth in care. IBHE is committed to facilitating the work taking place at the institutional level by:

- Encouraging institutions to prioritize their homeless student and youth in care identification efforts, including by collaborating across campus departments.
- Continuing to co-host a state-wide HOUSE Liaison Summit with the Illinois Community College Board and including HOUSE Liaisons in appropriate Communities of Practice meetings to share ideas and best practices among HOUSE Liaisons across Illinois.
- Increasing awareness of the law and its requirements by communicating with HOUSE Liaisons, the State Coordinator for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education, and ICCB as well as maintaining a website on resources for HOUSE Liaisons.

¹ Throughout this report, we use FY 2023 to mean August 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, which is the time period covered by the first annual report. The first annual report does not cover an entire fiscal year because the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act did not take effect until August 1, 2022.

² In this report, "youth in care" refers to any person that has been under the care and legal custody of the Department of Children and Family Services. This includes youth who have aged out of care as well as youth formerly under care that have been adopted or placed in a private or subsidized guardianship. Also referred to as "students in care"

In 2021, the Illinois General Assembly passed P.A. 102-0083 (110 ILCS 131/), the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, to address rising homelessness among college-age students and youth in care. The law required each institution of higher education to designate a Housing and Opportunities that are Useful for Students' Excellence (HOUSE) Liaison beginning August 1, 2022.

The main goal of the HOUSE Liaison program is to have a dedicated person on campus to address students' housing and other related needs. Under the law, HOUSE liaisons have the following duties:

1. To understand provisions pertaining to the financial aid eligibility of homeless students, including eligibility as an independent student under the federal Higher Education Act of 1965.
2. To identify services and resources that are available to and appropriate for a homeless student.
3. To assist a homeless student or student in care in applying for and receiving federal and State financial aid and available services.
4. To track and monitor the graduation rate and retention rate of homeless students and students in care enrolled at the institution.
5. To report annually to the Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board, as appropriate, the number of homeless students and students in care enrolled at the institution. The report must include the number of students who received assistance or services through the liaison and the type of service or assistance received by the student. If the information is available, the report may describe the outcome for the student as a result of the services or assistance he or she received through the liaison.
6. To act as an intermediary between a homeless student or student in care and the office of financial aid, student support services, and campus housing services.
7. To connect a homeless student or student in care to a local continuum of care program.
8. To publish on the institution's website information about the services and resources available through the institution's liaison, as well as contact information for local, State, and federal services.
9. To develop a plan to provide access to on-campus housing or to suitable off-campus housing between academic breaks to homeless students or students in care enrolled at the institution.
10. To train the institution's employees to identify students experiencing homelessness and to refer those students to the liaison.³

In addition to HOUSE Liaison's duties, the law states that institutions providing on-campus housing must grant students experiencing homelessness and youth in care priority access to on-campus housing, including housing that remains open during academic breaks. Any fees for on-campus housing during academic breaks for such students must be waived. Finally, the law requires institutions of higher education to allow part-time students who are experiencing homelessness or are youth in care access to on-campus housing, provide information about the availability of housing, and include homelessness services and assistance offered to students in admissions and financial aid packets and on the institution's website.

As noted above, HOUSE Liaisons are required to annually report to IBHE or ICCB. If, after three academic years, the data submitted indicates that at least 2% of the institution's student body experienced homelessness or have been youth in care, then the institution must create a dedicated position for the HOUSE Liaison. This report serves as the record of the second annual report to IBHE. We will discuss the requirements of the annual report and our findings beginning on page eight.

³ 110 ILCS 131/10.

Statutory Requirements

Under the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, IBHE is required to:

1. Provide access to a training program developed by a homeless advocacy organization.
2. Require a liaison to receive training on an annual basis.
3. Collaborate with the State Coordinator for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education and the contact liaisons designated under Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United States Code to facilitate the efficient transition of homeless students from secondary to postsecondary education and provide homeless students and students in care information about support services, including financial aid, on-campus and off-campus housing, food and meal plan programs, and counseling services, and other resources and any other relevant information to assist these students.
4. Issue annual reports about students experiencing homelessness and students in care enrolled at academic institutions.

IBHE Activities

HOUSE Liaison Contact List

Since P.A. 102-0083 became law, IBHE has worked to meet its statutorily mandated duties and to assist HOUSE Liaisons and institutions in addressing the root causes of homelessness among college-aged youth. IBHE maintains a list of HOUSE Liaisons on its website, which can be found at [IBHE HOUSE Liaisons](#). This list is publicly available and is shared with the State Coordinator for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education.

In FY 2024, the number of institutions required to report to IBHE decreased to 128 from 133. Several factors led to the decrease, including institution closure and determinations that out-of-state institutions were only offering dual credit courses in Illinois. Out of 128 institutions that report to IBHE, 115 (90%) have designated a HOUSE Liaison and provided contact information for them. See Appendix B for a list of institutions that have not designated a HOUSE Liaison. The HOUSE Liaison list is updated frequently and institutions are encouraged to submit a [form](#) on IBHE's website when a new HOUSE Liaison is designated.

HOUSE Liaison Training

IBHE and ICCB jointly hosted HOUSE Liaison training on November 8, 2023. The HOUSE Liaison training was expanded from 2 hours in 2022 to 3 ½ hours in 2023. The expanded training included sessions on the following topics:

- The Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.
- The specialized needs of foster by the Department of Children and Family Services and Foster Progress (a nonprofit organization working to help foster youth attain college degrees).
- Financial aid for homeless students and youth in care by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission
- Best practices for homeless higher education liaisons from across the United States by SchoolHouse Connection (a national nonprofit working to overcome student homelessness).

Over 150 individuals attended the live training. A recording of the training was subsequently posted on IBHE's website ([IBHE HOUSE Liaisons](#)) for those who could not attend. We utilized the questions from this training event to create a Training [FAQ document](#) which also can be found on our website. Feedback from our institutions indicated that this training was successful and we intend to utilize it again for FY 2025 with an updated section on financial aid that explains the recent changes to FAFSA.

HOUSE Liaison Summit

In May 2024, IBHE co-hosted with ICCB and Illinois State University's Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSPS) the first state-wide HOUSE Liaison Summit in Bloomington, Illinois. Through collaborating with ICCB and ICSPS, we were able to expand the Summit from a half-day to a full day. The Summit had 3 plenary session and 15 breakout sessions, many of which focused on the needs of historically underrepresented groups, such as undocumented students, parenting, and LGBTQIA+ students. The 2024 HOUSE Liaison Summit was attended by over 100 HOUSE Liaison from across the state.

Though expanded, the goal of the HOUSE Liaison Summit remained the same: to supplement the annual training by providing HOUSE Liaisons an opportunity to engage with each other, learn best practices, and determine what could best be brought back to their individual campuses. The feedback from the Summit was overwhelmingly positive and indicated we met this goal, with 91% of those that responded to a post conference survey indicating that the Summit was engaging. One criticism of the Summit was that there were too many breakout sessions that HOUSE Liaison wanted to attend. For the 2025 Summit, IBHE and its partners will reduce the number of sessions and repeat several sessions to provide HOUSE Liaisons with multiple opportunities to attend critical sessions. We will report on the 2025 Summit in next year's annual report.

End Student Housing Insecurity (ESHI) Grants

In FY 2024, the IBHE received \$2 million in funding from the General Assembly directly rather than through the Department of Human Services' Office to Prevent and End Homelessness like in FY 2023. IBHE used the funding to support institutions by providing the End Student Housing Insecurity (ESHI) Grants. For FY 2024, IBHE expanded the amount institutions were eligible to receive to a maximum \$200,000 each (formerly up to \$50,000). Through a competitive selection process, IBHE awarded 10 ESHI grants that were used by the institutions to address the root causes of homelessness, build collaborations across campus units to end the siloing of student support services, and provide direct emergency aid to students facing housing and basic needs insecurity. We will discuss the ESHI grants in greater detail on page 21 of this report.

For FY 2024, IBHE revised the HOUSE Liaison Reporting template to more accurately capture HOUSE Liaison activities. This resulted in the survey expanding from 47 questions to up to 58 questions. The reporting template was available to be completed by institutions October 15, 2024 through November 15, 2024. Notification of the reporting template's availability was sent to every designated HOUSE Liaison via their provided email address. As in FY 2023, the reporting template asked about the HOUSE Liaison's performance of statutorily mandated duties as well as other services provided to students.

Of 128 institutions required to report to IBHE, 98 (76.5%) filled out the reporting template. This is an increase from FY 2023 when the response rate was 67.6%. Of these, all 12 public universities responded as well as 86 other institutions including nonprofits, for profits, and graduate-only institutions of higher education. We provide a list of all institutions that completed the survey in Appendix A below.

In last year's report, we noted that many institutions did not complete the entire reporting template. For FY 2024, every institution submitted a complete reporting template, likely due to the clarifications and adjustments IBHE made.

Key Findings

HOUSE Liaison Employment Characteristics

We asked the HOUSE Liaisons about their employment status and the scope of their duties. We found that in FY 2024, 94 HOUSE Liaisons were full-time employees at their institutions (up from 83 in FY 2023), while only 4 were part time. At least 93 HOUSE Liaisons reported having other job responsibilities in addition to their duties as HOUSE Liaison (up from 80 in FY 2023). Only five HOUSE Liaisons reported that their only duty was to be the HOUSE Liaison. Four institutions reported that the HOUSE Liaison had not completed the required annual HOUSE Liaison training provided by IBHE.

Homeless Student and Youth in Care Population at Illinois Colleges and Universities

The Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act requires HOUSE Liaisons to report to IBHE or ICCB the total number of homeless students and youth in care enrolled at their institution. If, after 3 academic years, the number of such students is above 2% of the total student population, the institution must have a dedicated person to perform the duties of a HOUSE Liaison.

In FY 2024, 1,471 homeless students were reported by 46 institutions of higher education that report to IBHE. This is an over 200% increase from FY 2023 which only had 443 reported homeless students. See Figure 1 below for a year-to-year comparison. The schools reporting the highest number of homeless students were Southern Illinois University Carbondale (610)⁴, University of Illinois Springfield (77), and DePaul University (70).

For youth in care, 25 institutions reported enrolling 390 students. This is an over 40% increase from FY 2023 when 273 youth in care were reported. See Figure 1 below for a year-to-year comparison. The schools reporting the most enrolled youth in care were Northeastern Illinois University (138), University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (45), and Western Illinois University (33).

⁴ IBHE asked Southern Illinois University to provide some context for their reported number of homeless students. They provided us with the following information: Our total number of Homeless students we estimate is 610 students, based on the student demographics we have been able to serve with the assistance of the IBHE grant. Southern Illinois University has seen an increase in international and domestic students living in multiple-student dwellings. Many of these students live with multiple students sharing one bedroom and the same beds. Based on the theory of doubling-up, there is a lack of stable and adequate housing accommodation. Through our case management model, students openly share information about their current needs, financial challenges, and obstacles to securing and maintaining sufficient housing accommodations. The HEROES programs have been able to assist students living in these conditions with adequate bedding to address their challenges with individually adequate bedding, necessities, hygiene, meals, clothing, and supplies based on their current living conditions. Homelessness has been shown to harm students' physical and mental health and poses significant barriers to student success, persistence, retention, graduation, and overall well-being.

Figure 1. Total Number of Homeless Students and Youth in Care Reported in FY 2023 and FY 2024

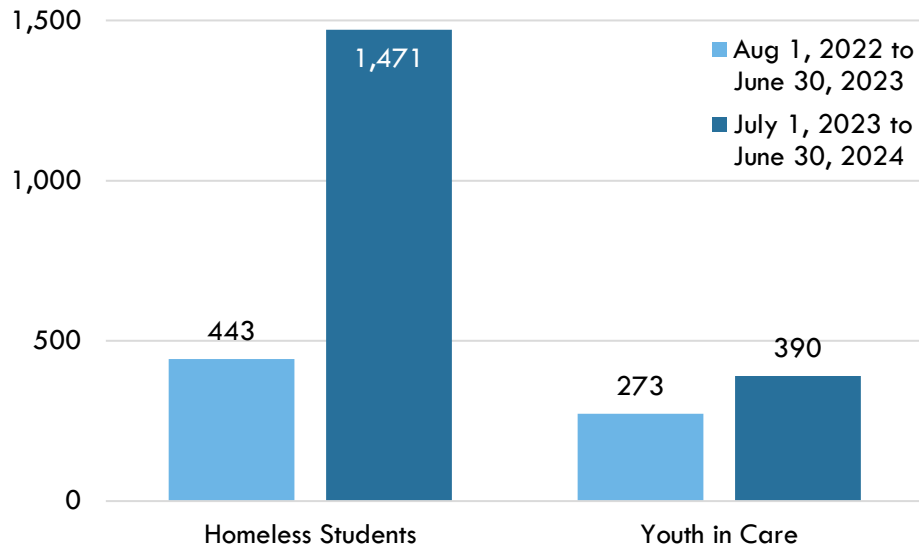


Figure 1 above shows the number of students who were homeless at any point during the reporting periods. The large increase in the number of homeless students between FY 2023 and FY 2024 can largely be attributed to student identification, data collection, and tracking procedures being fully implemented at more institutions in the second year of implementation of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. However, there are 54 institutions reporting zero homeless students and 73 institutions reporting zero youth in care, which indicates there is still work to be done to identify such students and implement the proper data collection and tracking procedures at colleges and universities.

If an institution's reported data indicates that least 2% of the institution's student body experienced homelessness or have been youth in care after three academic years, the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act requires the institution to create a dedicated position for the HOUSE Liaison. This report covers only the second year of implementation of the law; however, we have found that the following institutions have met the threshold already: Chicago State University, Monmouth College, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale. In next year's report, we will provide a final list of institutions that have met the 2% threshold.

Retention and Graduation Rates

In FY 2023, IBHE asked whether the HOUSE Liaison was tracking the graduation and retention rates for homeless students and youth in care. In the FY 2024 reporting template, IBHE asked institutions to provide the actual retention and graduation rates. Out of 98 respondents, only 32 (32.6%) provided any retention and/or graduation rates. Two institutions provided some data that needed clarification, but the institution did not respond to our requests, and we have excluded their data for this section. Figures 2 and 3 below show how many institutions report retention and graduation rates of at least 50%, 75%, and 90%.

Figure 2. Number of Institutions by Homeless Student Retention and Graduation Rates

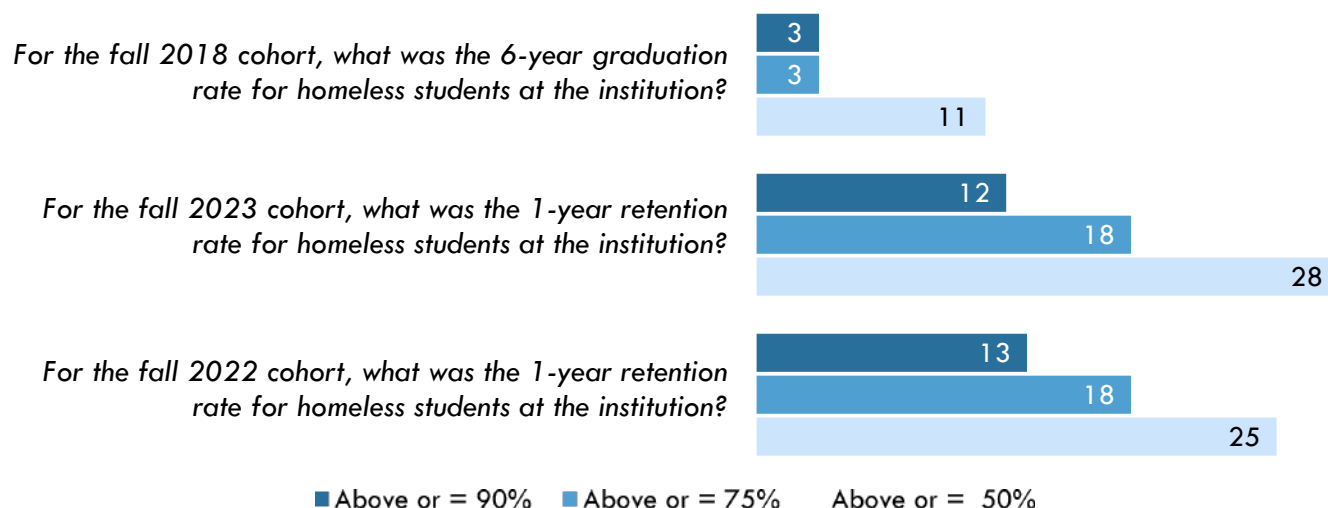


Figure 2 shows that retention rates are highest for the 2023 cohort with 28 out of 32 institutions reporting at least a 50% retention rate of homeless students. The 6-year graduation rate was much lower, with only 11 institutions reporting at least a 50% graduation rate. A low graduation rate is to be expected since institutions were not required to begin tracking homeless student and youth in care graduation rates until the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act was enacted in August 2022.

Figure 3. Number of Institutions by Youth in Care Retention and Graduation Rates

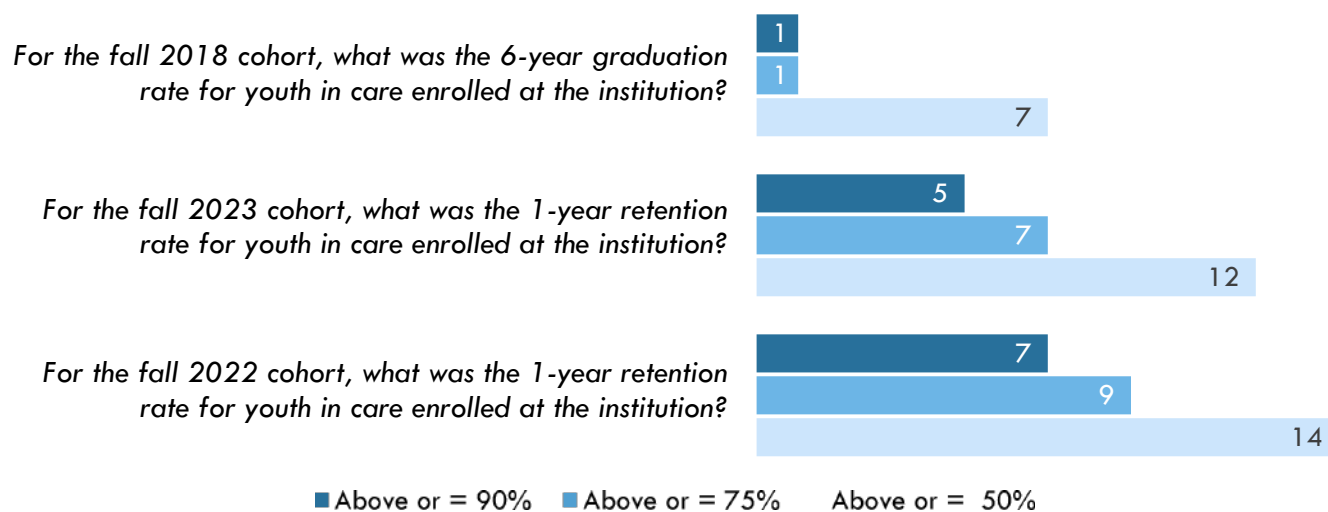
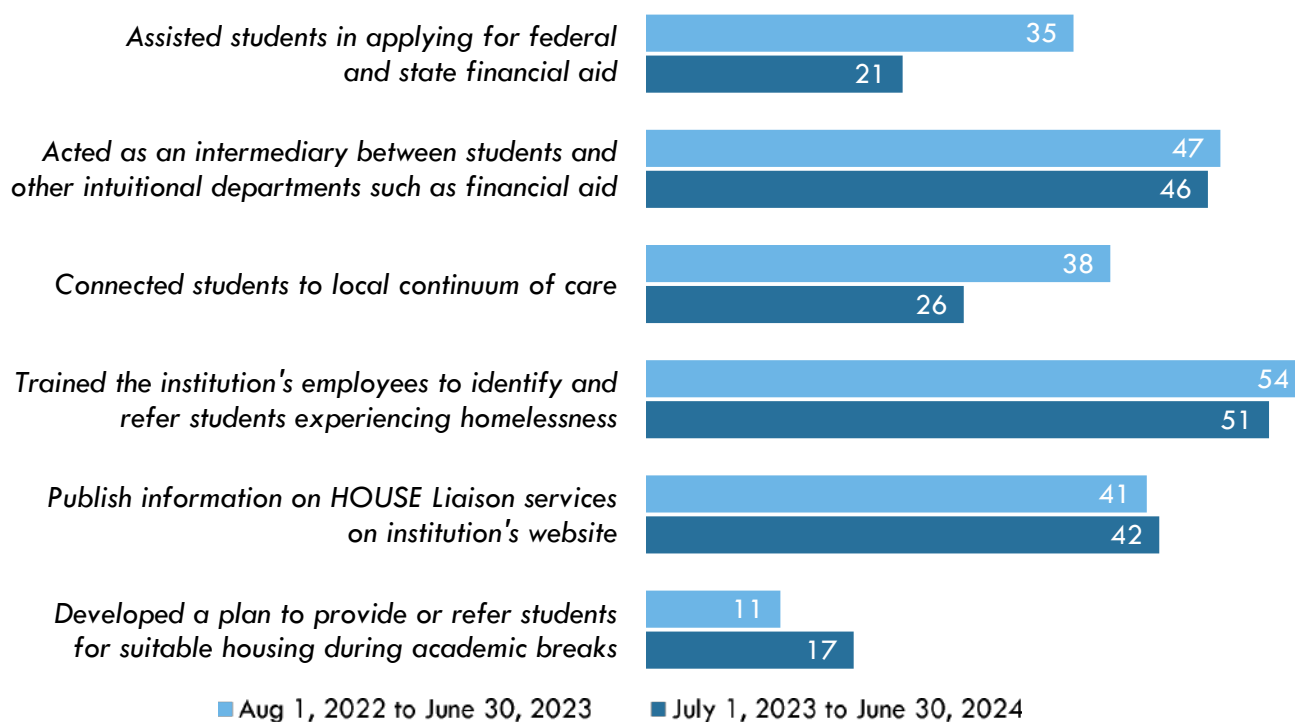


Figure 3 shows that the institutions reporting retention and graduation rates for youth in care are much lower than those able to report on homeless students. As noted above, institutions were not required to begin tracking graduation rates for the youth in care population until 2022. As implementation of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act continues, we expect to see more institutions report on both graduation and retention rates for homeless students and youth in care.

Other Statutory Duties of HOUSE Liaisons

As noted on page five, there are ten duties for HOUSE Liaisons outlined in the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. We report above on two duties: the number of homeless students and youth in care and tracking graduation and retention rates. Below we discuss the other quantifiable HOUSE liaison duties. Figure 4 below lists the remaining quantifiable duties required of HOUSE Liaisons and the number of institutions reporting that their HOUSE Liaison had fulfilled the duty in both the first and second year of implementation of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act.

Figure 4. Total Number of Institutions Reporting Fulfilling Duties Outlined in the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, 2023 and 2024

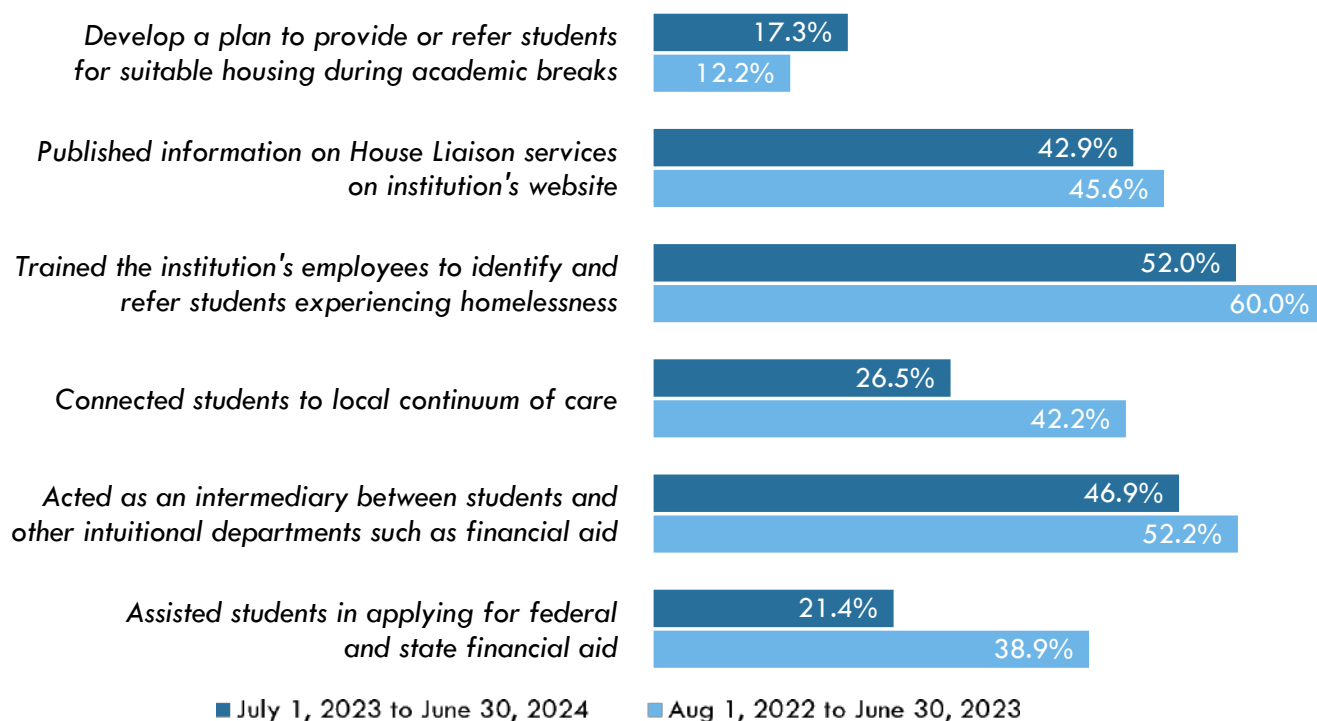


Though more institutions completed the required annual reporting in FY 2024 compared to FY 2023 (98 versus 90 institutions), fewer institutions reported that their HOUSE Liaisons completed several of the required duties. For example, 14 fewer institutions reported that the HOUSE liaison assisted in helping students apply for federal or state aid in FY 2024. Several institutions did indicate being unable to complete HOUSE liaison's required duties due to a lack of homeless students or youth in care enrolled at the campus. However, this would not account for the decrease seen in some statutorily required duties, such as training institution staff to recognize and refer homeless students, which would not require current homeless students on campus to undertake.

Figure 4 does show an increase in the number of institutions reporting that the HOUSE Liaison has published information on their institution's website and developed a plan for suitable housing during academic breaks. While some improvement is being made in both categories there is still more work to do. For example, many institutions provided a link for the HOUSE liaison website but did not include a link for a plan for academic breaks. There were also several institutions that submitted websites or plans that did not meet basic requirements, such as including the HOUSE liaison's name and contact information and therefore could not be included as completed for this report. Additionally, at least nine institutions were notified that the links they provided were not working, but did not provide a revised link to IBHE staff.

Figure 5 below uses the same information reported in Figure 4 to compare the compliance rate for each statutorily required duty assigned to HOUSE Liaisons. Please note 90 institutions completed the annual report last year which covered activities from FY 2023 while 98 institutions completed the report covering FY 2024.

Figure 5. Comparison of FY 2023 and FY 2024 Institutional Completion Rates of HOUSE Liaison Duties



As Figure 5 shows, compliance rates were down in FY 2024 for all the statutorily required HOUSE Liaison duties, except for developing a plan to provide or refer students to suitable housing during academic breaks.

Housing During Academic Breaks

The Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act requires all institutions with on-campus housing to grant priority access to such housing to students experiencing homelessness and youth in care. Priority access includes on-campus housing that remains open during academic breaks. Institutions also must waive any fees associated with housing such students during academic breaks.

In FY 2024, the annual HOUSE Liaison reporting template asked institutions how many students were housed on-or-off campus during academic breaks and any costs associated with housing these students. Over 30 institutions reported providing on-campus housing to 262 students during academic breaks for FY 2024. While only 24 institutions reported any costs associated with housing students on-campus during academic breaks, these institutions reported over \$354,855 in costs. Two institutions reported utilizing off-campus housing during academic breaks for 281 students during FY 2024. Only one institution reported \$14,511 in spending on off-campus housing during academic breaks.

Table 1 below compares the on-campus housing results from FY 2023's HOUSE Liaison report to FY 2024. IBHE cannot provide a year-to-year comparison for off-campus housing because too few students utilized the service in FY 2023.

Table 1. Comparison of 2022-23 and 2023-24 On Campus Housing During Academic Breaks

	Total Number of Institutions	Total Number of Students	Total Number of Institutions Reporting Costs	Total Cost to Offer on Campus Housing During Academic Breaks
Aug 1, 2022- June 30, 2023	25	141	19	\$121,290
July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024	34	262	24	\$354,844

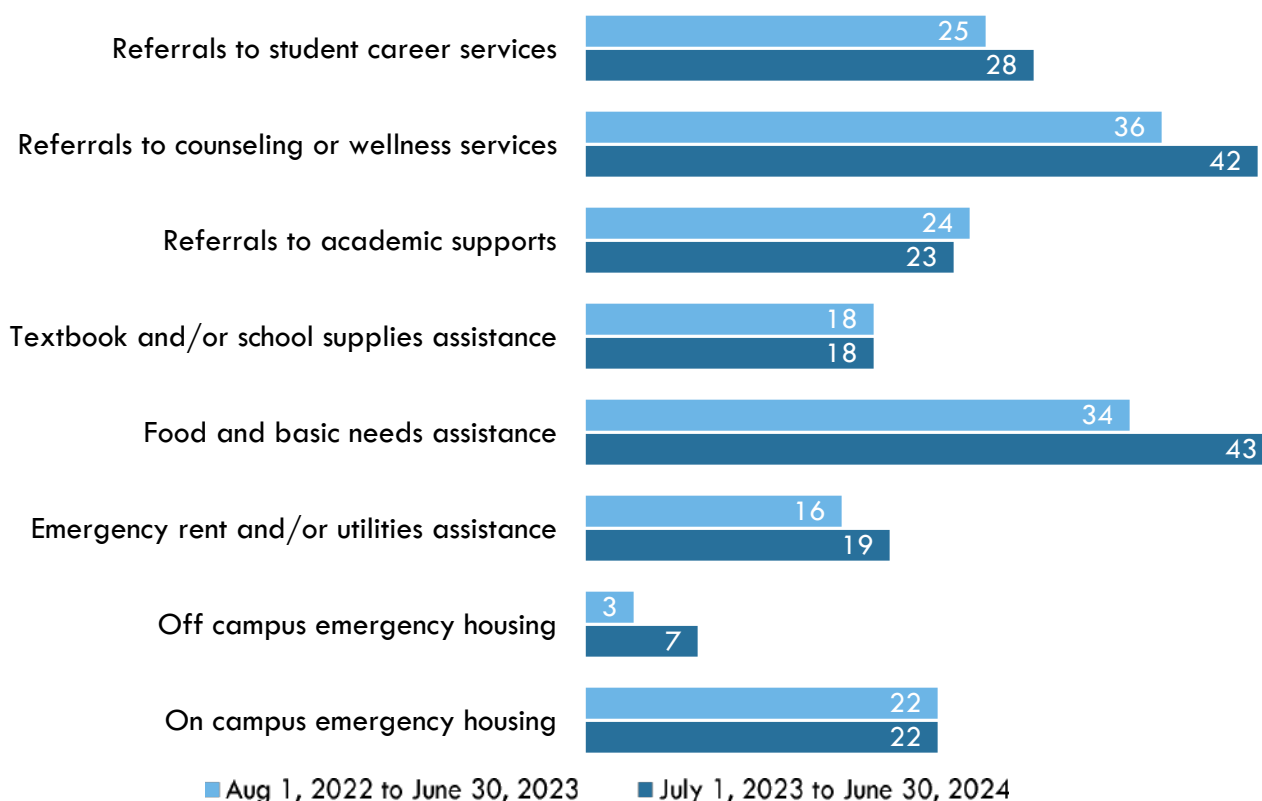
Table 1 shows an 85% increase in FY 2024 in the number of students experiencing homelessness and youth in care that utilized on-campus housing during academic breaks. It also shows an almost 200% increase in the reported costs of providing this service to such students.

STUDENT SERVICES RESULTS FROM ANNUAL HOUSE LIAISON REPORTING

In the annual HOUSE Liaison reporting template, IBHE also asked about services that an institution may be offering to students through the HOUSE Liaison, such as food and basic needs assistance, and referrals to counseling services, among others. We asked the institutions to provide the number of students receiving the service through the HOUSE Liaison and, for some services, an estimate of the cost to the institution to provide the service. Of the 98 respondents to the survey, 55 institutions reported students receiving at least one of the services listed, up from 46 institutions in FY 2023. The other 43 institutions reported zero students for all the services listed and are excluded from Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 below compares the total number of institutions reporting a service to students in FY 2023 to FY 2024. Please note that there were more institutions that completed the annual required reporting in FY 2024 (98) than FY 2023 (90). Also, IBHE's data collection only captures services provided by the HOUSE Liaison. It does not capture any services or assistance students received from other departments on campus, such as financial aid. As Figure 6 shows, in FY 2024 more institutions began offering services to students.

Figure 6. Total Institutions Offering Student Support Services through HOUSE Liaisons, FY 2023 and 2024



Only one service, referrals to academic support, saw any decrease in institutions offering it through the HOUSE Liaison. All other services remained the same or increased in the number of institutions offering it to students. In FY 2024, the services self-reported as being offered by the HOUSE Liaison at the most institutions are: food and basic needs assistance (43 institutions), referrals to counseling or wellness services (42 institutions), and referrals to student career services (28 institutions). This is similar to what was reported last year.

For the total number of students reported as receiving services, the top services remain the same, with food and basic needs assistance serving over 3,500 students (up from 2,101 students last report) and 961 students receiving referrals to counseling (down from 1,345). Note that the student numbers are totaled across all institutions reporting this service and that individual students may be counted in more than one service.

Table 2 below lists the total number of students utilizing each service and the reported costs to the institutions for providing the services to students in both reporting years.

Table 2. Comparison of 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 Student Receiving Services and Costs

Service	Total Number of Institutions Reporting Offering the Service	Total Number of Students Utilizing Service	Total Number of Institutions Reporting Cost	Total Cost to Offer the Service at All Institutions Reported Offering
July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024				
Emergency rent and/or utilities assistance	19	603	18	\$417,304
Food and basic needs assistance	43	3,555	20	\$165,749
Off campus emergency housing	7	68	6	\$36,810
On campus emergency housing	22	143	17	\$397,881
Referrals to academic supports	23	172	N/A	N/A
Referrals to counseling or student wellness	42	961	N/A	N/A
Referrals to student career services	28	424	N/A	N/A
Textbook and/or school supplies assistance	18	235	14	\$70,155
Aug 1, 2022-June 30, 2023				
Emergency rent and/or utilities assistance	16	464	15	\$354,074
Food and basic needs assistance	34	2,101	18	\$193,836
Off campus emergency housing	9	29	7	\$23,308
On campus emergency housing	23	131	18	\$309,083
Referrals to academic supports	24	164	N/A	N/A
Referrals to counseling or student wellness	36	1,345	N/A	N/A
Referrals to student career services	25	497	N/A	N/A
Textbook and/or school supplies assistance	18	198	16	\$72,170

The data presented above provides a general picture of the student services offered at institutions and used by students. As expected, we saw an increase in the number of institutions self-reporting that the HOUSE Liaison is offering these services and in the total number of students receiving services. This increase can be attributed to greater awareness around the requirements of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act and the reporting requirements mandated by IBHE. However, many institutions stated that they are still creating processes and procedures related to the HOUSE Liaison and the role's data and tracking requirements. We

expect to see further increases in institutions offering these services and in students utilizing them in the next reporting cycle.

Barriers to Implementing the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act

In the 2024 HOUSE Liaison annual reporting template, IBHE asked about barriers or challenges the institution faced in implementing the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. Over 50 institutions reported facing some barriers to implementation. The most common barriers cited were:

1. Staffing issues, including staff turnover and staff having time to dedicate to HOUSE liaison work
2. Data and tracking requirements, including student identification
3. Lack of funding
4. Institutional bureaucracy making implementing change difficult

Additionally, many HOUSE Liaisons indicated that their institution did not have any homeless students or youth in care enrolled, which meant that the institution could not fully implement the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. At this time, it is not clear if this is due to barriers in implementing the necessary student identification procedures or if such institutions are not targeting at-risk students or youth in care for enrollment.

Outcomes

We asked the institutions to share any student outcomes from the services provided by the HOUSE Liaison. Several institutions took the time to complete this section and we report some of their stories below. Please note that these are unedited responses from institutions.

Aurora University: Students were able to successfully and safely transition from emergency housing to permanent on-campus or off-campus housing. A student gained on-campus student employment. Students were able to persist in their degree program.

DeVry University: We were able to support all seven students with both financial and academic advising strategies as well as support for 24/25 FAFSA completion. We also triaged and connected each student with local Continuum of CARE resources.

Dominican University: The wraparound support for students by having a consistent touchpoint is very helpful.

Elmhurst University: We had two students recently graduate after receiving housing and on-campus and off-campus referrals. We have successfully assisted a variety of McKinney-Vento students apply for health insurance.

Governors State University: GovState developed the Achieving Completion with Excellence (ACE) program to support students with experience in foster care, kinship care, adoption, or residential care. The program provides access to resources, including financial support, housing assistance, academic advising, and social-emotional support. During the reporting period, the ACE program achieved a 91% fall-to-fall retention rate among participating students.

Illinois State University: The Housing Liaison has made a positive impact on student retention and success through responsive support services. Retention rates for students who engaged with the Housing Liaison were 86.4% in fall 2023, 64% in Spring 2024, and 100% in Summer 2024. While we typically see a decline in retention during the spring, these outcomes underscore the Housing Liaison's effectiveness in stabilizing students facing housing insecurity, particularly during the fall and summer terms, even without state funding for the role.

Lewis University: The HOUSE Liaison at Lewis University has played a pivotal role in supporting students experiencing homelessness or housing instability, providing critical resources and assistance to help them stay enrolled and succeed academically. Through the Liaison's efforts, many students facing significant barriers, such as lack of stable housing, food insecurity, and financial instability, were able to stabilize their living situations

and focus on their education. Additionally, the Liaison has helped students access financial aid office services and provided referrals to mental health counseling, leading to better overall well-being and academic performance. One student, for example, who was facing both housing and emotional distress, was able to access on-campus counseling and housing support. As a result, their grades improved, and they reported feeling more confident and supported in continuing their studies at Lewis.

Lincoln College of Technology: The HOUSE Liaison helped several students find emergency shelter resources.

McKendree University: Students were able to have housing at no additional costs during breaks allowing the funds from summer positions/work to be funneled elsewhere. Additionally, students who requested assistance/support with ABE have been successful in attaining Link Card and/or Insurance

Monmouth College: Provide a home, provide career assistance, provide food, provide mental health services, provide emergency services, provide books-Outcome-graduation!

North Central College: The HOUSE Liaison was able to refer multiple students to other offices on campus when they needed assistance with basic needs, career/graduation preparation, and even help multiple students receive on campus housing over winter break.

Northeastern Illinois University: Students have received support to become independent and permanent housing.

Northern Illinois University: We've been able to help students attain break housing, access the huskie food pantry, we provide emergency funding as available; we connect students to campus and community resources, we were one of four state schools to get our Y-CAP mentor program up and running. One student mentored three others in FY 2024.

Rockford University: On-Campus Housing occurred for one semester for the two individuals. One individual left the institution at the end of the semester. The other moved off-campus at the end of semester.

Roosevelt University: Thanks to the ESHI grant received we were able to revamp our laker food pantry. Many students utilize our food pantry but also we gained many volunteers. It encouraged students to give back as well. We were able to provide financial assistance for basic needs, housing, utilities to 29 students, many were able to pay for utilities, food and rent.

Saint Francis Medical Center College of Nursing: The college served 10 students through its on-campus food pantry. The items provided to the students from the food pantry were all donated items from the college's faculty, staff, student organizations and the local food pantry. The college receives monthly food donations from the local food pantry in order to pass them on to its needy students.

Southern Illinois University Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Carbondale, has successfully met all Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act requirements and has fully utilized funds provided by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Services for students have been expanded, and successful programming has been offered to assist students pursuing higher education with their mental health. Proactive and responsive efforts have been maintained with multidisciplinary approaches to address student well-being and health as a system that focuses on the whole student perspective. We have supported the increasing demand and severity of the needs of our diverse student population, creating improved physical and mental health, relationships, learning, and lifestyles. We have also successfully educated staff, students, and supports on mental health and basic needs signs, symptoms, needs, and the services and supports available to them on campus and in the community. The HEROES program was developed to address issues relating to basic needs, insecurities, mental health, physical health, and overall wellness. This holistic, multidisciplinary approach includes wrap-around services providing students with the resources and skills to maximize student engagement, retention, and success. Training and advertisement increased awareness of mental health and needs insecurity signs and symptoms, increased support-seeking skills, and reduced stigma related to accepting support for typically underserved populations. The HOUSE liaison and partners have collaborated with SIUC's Student Multicultural Resource Center and Center for International Education to improve awareness of support services and better understand the needs

of students facing insecurities. Our individualized case management considers students' backgrounds, identities, and experiences. Interventions are proactive, strength-based, and restorative, designed according to unique population needs. Our program has helped thousands of students during this last year, and our goal is to continue to increase our reach, support, and advocacy for all of our Salukis to ensure that, little by little, we close the gap of some of these challenges.

St. Augustine College at Lewis University: When I referred a student to the city of Chicago to apply for housing assistance, it was successful. I facilitate Student Council and the students are committed to helping raise awareness of student support for all students.

St. John's College of Nursing: St. John's College of Nursing was awarded the Homelessness Grant about 2 years ago. With the funding from the grant, we were able to support our student before homelessness happened. The food pantry is still open for all students.

Trinity Christian College: Specifically for the student who experienced homelessness because parents couldn't provide a safe environment, the assurance that we could find space and waive extra fees were very helpful as they made the transition

University Center of Lake County: We recently started a U Center Food Pantry where students can come to grab food items for themselves and their families. We are hoping that more students from our member universities will take advantage of this opportunity in the future. We are advertising the pantry in all of our classrooms now.

University of Chicago: While the HOUSE liaisons may not have provided direct assistance to students with all of the activities above, HOUSE liaisons played an integral role in providing advocacy and campus resource linkage to students who were housing insecure. All students were assessed based on their individual needs and solutions were provided to address those needs. HOUSE liaisons also worked to be more proactive in supporting students who may be facing housing insecurity rather than being reactive.

University of Illinois Springfield: Student was grateful for the support and the confidentiality in the process.

VanderCook College of Music: One student was granted emergency housing arrangements but declined it at the last minute. She was in an abusive relationship and no where to go.

Western Illinois University: A pregnant student experiencing homelessness was assisted in connecting with her caseworker in order to expedite placement in a safe environment.

Wheaton College: Students who have received book purchase support, housing support, or connection with local food pantries have reported much gratitude for the support and the advocacy.

In the second year of implementation of the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act, Illinois public and private colleges and universities have made great strides in addressing student homelessness on their campuses. Roughly 89% of institutions required to report to IBHE have designated a HOUSE Liaison and 77% completed the annual HOUSE Liaison reporting survey (up from 68% last year), which are among the main requirements of the law. However, as noted above, fewer HOUSE Liaisons are reporting being able to complete their required duties in FY 2024 compared to the first year of implementation. While the total number of institutions reporting students experiencing homelessness or youth in care increased in FY 2024, over half of the institutions that completed the required annual report did not report any homeless students or youth in care enrolled at their institution and therefore not all the statutory duties were applicable.

IBHE has the following recommendations on next steps to help increase compliance rates:

1. IBHE should continue to raise awareness about the law and HOUSE Liaisons by publicizing the requirements wherever possible, including by speaking at trainings and conferences. IBHE should consider additional methods such as webinars and utilizing the Communities of Practice program to further outreach with HOUSE Liaisons to determine what, if any, barriers they are facing in performing their statutorily required duties.
2. Institutions should prioritize homeless student identification efforts, including by encouraging collaboration between the financial aid department, student housing or student services department, and the HOUSE Liaison.
3. IBHE should raise awareness of the requirements of the HOUSE Liaison annual report, including providing best practices for implementing the retention rate and graduation rate data tracking. Additionally, IBHE should seek to determine if different strategies are needed to increase retention rates and graduation rates for youth in care since they appear to be lagging.
4. Institutions should update policies and procedures relating to HOUSE Liaisons that will allow the institution to come into compliance with all related statutory mandates.

Additionally, it is important to know how many students are receiving aid from the HOUSE Liaison and the cost of such aid to the institution in order to appropriately evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation and the impacts on students brought through the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. The second year's annual reporting shows increases in both institutions offering services and students utilizing the services; however, it should not be viewed as an entirely accurate reflection of what has taken place at Illinois college and university campuses due to the continued implementation of appropriate recordkeeping and tracking by institutions.

IBHE has the following recommendations for next year's data collection on services received by students from the HOUSE Liaison:

1. Institutions should continue prioritizing establishing and implementing processes and procedures to guarantee proper data collection and compliance with the requirements under the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act.
2. IBHE should continue to increase institutional awareness of the robust tracking and monitoring requirements for the HOUSE Liaison annual reporting survey. IBHE should consider providing training for HOUSE Liaisons on the annual reporting template.
3. IBHE should review the current reporting template to determine if any revisions are needed to appropriately capture HOUSE Liaison activities.

In FY 2023, IBHE was awarded \$2.0 million from the Department of Human Services under Illinois' Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness to provide grants to public and private universities to identify and address the underlying causes of homelessness among students. IBHE awarded the Ending Student Housing Insecurity (ESHI) grants to 11 institutions. Institutions used the funding to provide emergency funding for students, expand food pantries to basic needs pantries, and provide training for staff and resource centers for students.

In FY 2024, \$2 million was transferred into IBHE's budget, rather than be awarded as a grant from DHS. In November 2023, IBHE awarded 10 ESHI Grants with amounts expanded to up to \$200,000 per institution. ESHI Grant awardees for FY 2024 are listed below. Institutions that also received an ESHI Grant in FY 2023 are indicated by an asterisk.

- Chicago State University*
- Dominican University
- Eastern Illinois University
- Governors State University*
- National Louis University
- North Central College
- Roosevelt University
- Southern Illinois University-Carbondale*
- Trinity Christian College*
- University of St. Francis*

In FY 2024, nine out of ten ESHI awardees provided some form of direct emergency aid to students. In total, these institutions helped approximately 570 students during the 8-month grant period by providing assistance with rent, utilities, childcare, transportation, among others.

Many grantees used ESHI funding to address food insecurity in FY 2024. Eastern Illinois University expanded the number of visits allowed at its food pantry to four visits per month (formerly two visits per month) and was able to serve 1,106 students. Roosevelt University established a food pantry outreach and evaluation system that led to a 20-fold increase in the visits to their pantry. The University of St. Francis added two new nonperishable food pantries in its commuter lounges. National Louis University opened a new food pantry on its Lisle campus. All National Louis University's food pantries helped 1,392 students and distributed over 16,000 pounds of food. About 87% percent of students who utilized National Louis University's food pantries persisted at the institution to the next term.

Other grantees, such as Governors State University, addressed basic needs insecurity by installing free laundry facilities for students in need. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale was able to provide 685 students a month's supply of basic needs items.

Innovative Programs Funded by ESHI

Three institutions used ESHI funding to create or expand programs that were innovative approaches to addressing student housing insecurity on their campus. These approaches could serve as models for future ESHI grantees. We provide details about each program below.

Dominican University: Partnership with West Cook YMCA

Dominican University determined that its institution did not have enough housing available to adequately help the number of students experiencing housing insecurity. Dominican used ESHI Grant to fund a partnership with West Cook YMCA to renovate space at the YMCA to create dedicated emergency housing for up to 20 Dominican University students. This emergency housing will be used by students on a short or long-term basis,

depending on the student's circumstances. The rooms created include a communal living space as well as fully furnished bedrooms with internet access. Security upgrades were added to guarantee that only Dominican University students would have access to the designated emergency housing. In addition to dramatically increasing Dominican University's capacity to help students in emergency situations during the school year, it also built their capacity to house homeless students during summer break when the residence halls are closed.

North Central College: Textbook Loaning Program

Before receiving an ESHI Grant, North Central College had determined that the lack of affordable textbooks was creating a barrier to success for its low-income and historically underrepresented students and created the Textbook Loaning Program. With ESHI funding, North Central College was able to expand their program by purchasing more than 700 textbooks that students can borrow to complete their coursework. North Central College's Textbook Loaning Program now includes required texts from every undergraduate course at North Central College.

Trinity Christian College: Empower First Program

Trinity Christian College used ESHI funding to pilot the Empower First Program which was designed to be a culturally responsive paid internship program in partnership with the Chicago Semester. This eight-week internship program was open not only to students at risk of homelessness but also to first-generation low-income students and historically underrepresented students. The pilot served 12 students and included coursework and mentoring as well as the paid internship.

APPENDIX A. IBHE HOUSE LIAISONS ANNUAL REPORT COMPLETION LIST BY INSTITUTION

Institution Name	Completed IBHE Annual Survey
A.T.Still University	Yes*
Adler University	Yes
Ambria College of Nursing	Yes
American Islamic College	No
Augustana College	Yes
Aurora University	Yes
Beck School of Practical Nursing	Yes
Benedictine University	Yes
Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Federation	No†
Blackburn College	No
Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing	Yes
Bradley University	Yes
CAAN Academy of Nursing	Yes
Catholic Theological Union	No
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	No
Chamberlain University	No
Chicago Baptist Institute	No
Chicago College of Oriental Medicine	Yes
Chicago State University	Yes
Chicago Theological Seminary	Yes*
Christian Life College	No
Columbia College (MO)	Yes
Columbia College Chicago	Yes*
Concordia University Chicago	Yes
DePaul University	Yes
DeVry University, Inc.	Yes
Dominican University	Yes
Eastern Illinois University	Yes
East-West University	No
Elmhurst University	Yes
Erikson Institute	Yes
Eureka College	Yes*
Fox College	Yes
Garrett - Evangelical Theological Seminary	No
Generations College	No
Governors State University	Yes
Graham Hospital School of Nursing	Yes
Greenville University	Yes
Hebrew Theological College	Yes
Illinois College	Yes*
Illinois College of Optometry	Yes
Illinois Institute of Technology	Yes
Illinois State University	Yes
Illinois Wesleyan University	Yes*
Institute for Clinical Social Work	Yes

Institution Name	Completed IBHE Annual Survey
Instituto College	No
Judson University	Yes
Knox College	Yes*
Lake Forest College	Yes*
Lake Forest Graduate School of Mgmt.	Yes
Lakeview College of Nursing	Yes
Lewis University	Yes
Lincoln College of Technology	Yes
Logos Evangelical Seminary	No
Loyola University of Chicago	Yes
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago	Yes
McCormick Theological Seminary	No
McKendree University	Yes
Meadville - Lombard Theo. School	Yes
Methodist College	Yes
Midwest College of Oriental Medicine (WI)	No
Midwestern Career College	Yes
Midwestern University	No
Millikin University	Yes*
Missouri Baptist University (MO)	Yes
Monmouth College	Yes
Moody Bible Institute	Yes
Morrison Institute of Technology	Yes
National College of Naprapathic Medicine	No
National Louis University	Yes
National University of Health Sciences	Yes
North Central College	Yes
North Park University	Yes
Northeastern Illinois University	Yes
Northern Baptist Theo. Seminary	No
Northern Illinois University	Yes
NorthShore University HealthSystem School of Nurse Anesthesia	No
Northwestern University	Yes
Olivet Nazarene University	No
Pacific College of Health and Science (CA)	Yes*
Principia College	Yes
Quincy University	Yes
Quiroga College	No
Rasmussen University (MN)	No
Relay Graduate School of Education	Yes*
Rockford University	Yes
Roosevelt University	Yes
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science	No
Rush University	Yes
SAE Institute of Technology	No†
School of the Art Inst. Chicago	No†
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	Yes

Institution Name	Completed IBHE Annual Survey
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Yes
Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership	Yes
St. Anthony College of Nursing	Yes
St. Augustine College	Yes
St. Francis Medical Center College of Nursing	Yes
St. Johns College of Nursing	Yes*
St. Sava Serb. Orth. Sch. Theo.	No
St. Xavier University	Yes
Stautzenberger College-Rockford Career College	Yes
Taylor Business Institute	Yes
Telshe Yeshiva	Yes
Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute (formerly The Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis)	Yes*
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology	No
Touro College Illinois	Yes
Toyota Technological Institute at Chicago	Yes
Trinity Christian College	Yes
Trinity College of Nursing & Health Sciences	Yes
Trinity International University	Yes
University Center of Lake County	Yes
University of Chicago	Yes
University of Illinois Chicago	Yes
University of Illinois Springfield	Yes
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Yes
University of Notre Dame (IN)	Yes
University of St. Francis	Yes
Univ. of St. Mary of the Lake	Yes
Upper Iowa University (IA)	Yes
Urbana Theological Seminary	Yes
VanderCook College of Music	Yes
Visible Music College	No
Walther Theological Seminary	Yes
Webster University (MO)	Yes
Western Illinois University	Yes
Westminster College (MO)	No
Wheaton College	Yes
Worsham College of Mortuary Science	Yes

As of March 2025.

* Institution completed required HOUSE liaison annual report template for first time in FY 2024

† Institution completed required HOUSE Liaison annual report in FY 2023, but not in FY 2024.

APPENDIX B. INSTITUTIONS WITHOUT IDENTIFIED HOUSE LIAISONS

As of March 2025

Institution Name
American Islamic College
Chicago Baptist Institute
Garrett - Evangelical Theological Seminary
Instituto College
Logos Evangelical Seminary
Midwest College of Oriental Medicine (WI)
Midwestern University
National College of Naprapathic Medicine
Northern Baptist Theo. Seminary
NorthShore University HealthSystem School of Nurse Anesthesia
Rasmussen University (MN)
St. Sava Serb. Orth. Sch. Theo.
Westminster College (MO)