

Defining Functional Zero

Functional zero is definitely not a mainstream term. Find below some answers for frequently asked questions. For further detail, refer to the [Functional Zero Q&A](#).

What do you really mean when you say a community has ended homelessness?

When we refer to ending homelessness, we mean that a community has reached functional zero, a standard developed by Community Solutions. Functional zero is a dynamic milestone that indicates a community has solved homelessness for a population (such as chronic or veterans). Reaching and sustaining this milestone is in service of building a future where homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

What does reaching functional zero chronic homelessness mean? [Watch our video.](#)

A community has ended chronic homelessness when the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness is three or less (or 0.1% for larger communities with more 4,000 people experiencing homelessness).

What does reaching functional zero veteran homelessness mean? [Watch our video.](#)

A community has ended veteran homelessness when the number of veterans experiencing homelessness is less than the number of veterans a community has proven it can house in a month—basically when the system capacity (or average monthly housing move-in rate) is greater than the number of veterans experiencing homelessness on the community's By-Name List.

Why are you only focused on ending chronic or veteran homelessness?

Built for Zero Canada is starting with chronic and veteran homelessness as the first steps in eliminating all homelessness. By working with communities to build coordinated homelessness response systems focused on preventing and ending homelessness (beginning with chronic and veterans) to create proof-points, we can demonstrate that ending homelessness is possible. Through the efforts of building a By-Name List and Coordinated Access, a community is learning and setting up the foundation for a homelessness-serving system that will lay the foundation to ensure that homelessness for any individual is rare, brief and non-recurring.

Why do I still see people on the street when you say you've reduced or ended homelessness?

Ending homelessness does not mean that people will never experience it again. What it does mean is that systems are in place to ensure that any experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Like the healthcare system may not prevent everyone from getting sick it will ensure that people who do get sick are triaged appropriately and receive the services they need to improve their health before it becomes a crisis.