

General Assistance-Emergency Housing

Economic Services Division

Department for Children & Families



DCF Emergency Housing Team

Commissioner's Office:

Ken Schatz: ken.schatz@vermont.gov

Karen Vastine: karen.vastine@vermont.gov

Economic Services Division:

Sean Brown: sean.brown@vermont.gov

Geoffrey Pippenger: geoffrey.pippenger@vermont.gov

Office of Economic Opportunity:

Sarah Phillips: sarah.phillips@vermont.gov

General Assistance – Emergency Housing



General Assistance-Emergency Housing (GA-EH) provides emergency housing to individuals and families through the use of motels.

This program is administered through DCF's Economic Services Division (ESD).

Emergency Housing Eligibility

To be eligible, a household (an individual or family) must be homeless through no fault of their own; have no other place to stay; have no financial resources to pay for housing; and meet one of the following categories:

Vulnerable: The household has a member who is 65 years of age or older, receives SSI or SSDI, a child age six or younger, or in the third trimester of pregnancy. (28 days in a 12 month period)

Catastrophic: The household experiences a sudden loss of housing due to flood, fire, domestic violence or constructive eviction. (84 days in a 12 month period)

Cold Weather Exception: The above rules are relaxed so that any homeless household is eligible if one of these two weather related events are predicted during the overnight hours:

- a temperature, with or without wind chill, is below 20 degrees
- the temperature is below 32 degrees with a greater than 50% of precipitation.

Emergency Housing Data

State Fiscal Year	Household/Cases Served	Motel Nights
2011	1448	31,934
2012	1954	38,350
2013	2851	71,770
2014	2796	52,087
2015	3143	76,637
2016	2145	48,093

Cold Weather Exception Data

COLD WEATHER EXCEPTION ANALYSIS FOR SFY14 - SFY16			
<u>CWE Measure</u>	<u>SFY14</u>	<u>SFY15</u>	<u>SFY16</u>
Nights Meeting Criteria*	154	133	93
Requests for Emergency Housing	6835	12,279	3,721
Number of Motel Nights	16,542	26,226	4745
Avg. Number Motel Rooms Per CWE Night	107	197	41
Number of Adults	7338	13152	3961
Number of Children	1558	3370	1334
Cost	\$983,443	\$1,833,587	\$344,441
*The first CWE night: SFY14 - 10/25/13, SFY15 - 11/2/14 and SFY16 - 11/17/15.			
*The last CWE night: SFY14 - 4/25/14, SFY15 - 4/8/15 and SFY16 - 4/27/16.			

Vermont Rental Subsidy Program (VRS)

- VRS began in December of 2011.
- State-funded short term (12 month) rental assistance program.
- Clients are generally on Reach Up or SSI or have income less than 125% of FPL.

	2014	2015	2016
Average monthly rent paid by each household:	\$282	\$287	\$280
Average monthly rent paid by ESD per household is:	\$536	\$623	\$713
Households are approved and leased up	69	113	133
Households are tentatively granted and seeking housing	60	27	36
Households are on the waiting list	0	56	79
Vermont Rental Subsidy Funding	\$500,00	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

Challenges

Historically, shelter in a motel was the primary service delivery model. This is a poor model for many reasons:

- Limited access to case management and other resources;
- Challenging conditions for families and individuals, especially for those who require a longer-term stay including:
 - lack of safety,
 - lack of confidentiality and
 - lack of options for food storage and preparation;
- Level of disruption for children;
- Poor outcomes moving households to permanent housing.

Emergency Housing Initiative

The DCF Housing Team is working with housing stakeholders across the state to transform the GA-EH from a *motel-centered voucher program* to a *community-based program* that serves *ALL* homeless individuals and families through a range of appropriate and effective crisis response tools.

Emergency Housing Initiative

Housing Stakeholders include:

- Policy-makers;
- Homeless Continua of Care and local Housing Review Teams;
- Economic Services District (ESD) Offices;
- AHS Field Directors; and
- Homeless shelter and service providers.

Emergency Housing Initiative

The DCF Housing team has learned through meeting with stakeholders that:

- Communities are very interested in approaches to address crisis housing needs in their locale;
- A coordinated response and creative partnering are key; and
- Motels may still be needed for certain situations.

Emergency Housing Initiative



Parameters for community-based concept:

- Collaboration with local continuum of care;
- Address reliance on motels;
- Incorporate evidence-based/informed approaches from the Family Connections Framework;
- Commit to participation in coordinated intake and assessment.

Emergency Housing Initiative Funding

Projects are GA funded and administered through the Office of Economic Opportunity's (OEO) Housing Opportunity Grant Program (HOP).

Being administered through HOP provides GA with:

- Existing shelter/program standards and requirements – bringing consistency and uniformity to how DCF funds and monitors shelters
- Monitoring processes
- Performance Measures and Reporting

Thank you!



If you have any questions, please contact:

- ESD Deputy Commissioner, Sean Brown
Sean.brown@Vermont.gov
- OEO Director, Sarah Phillips
Sarah.Phillips@Vermont.gov