

NEWS RELEASE

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The Lord's Place Project Divert: Tackling Homelessness Before it Begins

[The Lord's Place](#) Project Divert is successfully stopping homelessness in its early stages or before it begins. In collaboration with research and nonprofit partners across the U.S., the local social-impact agency has been participating in a pilot program studying homeless shelter diversion services and tackling the lack of alternatives to traditional shelter entry for people experiencing homelessness.

Palm Beach County reflects a unique housing crisis—a 44% increase of individuals experiencing homelessness within the last 18 months. While the county has 550 emergency shelter beds, there are more than 900 people unsheltered daily. Critically, 70% of these individuals are experiencing homelessness for the first time, well above the 28% state average.

Instead of managing homelessness after it occurs, Project Divert intervenes early—serving individuals who recently became homeless, have not experienced repeated episodes, and do not need intensive services. Through flexible case management and targeted financial assistance, participants receive help with rent negotiations, temporary housing, vehicle repairs, relocation costs, and other immediate needs to prevent shelter entry.

For instance, in July 2025, the agency received a call from an elderly couple living in their car. Both in their seventies, the husband and wife lost their home and had nowhere to turn. The diversion case manager met with the couple to learn more about their situation. After immigrating to the United States nearly 50 years ago from Israel, they established a home, a family, and a business in New York City. Tragedy struck when their son was murdered in a road rage incident. Mourning the death of their son took a toll on their mental health, and the couple decided to sell their business and move to South Florida. With the rising cost of living, their fixed income was not enough to sustain their housing, resulting in their homelessness. With the support of their diversion case manager, the couple determined that they would have an opportunity for affordable housing in their home country. The diversion program provided flexible financial assistance to allow a few-nights stay in a hotel and then a flight to return home to reunify with their families in their home community.

“While this couple may have been able to secure beds in a shelter, this would not have permanently resolved their homelessness. At The Lord’s Place, we are grateful for the opportunity to work with national and community partners in being part of innovative solutions to break the cycle of homelessness for good—especially when we can intervene, prevent homelessness before it starts, and bring renewed hope to our clients,” stated Christine Frederick, CEO of The Lord’s Place.

In partnership with University of Notre Dame, Pulte Family Foundation, and Family Promise affiliates, Project Divert is the first national, multi-site randomized controlled trial for homeless shelter diversion services. It simultaneously provides immediate help while generating scientific evidence to validate and scale diversion strategies nationwide. Rather than responding after people enter shelters, the program intercepts individuals at the point of housing crisis, recognizing that first-time unhoused individuals need different interventions than chronically homeless populations.

By creating a program that simultaneously serves people in crisis and generates research needed to convince policymakers and funders, Project Divert addresses both immediate needs and systemic change in one integrated solution.

Project Divert is creating ripple effects throughout Palm Beach County and beyond, demonstrating success in service delivery and systemic change. The diversion program served 257 clients in 20 months compared to 140 clients who were targeted to be served in that time period. Since the project’s inception, Palm Beach County has seen a 44% decrease in first-time homelessness among its unsheltered populations. While not claiming direct causation, this early intervention model likely contributed. Other benefits of Project Divert include freeing up emergency shelter beds and reducing the strain on emergency services.

“Project Divert is true innovation. We are not just assisting individuals and families, we are fundamentally changing how communities prevent homelessness through early intervention, evidence-based practices, and cost-effective solutions—serving as a national model,” added Frederick.

The successful outcomes of the program helped The Lord’s Place secure ongoing funding. In addition to a three-year county grant, one local community partner has stepped in “Just in Time” to support this effort. [GL Homes](#) recently committed \$15,000 to help fund Project Divert.

According to GL Homes Vice President of Community Relations Sarah Alsofrom, “Let’s prevent homelessness before it starts. Big problems such as eviction, job loss, and family turmoil are stopped in their tracks. We’ll keep struggling families in their homes by promoting stability and peace of mind.”

For more information on The Lord’s Place, Project Divert, or other programs and services that are breaking the cycle of homelessness for men, women, and children, visit thelordsplace.org.



About The Lord's Place

For 45 years, The Lord's Place, a non-sectarian agency, has been working to break the cycle of homelessness for men, women, and children in Palm Beach County, FL, through innovative, compassionate and effective services. The Fortin Family Campus in West Palm Beach provides training and support services including: the operation of Café Joshua; job training and placement services; clinical and care coordination; community engagement services; and a reentry program helping men and women transitioning from incarceration. The agency also owns or rents 15 supportive and graduate housing locations, as well as 85 scattered site apartments, to help house about 300 individuals every night. For more information, visit thelordsplace.org.

PHOTO ID:

[5948](#): The Lord's Place Engagement Center at the Fortin Family Campus in West Palm Beach where individuals on the verge of homelessness or already experiencing homelessness have the opportunity to meet with case managers to address their unique needs and access community resources.

Photo credit: David Scarola Photography

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