

Vermont Agency of Human Services Summary Housing Outcomes State Fiscal Year 2015

The Agency of Human Services strives to improve the health and wellbeing of Vermonters today and tomorrow and to protect those among us who are unable to protect themselves.

All departments of AHS recognize the critical role of stable housing in the lives of the people we work with. Addressing the housing needs of our clients today and tomorrow requires options ranging from emergency responses, prevention resources, transitional programs, and long-term housing solutions (such as supportive services, rent subsidies, and greater access to housing). Our departments provide these housing services directly and through partnerships with dozens of local non-profit organizations in all regions of Vermont.

The following summaries highlight activities from key AHS housing programs over the past fiscal year reflecting this multi-pronged approach to housing stability.

Independent Living

Expanding Community Opportunities for all Ages

Over **200** home-seekers and home-providers were matched through **HomeShare** programs, supported by the Department of Aging and Independent Living.

72 Vermonters with physical disabilities made accessibility modifications to their homes through the **Home Access Program**, supported by the Department of Aging and Independent Living.

Over **5,000** seniors and persons with disabilities maintained independent living situations with services funded by AHS programs and coordinated by the **Support and Services at Home** program.

67 young adults, who had formerly been in DCF custody, achieved safe, stable housing with flexible financial supports offered by the Department for Children and Families' **Youth Development Program**.

Emergency Shelter & Services

Providing a Safe, Emergency Response

4,303 homeless Vermonters, a quarter of whom were children, found safe emergency shelter supported by **Emergency Solutions Grants** from the Department for Children and Families.

During times when emergency shelters were full, the department's **General Assistance Temporary Shelter** program paid for **2,981** homeless households to stay in motels and **560** households to stay at Harbor Place.

Rental Subsidies

Targeting Financial Assistance to Support Stability

Approximately **190** formerly homeless households (**248 adults** and **297 children**) moved into affordable housing with a **Vermont Rental Subsidy** from the Department for Children and Families. Among families who exited the program during the year, **87%** successfully transitioned to a federal subsidy or increased income and did not require subsidy.

Approximately **145** persons with serious mental illness accessed permanent affordable housing with a **Subsidy and Care** voucher from the Department of Mental Health. **100%** of participants enrolled maintained stable housing for at least 90 days.

Approximately **300** adults with mental illness found affordable housing with financial assistance from the **Community Rehabilitation and Treatment Housing Support Fund** in the Department of Mental Health. **78%** maintained housing stability for at least 90 days.

Weatherization

Improving the Efficiency of Vermont Homes

1,123 Vermont households with low incomes were able to weatherize their home to increase thermal efficiency, comfort and safety through the **Weatherization Assistance Program** in the Department for Children and Families' Office of Economic Opportunity.

Supportive Housing

Customizing Services for Tenants at Higher Risk

91 formerly homeless families moved into housing and received intensive case management supports through the **Family Supportive Housing** program in the Department for Children and Families. **86%** of families remained stably housed at year-end.

100 individuals were housed in the community through the **Pathways to Housing** program, supported by the Department of Mental Health.

Homelessness Prevention

...and Rapidly Re-Housing the Homeless

2,167 Vermonters (in 867 households) received prevention or rapid re-housing services and assistance through **Emergency Solutions Grants** from the Department for Children and Families. **67%** of households at-risk of homelessness had their housing stabilized within 28 days and **66%** of these households subsequently maintained their housing for at least 90 days following assistance. **44%** of homeless households were housed within 28 days and **72%** of these households maintained their housing for at least 90 days following assistance.

2,779 clients received homelessness prevention services supported by **Community Housing Grants** in the Department for Children and Families. **82%** of households had their housing stabilized within 28 days and **86%** of these households maintained that housing for at least 90 days. Among **1,643** clients receiving Rapid Re-Housing assistance, **72%** of households were housed within 28 days and **77%** of these households maintained that housing for at least 90 days following assistance.

112 families that were homeless or precariously-housed received additional housing case management support through **Reach-Up Housing Grants** in the Department for Children and Families. **40%** were re-housed or stabilized within 28 days of being identified as homeless or at-risk. Of families re-housed or stabilized, **95%** remained stably housed for at least 90 day following assistance.

Transitional Housing

Creating Pathways from Institution to Community

952 offenders were housed in the community and received service supports through the **Transitional Housing** program in the Department of Corrections. Approximately **35%** of participants successfully transitioned to independent living during the year.

433 people with substance abuse disorders received short-term sober housing and recovery supports through the **Transitional Housing** program in the Department of Health's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs. Approximately **13%** of participants successfully transitioned to stable housing.

2015 Other Developments from the Past Year

Commitment to Ending Homelessness

In the spring of 2015, Governor Shumlin and AHS Secretary Cohen announced Vermont's goal of **Ending Child and Family Homelessness by 2020**. Vermont has adopted the national *Family Connection* framework which emphasizes coordinated system work to ensure people in housing crisis are rapidly connected to appropriate resources and services.

Leveraging State Funds to Bring Success to Scale

A legislative appropriation in 2015 allowed the **Family Supportive Housing** program to expand from three to five AHS districts. AHS is now exploring how these general fund dollars can leverage federal dollars to further expand services into un-served regions.

A Small But Welcome Reduction in Homelessness

For the first time in years, Vermont's official rate of homelessness has declined. While the change across all homeless populations was only **2%**, the reduction among children was a more significant **17%**.

Consolidating Prevention & Re-Housing Activities

Beginning in July 2015, the Department of Children and Families combined Emergency Solutions Grants and Community Housing Grants in the **Housing & Opportunity Program** grants, administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity.