

# **Housing Programs Summary**



**Economic Services Division**

**Department for Children and Families  
Agency of Human Services**

## **General Assistance - Emergency Housing Program**

The General Assistance (GA) program provides aid to individuals and families who have experienced an emergency and as a result, are unable to provide for their basic needs.

Examples include:

- food and personal needs money
- housing (e.g., mortgage, rent, room rent, emergency housing)
- fuel and utilities
- medical assistance

Individuals and families apply at an Economic Services' district office and have a same day face-to-face interview.

Emergency housing is provided if alternative arrangements (i.e. family, friends or shelter) are not immediately available, and the individual or family does not have income or assets to provide housing on their own. Eligibility is based on one of the following criteria:

- Catastrophic (fire, flood, natural disaster, court-ordered or constructive eviction, and domestic violence)
- Vulnerable Population (65 years of age or older, those who receive SSI or SSDI, children six years of age or younger, or those in the third trimester of pregnancy)
- Cold Weather Exception is in place as outlined below:

Eligibility for temporary shelter will be relaxed when any of the following conditions exist, or are anticipated to exist, between 6pm and 6am in the Vermont zip code where the homeless applicant is applying:

- Temperatures or Wind Chill are *less than 20 degrees* (F)
- Temperatures are *less than 32 degrees* (F) with a *higher than 50%* chance of precipitation reported

## **The Vermont Rental Subsidy Program**

The Vermont Rental Subsidy Program (VRS) is a state funded, short term (12 month) housing subsidy program. VRS was created in December 2011 and provides rental assistance and case management services to homeless individuals and families while they work to increase their income and/or secure a longer term housing subsidy such as Section 8.

VRS works closely with the Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) who provides VRS recipients with a preference on the Section 8 waiting list. Case management for the VRS program is provided by local housing review teams in each district and includes staff from ESD, AHS Field Directors, community partners, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), the Department of Corrections (DOC), domestic violence agencies, religious organizations, etc. The housing review teams make all referrals to ESD and assign a case manager (housing support worker) to the applicant. This case manager follows and supports the consumer throughout their time on the program.

Participants pay 30% of their income towards rent; ESD pays the difference directly to the landlord.