



THE WAY HOME

Season Three Toolkit



KAISER PERMANENTE®

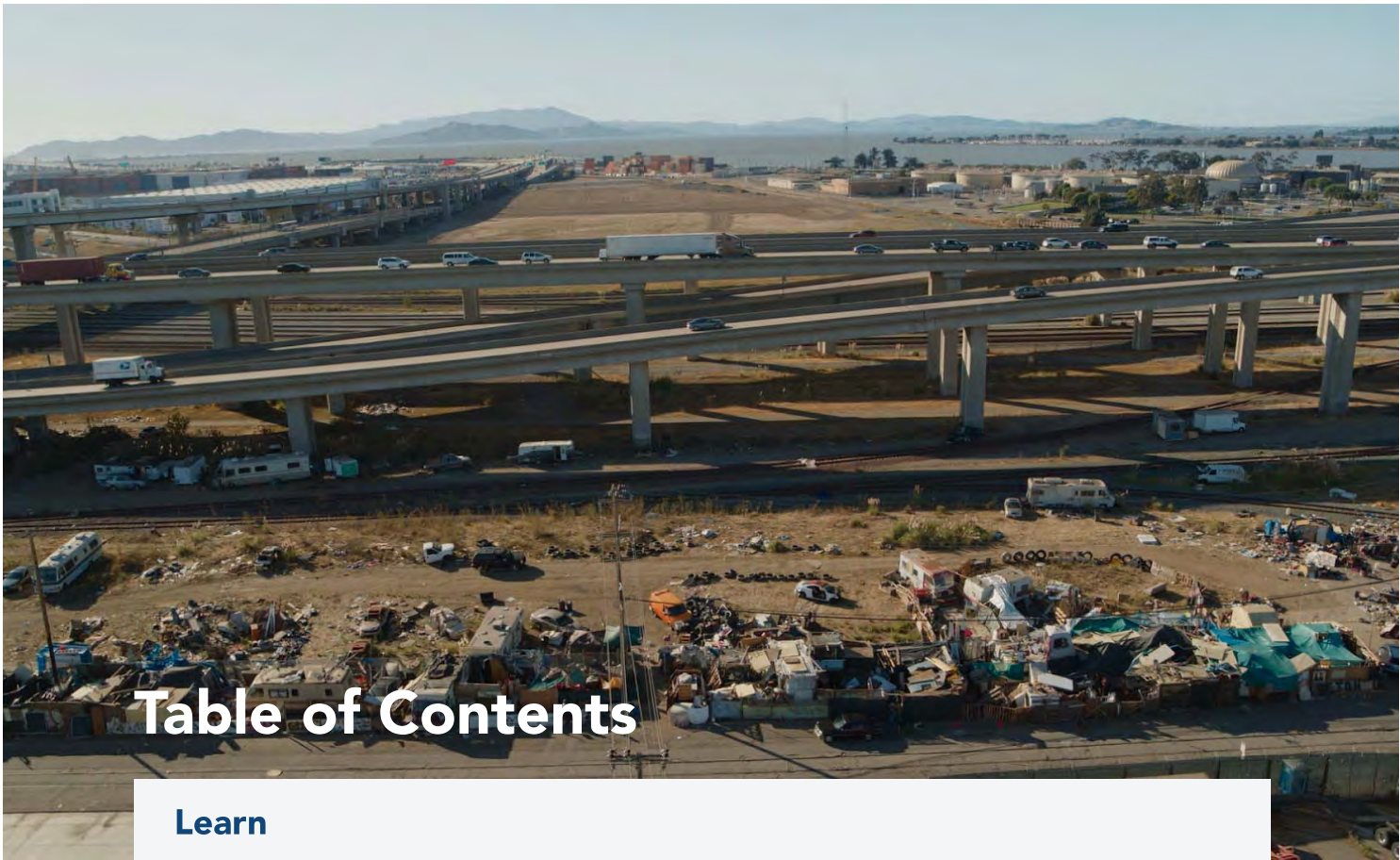


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About the Series

The Way Home is a short-form documentary series sponsored by Kaiser Permanente and produced by KTF Films and Bread and Butter Films aimed at deepening understanding, sparking dialogue, illuminating root causes, and promising solutions to the homelessness crisis across the country.

The series humanizes the homelessness crisis through personal storytelling, documenting the lives of people experiencing homelessness that are often overlooked and lifting up promising solutions to end homelessness in California, Washington state, and beyond.

All three seasons are now available for free on YouTube.

“Homelessness is often addressed in terms of the systemic problems at its core, but the people and lives directly affected by it are often overlooked. The opportunity to raise awareness by documenting the reality of this broad issue on a human level has been eye-opening for me, and I hope audiences will similarly come to see homelessness from a new perspective.”

—Don Hardy, director of *The Way Home*

About

Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente is committed to helping shape the future of health care. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and not-for-profit health plans. Founded in 1945, Kaiser Permanente has a mission to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve 12.7 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal Permanente Medical Group physicians, specialists, and team of caregivers. Our expert and caring medical teams are empowered and supported by industry-leading technology advances and tools for health promotion, disease prevention, state-of-the-art care delivery, and world-class chronic disease management. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education, and the support of community health.

Kaiser Permanente believes that without a stable place to call home, it is nearly impossible to maintain good health. For several years, the organization has put housing solutions at the center of its efforts to improve conditions for health across communities, leading efforts to end homelessness and preserve and create affordable housing by making impact investments, shaping policy, and fostering innovation through partnerships.

Kaiser Permanente supported the production of *The Way Home* to deepen understanding of, spark dialogue around, and illuminate root causes of—as well as promising solutions to—the homelessness crisis in California and across the country.



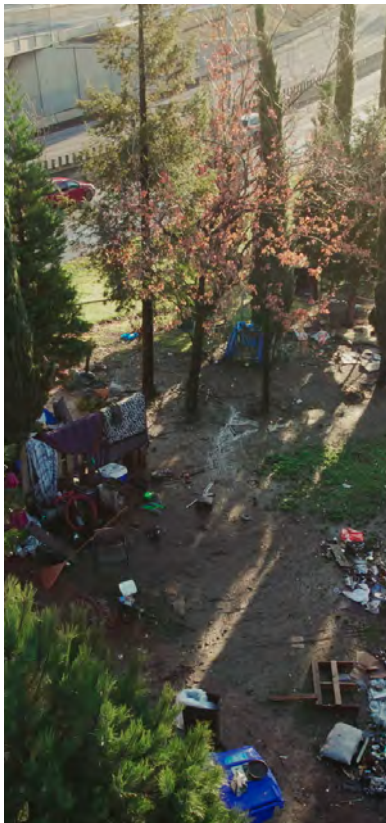
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How To Use This Toolkit

Thank you for sharing ***The Way Home*** with your community!

This toolkit is designed to help community partners reflect on the series and guide viewers through a meaningful discussion on the documentary. We hope the series and this toolkit will provide an opportunity for conversation and action and give your audience the context to think critically about the ongoing homelessness crisis.



This toolkit will enable your audience to talk about the ways the series relates to their own lives and beliefs and support them in efforts to take action and articulate their thoughts around the points below:

- 1 Common misconceptions surrounding homelessness.
- 2 Root causes of homelessness across the country, including a lack of affordable housing and systemic racism.
- 3 Promising solutions to end homelessness, including increasing the supply of affordable housing.



Host a Screening

Having a constructive conversation about issues that continue to perpetuate the homelessness crisis, like deep-seated racial inequities and a lack of affordable housing, is not easy, so it is critical to create a space to discuss these issues with empathy and understanding.

Keep the following items in mind before hosting your screening event:

- Preview the series yourself so that you can speak to the content well before your screening begins.
- Remember that as a facilitator, your role is to guide the discussion and set expectations that allow for everyone's voices to be heard.
- You are not expected to be an expert on the issues presented. Consider involving a subject matter expert from your local community in your screening if possible.
- [Read more](#) about Kaiser Permanente's efforts to end homelessness.
- There are no licensing issues in sharing this series in a public or private gathering.

Screening Event Considerations

Before the Screening

- Send save-the-dates 4-6 weeks prior to the event. Send invitations with more information 2-4 weeks prior to the event. Consider including teaser segments in your invitation. **Teaser segments can be found on YouTube for each episode: [Episode 1](#), [Episode 2](#), [Episode 3](#), [Episode 4](#).**
- Consider your audience. Setting your goal and a vision for your event ahead of time will help you decide on your key audience for the screening and discussion. For example, are you looking to identify those who are predisposed to community engagement and advocacy, but don't have a deep understanding of the homeless crisis? Or local policymakers and housing organization leaders for a deeper discussion on what opportunities exist in your community? Whom you invite will depend on your goal.
- Promote the event to existing partners and ask them to share it with their communities.
- If your organization does not have a suitable space to host the screening, consider partnering with other local organizations, nonprofits, community centers, or faith-based groups.
- Test the equipment you plan to use prior to the screening; check for sound quality and volume.

During the Screening

- Consider providing light refreshments to encourage social interaction and foster a sense of community.
- Appoint a facilitator or two to moderate the discussion.
- Provide time for reflection and discussion following the screening, using conversation starters and discussion questions from this toolkit.
- Direct audience members to resources provided in this toolkit and other local resources to help them to continue to process, learn, and act after the screening ends.

After the Screening

- Ask attendees to complete a brief survey sharing feedback on the event. Questions can ask how informative the event was and if attendees are motivated to engage in more conversation about homelessness in their communities.
- Consider whether there is a call to action your organization would like to make.

Facts About **HOMELESSNESS**

Homelessness has been on the rise since 2017. The crisis has become more pervasive and visible, with rates of housing insecurity rapidly increasing amid the economic fallout of COVID-19. These dual crises are hitting low-income and communities of color hardest, widening existing gaps in equity.

Affordable housing is a key solution to ending the homelessness crisis. People experiencing homelessness report higher rates of health-related issues. The consequences of racism show that more people of color are experiencing, or are more likely to experience, homelessness.

Homelessness is solvable if it is treated as the national emergency it is. Successful short-term solutions provide an opportunity to transform temporary fixes into more permanent solutions. It will take creative solutions, community collaboration, and mobilization to make it happen.

Here are some key facts about homelessness from the [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#):

- Homelessness has been on the rise since 2017, experiencing an overall increase of 6 percent.
- In 2022, counts of individuals experiencing homelessness (421,392 people) and chronically homeless individuals (127,768) reached record highs in the history of data collection.
- Unsheltered rates are also trending upward, impacting most racial, ethnic, and gender subgroups.
- Homeless services systems continued to expand the availability of both temporary and permanent beds in 2022, but these resources still fall short of reaching everyone in need.
- To end homelessness, the nation will need an adequate supply of housing that is affordable to lower-income households. Until that problem is solved, the homeless services system will help people quickly return to housing, connect to employment, and get needed services and support. ([Source](#))

Who Is Experiencing Homelessness in 2022: Special Populations

- 22 percent are chronically homeless individuals (or people with disabilities who have experienced long-term or repeated incidents of homelessness).
- 6 percent are veterans (distinguished due to their service to the country).
- 5 percent are unaccompanied youth under 25 (considered vulnerable due to their age).
- 40 percent of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ, while the general youth population is 10 percent LGBTQ. ([Source](#))



Series Breakdown

Each episode of *The Way Home* follows a different theme and storyline. It is not necessary to watch these in order of their season release. Each episode can stand on its own or be watched in order. However, when a season is watched as a whole, each episode builds toward a conclusion at the end of the final episode.

Season One focuses on the root causes of homelessness in California and how volunteers, nonprofit organizations, and local government leaders are working together to create innovative, sustainable housing solutions. Season One is comprised of four segments and runs approximately 45 minutes long.

Season Two, which premiered in June 2021, focuses on the impact of COVID-19 and systemic racism on the ongoing homelessness crisis in California and the nation. Season Two is comprised of four segments and runs approximately 33 minutes long.

Season Three, released in October 2023, focuses on effective solutions for ending homelessness, both new—arising from the COVID-19 pandemic—and more established strategies. Each approach has successfully helped people secure stable homes and offers a pathway toward ending the crisis nationally. Season Three is comprised of four segments and runs approximately 48 minutes long.

Season Three

Episode One: Lessons Learned

As the COVID-19 pandemic becomes an endemic disease, many people wonder what short-term solutions to homelessness developed during the emergency response phase can be converted into long-term solutions that can be replicated nationwide. Record numbers of people were housed during the pandemic, but even more lost their jobs and, if rent moratoriums end, are at significant risk of falling into homelessness. What diversion and intervention programs are there to help protect those in need? Is building more affordable housing the only solution?

Interviews

- Jeff Olivet, Executive Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Bobby Watts, CEO, National Health Care for the Homeless Council
- Margot Kushel, Director, UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative
- Ryan Finnigan, Senior Research Associate, Turner Center for Housing Innovation, University of California, Berkeley
- Emily Halcon, Director of Homelessness Initiatives, Sacramento County, California
- Paula Birdsong, Executive Director, Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps
- Jennifer Landert, Manufacturing Specialist, Pallet
- Stephan Daus, Former Regional Director of Housing Development, Sacramento Mercy Housing
- Susana Treviño, Youth Advocate, The Loft, Walla Walla, Washington
- Esther Taylor, Anchor Community Core Team Member, former foster care and unhoused person, Walla Walla, Washington





Episode Two: Lilly

In Portland, Oregon, homelessness is very visible throughout the city.



Health Share of Oregon is working to change that through its Metro 300 program that quickly puts temporary housing vouchers into people's hands while also providing a direct path to permanent housing and support services. Our main character in this episode is Lilly Killbear, a Native American woman who has experienced a great deal of trauma in her life and ended up without stable housing. She's on a new, better path because of the Metro 300 program.

Interviews

- Alyssa H. Craigie, Director, Health Systems Integration, Health Share of Oregon
- Lillian Alice Killbear, formerly unhoused person and Metro 300 participant, Portland, Oregon
- Joanna Jones, Elders Housing Coordinator, Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest

Episode Three:

Lived Experience

In Walla Walla, Washington, youth homelessness has been rising for years. Now, though, the unsheltered have hope because of the data-driven work done by frontline community organizations. The young people featured in this episode have a brighter future for themselves, and now they share what they know to help others find their way off the street.

Interviews

- Julie Patiño, Executive Director, A Way Home Washington
- Tim Meliah, Director, Catholic Charities Walla Walla
- Sam Jackle, Anchor Community Initiative Coordinator, Walla Walla County Dept. of Community Health
- Justin Keele, Anchor Community Core Team Member, former unhoused person, Walla Walla, Washington
- Esther Taylor, Anchor Community Core Team Member, former foster care and unhoused person, Walla Walla, Washington
- Mike Woolson, Homelessness and Young Adult Service Navigator, Blue Mountain Action Council, Walla Walla, Washington
- Dennis F. Moore III, unhoused person, Walla Walla, Washington





Episode Four:

We're In This Together

Fairfax County, Virginia, is a suburb of Washington, D.C., and one of the wealthiest communities in the U.S. It also has approximately 1,200 people experiencing homelessness every night. Although only 10 percent of the residents of Fairfax County identify as Black, over 50 percent of people living unsheltered within their community identify as Black.

Now, an innovative diversion program is working to change that. The diversion team steps in to help before individuals lose their homes and provides what individuals need in a targeted way. In this episode, we meet the committed people making this diversion program a model for the nation. And we go with them to visit the people they've helped.

Interviews

- Abby Dunner, Program Manager, Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness
- Sandra McLean, Diversion Program Manager, Shelter House, Fairfax, VA
- Jessamyn Ayers, Director of Data Analytics and Insights, Shelter House, Fairfax, VA
- Stacey Smith, Diversion Specialist, Shelter House, Fairfax, VA
- Joe Meyer, CEO, Shelter House, Fairfax Virginia
- Theresa Kemp, Shelter House participant, Fairfax, VA
- Everette Banks, Shelter House participant, Fairfax, VA
- Angela Peterson, Shelter House participant, Fairfax, VA
- Jeff Olivet, Executive Director, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Bobby Watts, CEO, National Health Care for the Homeless Council
- Margot Kushel, Director, UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative

Season Two

Episode One: A Sense of Urgency



This episode examines the stark impact of COVID-19 on people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, introducing California's Project Roomkey as an effective response to urgent needs amid the pandemic.

Key themes: increase in job loss leading to increase in homelessness, lack of access to health care and other services (e.g., shelter, food, and transportation)

Episode Two: Food, Water, Care



This episode follows street medics, volunteers, and health care workers providing necessary and critical care to people experiencing homelessness, spotlighting the Roots Community Health Center.

Key themes: chronic homelessness, health-related issues, barriers created by the pandemic (e.g., lack of access to transportation and other services)

Season Two

Episode Three: Repercussions of Racism



This episode explores the history of systemic racism on housing policy and homelessness, examining the impact of redlining in Pacoima, a small neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley, and promising solutions to end homelessness.

Key themes: race inequity and inequality, organizing, policy and structure

Episode Four: A Challenge, An Opportunity



This episode shows how the sense of urgency amid the COVID-19 pandemic spurred action, revealing that powerful policies and programs, such as Project Roomkey, can be implemented at an accelerated pace.

Key themes: importance of public support, long-term and permanent solutions are the next crucial step

Season One

Episode One: How Did We Get Here?



This episode examines the origins of the homelessness crisis in the United States and how it has grown to an epidemic in California since the 1980s.

Key themes: housing crisis, labor shortage, policies, perceptions of people experiencing homelessness

Episode Two: The Most Vulnerable



This episode examines seniors, who make up more than half of the homeless population in California, and the efforts to help them get off the streets.

Key themes: risks and solutions for seniors experiencing homelessness, mental and physical health

Season One

Episode Three: The Invisible



This episode follows a community of volunteers, nonprofit organizations, and others working together to find creative solutions to solve the homelessness crisis in Bakersfield, California.

Key themes: grassroots organizing, community organizing, housing first as a solution

Episode Four: The California Dream



This episode examines the growing housing crisis in California.

Key themes: lack of affordable housing

General Audiences

Conversation Starters

- 1 What are your initial reactions to the series?
- 2 What were some facts that surprised you?
- 3 Which of the subjects did you connect with most? Why?
- 4 What were some things that resonated with you?
- 5 What is your biggest takeaway from the series?
- 6 Do you feel more motivated to take action having watched the series?

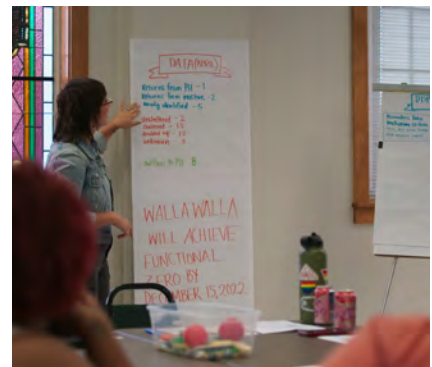
Discussion Questions

- 1 Many people have misconceptions about who experiences homelessness. What were some misconceptions that you had about people experiencing homelessness? How did the series change your perception?
- 2 The housing crisis fuels the homelessness crisis, and many states aren't producing enough affordable housing. What have you learned about the housing crisis and its effect on homelessness from watching this series?
- 3 Season 3, Episode 4 touches upon how, nationwide, people of color are disproportionately impacted by homelessness and housing insecurity. What can be done to help solve these deep-seated racial inequities?
- 4 Contrary to what many people believe, not all people experiencing homelessness are jobless. What can be done to support people who are working but cannot afford housing or reliable health care?
- 5 Season 3 focuses on effective solutions for ending homelessness, both new—arising from the COVID-19 pandemic—and more established strategies. What are your thoughts on the solutions highlighted in the series (e.g., Health Share Oregon's Metro 300 program)? How can successful temporary measures become long-term solutions?
- 6 How can we work together to end homelessness for good?
- 7 How can we educate ourselves and others about the solutions to ending homelessness?
- 8 How can we support current initiatives and take action?
- 9 What can you do in your community to take action?

Discussion Guides

Policy and Health Care Audiences

- 1 How can communities start to overcome system failures, like unjust housing policies, for people experiencing homelessness and those at risk?
- 2 What are some policies that can be changed, or implemented, to address widening gaps in health equity?
- 3 Season 3 focuses on effective solutions for ending homelessness, both new and more established strategies. What are your thoughts on the solutions highlighted in the series (e.g., Health Share Oregon's Metro 300 program)? How can successful temporary measures become long-term solutions?
- 4 How can programs like the diversion program highlighted in Season 3, Episode 4 be replicated in other communities? What are some of the different challenges communities face? What are some other creative solutions?
- 5 We often look to nonprofit and public organizations to provide solutions. How can corporate and private entities help? What role can public-private partnerships play?



Call to Action

The homelessness crisis across the U.S. demands action. After screening *The Way Home*, consider sharing the following with your audience to inspire action:



Educate yourself and your community on root causes and promising solutions to the homelessness crisis, sharing *The Way Home* with your network and learning more about the organizations featured in the series.

Create spaces to discuss healthy housing solutions, dismantling misconceptions about homelessness and encouraging conversations that build empathy and understanding for people experiencing homelessness.

Discuss and support innovative, equitable housing policies, looking for opportunities to transform emergency measures into long-term, sustainable solutions.

Volunteer with organizations in your community to provide resources and critical services that support people experiencing homelessness.



Community Partners and Sources

To learn more about the partners featured in *The Way Home*, see the list below and links to their organizations.

- [Abode Services](#)
- [A Way Home Washington](#)
- [Anchor Community](#)
- [Bay Area Community Services](#)
- [Be Finally Free, Inc](#)
- [Blue Mountain Action Council](#)
- [Catholic Charities Walla Walla](#)
- [Community Partners](#)
- [Community Solutions](#)
- [Destination Home](#)
- [East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation](#)
- [Enterprise Community Partners](#)
- [Enterprise Community Partners, Los Angeles](#)
- [Flood Ministries](#)
- [Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness](#)
- [Health Share of Oregon](#)
- [Homeless Initiative, County of LA](#)
- [Kern County Housing Authority](#)
- [LA Family Housing](#)
- [LA Housing Services](#)
- [Mercy Housing Sacramento](#)
- [National Health Care for the Homeless Council](#)
- [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)
- [National Health Care for the Homeless Council](#)
- [Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest](#)
- [Pallet](#)
- [Project Roomkey](#)
- [Roots Community Health Center](#)
- [Sacramento Homeless Services](#)
- [Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency](#)
- [Sacramento County: Homeless Initiatives](#)
- [Sacramento Mercy Housing](#)
- [Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps](#)
- [Shelter House](#)
- [The Loft](#)
- [UCB Turner Center for Housing Innovation](#)
- [UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative](#)
- [US Interagency Council on Homelessness](#)
- [Weave](#)

Templates

Sample Invitation

For you to customize

Subject: You Are Invited: Documentary Screening and Panel Discussion

Dear (Name),

Homelessness has become part of our nation's public landscape, but its visibility shouldn't be ignored. (YOUR ORGANIZATION) is proud to support *The Way Home* docuseries because it lifts the voices of those who have lived through housing instability and found their way home. Their stories and journeys reveal pathways that our country can take to end this crisis, improve health, and strengthen communities.

Please join us on (DATE) for a screening and discussion of Season 3 of *The Way Home*, which was released in October 2023. The season highlights the crucial link between housing and health. Each of the episodes highlights stories that reveal lives strengthened through programs in California, Oregon, Washington state, and Virginia that have come up with promising solutions to helping people experiencing homelessness find permanent housing or take steps before people lose their homes.

DATE

LOCATION

TIME

REGISTER

We hope to see you there!

(Your organization's logo)

Templates

Sample Thank You

For you to customize

Subject: Thank You for Joining *The Way Home* Documentary Screening and Panel Discussion

Dear (Name),

Thank you for joining us for a preview screening of *The Way Home* and discussion exploring solutions to the homelessness crisis, as well as the important connections between housing and health. We appreciate your support and ideas.

We want to hear from you. Please share your thoughts by completing a brief survey. Gathering your reflections will help us improve and shape future events.

If you missed our event, you can find the recording ([here](#)).

To learn more about *The Way Home* and get a link to all three seasons, visit: thewayhomedoc.com.

Thank you for your partnership,

(Your organization's logo)

Templates

Sample Survey

For you to customize

Survey tools like SurveyMonkey or Microsoft Forms are an easy way to capture feedback. Consider displaying a QR code immediately following your event that links your audience directly to the survey.

Some survey questions to consider are:

- How informative was the event? (rating scale)
- What new learnings or connections did you take away from the event?
- How do you intend to apply any information or insights gained from the event in your work?
- Today's conversation motivates me to engage further with the presenting partner organizations (Y/N)
- Option to leave name for further collaboration



THE WAY

HOME



Closing

No one organization can solve the affordable housing and homelessness crisis. Only through innovative partnerships, strategic investments, and impactful storytelling can we move the needle for our most vulnerable communities. We are grateful to our partners featured in the film series. Thank you for sharing your expertise and helping us continue the conversation on this very important issue.