



PalAmerican SECURITY

Addressing the Seasonal Unhoused Population in Greater Chicagoland & Northwest Indiana



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Introduction: Understanding the Rise in Homelessness

In recent years, the Greater Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana regions have experienced a significant increase in the unhoused population. Factors contributing to this surge include economic challenges, a shortage of affordable housing, and an influx of migrants seeking asylum.[Fox 32 Chicago](#)

Current Statistics and Trends

| Illinois:

The state witnessed a 116% increase in homelessness between 2023 and 2024, with the numbers rising from 11,947 to 25,832 individuals. Notably, approximately 91% of this increase occurred in Chicago. [Fox 32 Chicago](#)

| Chicago:

The city's Point-in-Time Count estimated 18,836 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night in early 2024, a substantial rise from 6,139 in 2023. This surge is largely attributed to new arrivals from the southwest border of the U.S. [chicago.gov+2chicago.gov+2Fox 32 Chicago+2](#)

| National Perspective:

The U.S. recorded a 12.1% increase in homelessness from 2022 to 2023, marking the largest rise since data collection began in 2007. [End Homelessness](#)



Seasonality of Homelessness

Homelessness exhibits seasonal patterns, with certain periods experiencing higher numbers of individuals without stable housing.

Factors Influencing Seasonality

Weather Conditions: Harsh winters in the Midwest drive individuals to seek shelter, leading to overcrowding in urban areas like Chicago.

Economic Cycles: Seasonal employment fluctuations, especially in industries like construction and tourism, can result in temporary housing instability.

Migration Patterns: In recent years, there has been an influx of migrants seeking asylum, contributing to the rise in the unhoused population.

State Legislative Responses to Homelessness in Illinois and Indiana

Illinois: Proactive Measures and Increased Funding

Illinois has implemented comprehensive strategies to address homelessness, focusing on collaboration, funding, and legislative action:

1. HOME Illinois Initiative

Increased Funding: In the 2024 legislative session, the Illinois General Assembly allocated \$290.3 million to the HOME Illinois plan, marking a \$90 million increase from the previous year. This funding supports various programs aimed at preventing and ending homelessness statewide. [Illinois Government+2housingactionil.org+2housingactionil.org+2](#)

Comprehensive Strategy: HOME Illinois emphasizes expanding affordable housing, targeting high-risk populations, and providing comprehensive support services to individuals experiencing homelessness. [Illinois Government](#)

2. Codification of Homelessness Task Forces

HB2831 Enactment: In July 2023, Governor JB Pritzker signed HB2831 into law, formally establishing the Illinois Interagency Task Force on Homelessness and the Community Advisory Council on Homelessness. These bodies work across 17 state departments and agencies to develop and implement strategies aimed at achieving functional zero homelessness in Illinois. [housingactionil.org+4Illinois Government+4LegiScan+4](#)

Leadership: The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, led by the State Homelessness Chief Officer, coordinates efforts among state agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders to address homelessness effectively. [Illinois Government+2LegiScan+2LegiScan+2](#)

3. Legislative Efforts to Support Vulnerable Populations

HB5407: This bill aims to strengthen supports for students experiencing homelessness by reinstating and expanding funding for homeless education, addressing the significant increase in student homelessness in recent years. [Chicago Homeless](#)

HB5564: Focused on enhancing the Homelessness Prevention Program, this legislation permits providers to allocate up to 30% of their funding for case management, ensuring individuals remain housed after receiving assistance. [Chicago Homeless](#)

Indiana: Debates Over Criminalization and Policy Approaches

Indiana's legislative approach to homelessness has been characterized by debates over policies perceived as criminalizing homelessness:[aclu-in.org+7indianacitizen.org+7IBJ+7](https://www.aclu-in.org/7indianacitizen.org+7IBJ+7)

1. Proposed Public Camping Ban

HB1662 Introduction: In early 2025, Indiana legislators introduced House Bill 1662, aiming to prohibit camping or sleeping on state or local government-owned property. The bill proposed penalties, including fines and possible jail time, for individuals violating the ban. [WFYI+4indystar.com+4WTHR+4](https://www.wfyi.com/4indystar.com+4WTHR+4)

Criticism and Opposition: The bill faced significant opposition from homeless advocates, legal experts, and community members who argued that it would criminalize homelessness and exacerbate the challenges faced by unsheltered individuals. [IBJ](https://www.indy1130.com/7IBJ)

Legislative Outcome: Due to the controversy and widespread criticism, HB1662 did not advance in the legislative process and was effectively shelved. [IBJ](https://www.indy1130.com/7IBJ)

2. Alternative Approaches and Advocacy

Calls for Supportive Measures: Advocates in Indiana continue to push for policies that focus on providing affordable housing, increasing shelter capacity, and offering supportive services rather than punitive measures.

Community Initiatives: Local organizations are working to implement community-based solutions, emphasizing the need for state support and funding to address the root causes of homelessness effectively.

The contrasting legislative responses in Illinois and Indiana highlight the complexities and challenges in addressing homelessness. Illinois's approach centers on increased funding, strategic planning, and supportive legislation, while Indiana's recent legislative efforts have sparked debates over the criminalization of homelessness and the need for more compassionate solutions.

Impact on Key Sectors

1. Higher Education Campuses

The rise in homelessness poses challenges for higher education institutions:

Student Homelessness: A report indicates that nearly one in seven Chicago students experiences homelessness, affecting their academic performance and well-being. urbanlabs.uchicago.edu

Campus Safety: Increased interactions between the unhoused population and campus communities can lead to safety concerns.

Resource Allocation: Institutions may need to divert resources to support homeless students and address related challenges.

2. Commercial Real Estate

The commercial real estate sector faces several issues due to rising homelessness:

Property Values: Areas with visible homelessness may experience declining property values and reduced investor interest.

Tenant Retention: Businesses may relocate due to safety and aesthetic concerns, leading to higher vacancy rates.

Maintenance Costs: Increased need for security measures and property upkeep to address issues related to encampments.

3. Manufacturing Industries

Manufacturing sectors encounter unique challenges:

Workforce Stability: Employees facing housing instability may have reduced productivity and higher absenteeism.

Facility Security: Unhoused individuals seeking shelter may access manufacturing sites, posing safety and operational risks.

Community Relations: Manufacturers may face public scrutiny if they are perceived as unsupportive or indifferent to local homelessness issues.

PalAmerican Security's Role in Mitigating Challenges

PalAmerican Security offers tailored solutions to help these sectors address the challenges associated with the rising unhoused population:

1. Comprehensive Risk Assessments

Identifying vulnerabilities and developing strategies to enhance safety and security.

2. Customized Security Solutions

Higher Education: Implementing campus safety programs, including patrol services and emergency response planning.

Commercial Real Estate: Providing on-site security personnel, surveillance systems, and tenant safety workshops.

Manufacturing Industries: Securing perimeters, controlling access points, and conducting employee safety training.

3. Community Engagement

Collaborating with local organizations to support initiatives aimed at reducing homelessness and promoting community well-being.



PalAmerican's Differentiated Approach to Empathetically Handling the Unhoused

PalAmerican emphasizes a compassionate yet effective strategy:

1

Environmental Deterrents

Utilize design elements like strategic landscaping to discourage loitering.

2

Integrated Surveillance

Employ intelligent video monitoring systems to detect and respond to unauthorized activities.

3

Collaborative Enforcement

Work alongside local law enforcement to uphold policies against loitering and unauthorized camping.

4

Compassionate Engagement

Train security personnel to engage respectfully with the unhoused, providing information on available resources and support services.

5

Community Involvement

Encourage property stakeholders to support local shelters and participate in solutions to homelessness.

Recent News Highlighting the Issue

1. Chicago's Homelessness Surge

The city experienced a significant increase in its unhoused population, with numbers tripling from 2023 to 2024. This surge is partly due to the influx of migrants seeking asylum. [abc7chicago.com+1Fox 32 Chicago+1](#)

2. National Trends

The U.S. is on track for another record in homelessness, with preliminary data indicating a 10% increase from the previous year. Factors include high housing costs, the expiration of pandemic-related aid, and mental health issues. [apnews.com+3The Wall Street Journal+3nypost.com+3](#)



Conclusion

The rise in the seasonal unhoused population in Greater Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana presents multifaceted challenges across various sectors. By understanding these challenges and implementing strategic measures, organizations can mitigate risks and contribute positively to community well-being. PalAmerican Security stands ready to partner with institutions to develop and implement effective solutions tailored to their unique needs.

PalAmerican offers a comprehensive and compassionate approach to security, integrating professional guard services, mobile patrols, and a state-of-the-art **Security Operations Center (SOC)** to deter unauthorized activity, minimize disruptions, and enhance overall safety.

Take the Next Step:

Schedule a Security Assessment – Connect with PalAmerican's security experts to discuss your unique challenges.

Hire PalAmerican for On-Site Security – Deploy professional security officers trained in de-escalation and public engagement.

Comprehensive Security Training – Equip your team with best practices in crisis intervention and risk mitigation.



Your security challenges deserve a strategic, compassionate, and effective solution. Let PalAmerican help you navigate the complexities of securing your property while maintaining an empathetic approach. Contact us today to schedule your consultation!

Contact Us

PalAmerican Chicago
1000 Jorie Blvd Suite 42, Oak Brook

Contact: Nicole Ryan
Email: nzenter@palamerican.com
Tel: 408-978-9111