

# DENVER BASIC INCOME PROJECT



**MAYORS FOR A  
GUARANTEED  
INCOME**

## NEWS RELEASE

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*(For Immediate Release)*

### **DENVER TO BE FIRST CITY PILOTING A GUARANTEED BASIC INCOME FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

*Denver Basic Income Project Launches in partnership with Mayor Hancock's Office  
and Mayors for a Guaranteed Income to Help Support Denver Residents in Need*

DENVER (April 29, 2021) — [Denver Basic Income Project](#), in partnership with Mayor Hancock's Office and [Mayors for a Guaranteed Income](#), will be among the nation's first efforts to determine the effectiveness of monthly unconditional payments to residents experiencing homelessness.

**The Denver Basic Income Project** is giving basic income to individuals experiencing homelessness with the goal of building a healthier society grounded in social justice and centered around improving human thriving. Denver is poised to become the first city in the United States to study the impact of providing this direct cash assistance to unhoused individuals.

"Homelessness, income inequality, a hollowed-out middle class, an alarming disparity in access to opportunity, and the challenges of mental health and poverty all stem from a lack of equity in our economic systems," Mayor Michael B. Hancock said. "The Denver Basic Income Project is an opportunity to explore how the philanthropic community and the private sector can augment public support for those living in poverty, particularly our unhoused neighbors, and extend that hand up to stability."

Direct cash transfers empower individuals with dignity and provide the choice to make spending decisions that best suit their needs. Contrary to popular belief, it's proving out in other communities that individuals largely make good choices that result in increased well being, greater financial stability, and new opportunities for self-determination, choice, goal-setting and risk-taking.

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“Our society can do better,” said Denver Basic Income Project Founder Mark Donovan. “Direct cash payments move toward eliminating wealth inequality and begin to build a healthier community here in Denver and hopefully we’ll create a model for other cities to follow.”

The Denver Basic Income Project recognizes that people are disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression: race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. The multiple struggles and intersecting oppressions the unhoused face are simply unacceptable in a just society.

"The Denver Basic Income Project is a powerful example of what can happen when the private sector, government, and philanthropy come together to co-create solutions to complex challenges," says Javier Alberto Soto, President and CEO of The Denver Foundation. "Many people in our community need resources to overcome deep, systemic issues that lead them to homelessness in the first place. Basic incomes will create a lifeline for stability, economic opportunity, and wellness."

This privately funded community initiative was started with a seed donation by Donovan, a Denver resident who believes that taking action today can have an immediate impact on the lives of people who are suffering and in great need. The program is being modeled after the groundbreaking New Leaf project (NLP) in Vancouver and the Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED). The SEED program’s [research results](#) highlight the positive impact of direct cash payments. The cash transfers reduced income volatility and allowed recipients to find full time employment. Recipients of guaranteed income were healthier, showing less depression and anxiety and enhanced wellbeing. The [Impact Report](#) from the New Leaf Project study has shown that moving into housing provides stability, reduces the risk of trauma, improves health, and frees up shelter beds for others in need. Cash transfer recipients prioritized and increased spending on recurring staples like housing/rent, food, transportation, and utility bills. They also saw a 39 percent reduction in spending on goods such as alcohol, drugs or cigarettes.

The Denver Basic Income Project is raising an additional \$5,500,000 to launch this initiative. They are asking for the support, both large and small, of anyone who agrees that this Denver community can do better to support those in need. Individuals will have an opportunity to make a difference today. The project is a part of [Impact Charitable](#), a 501c3 who partners with public and private funders who want to mobilize their assets into communities in creative and impactful ways. All donations to the program are tax deductible. To donate, visit: <https://denverbasicincomeproject.org/>

## **ABOUT THE DENVER BASIC INCOME PROJECT COALITION**

The Denver Basic Income Project is a partnership between local nonprofit service providers fighting homelessness, caring community members and organizations providing funding and support. The organization has partnered with the University of Denver’s Center for Housing and Homelessness Research (CHHR) which will be running a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) to

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capture the results and contribute to the policy debate advocating for Universal Basic Income as an effective mechanism to fight poverty, homelessness and many forms of inequality and injustice. The research will analyze the impact of direct cash on speed to housing, wellness, income volatility, time use and numerous other factors. It will also compare the impact of up-front lump sum transfers vs. monthly transfers. The impact of different approaches by the service providers will also be assessed. The project will begin with a soft launch in the early summer and then the full launch in the fall.

### **The Denver Basic Income Project Team**

Founder: Mark Donovan

Director: Jessica Sherwood

Research Team: Daniel Brisson, Jennifer Wilson, Katie Calhoun

Fiscal Sponsor: Impact Charitable

Working Group Partners: Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, Colorado Village Collaborative, Denver Alliance for Street Health Response (DASHR), The Delores Project, Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, Mile High Ministries, Urban Peak, Denver Indigenous Family Resource Center (DIFRC), St Francis Center, Denver Homeless Out Loud (DHOL), and Donald Burnes, PhD, Founder, Burnes Institute for Poverty Research at the Colorado Center on Law & Policy.

### **ABOUT MAYORS FOR A GUARANTEED INCOME**

Building off his first-of-its-kind guaranteed income pilot ([SEED](#)) and rooted in Dr. King's legacy, Mayor Michael D. Tubbs (Stockton, CA) and the [Economic Security Project](#) founded [Mayors for a Guaranteed Income](#) (MGI) in June 2020. Since that time, 45 mayors have come together in this network to advocate for a guaranteed income — direct, recurring cash payments — that lifts all of our communities, building a resilient, just America. Follow MGI on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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