

Homeless Assistance

Sarah Phillips, Chief Administrator
Office of Economic Opportunity



Homeless Assistance – How it All Works

State Programs & Resources

- Housing Opportunity Grant Program
- General Assistance Emergency Housing (Motel Vouchers)
- Family Supportive Housing
- Vermont Rental Subsidy
- Other State housing funds (not homeless specific)

Structure & Process

- Funding
- Vermont Council on Homelessness
 - Vermont Plan to End Homelessness
- Continuums of Care (CoC)
 - Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness
 - Local “CoCs”
 - Chittenden Homeless Alliance
- Coordinated Entry
 - Housing Review Teams
- HMIS/Point in Time Count

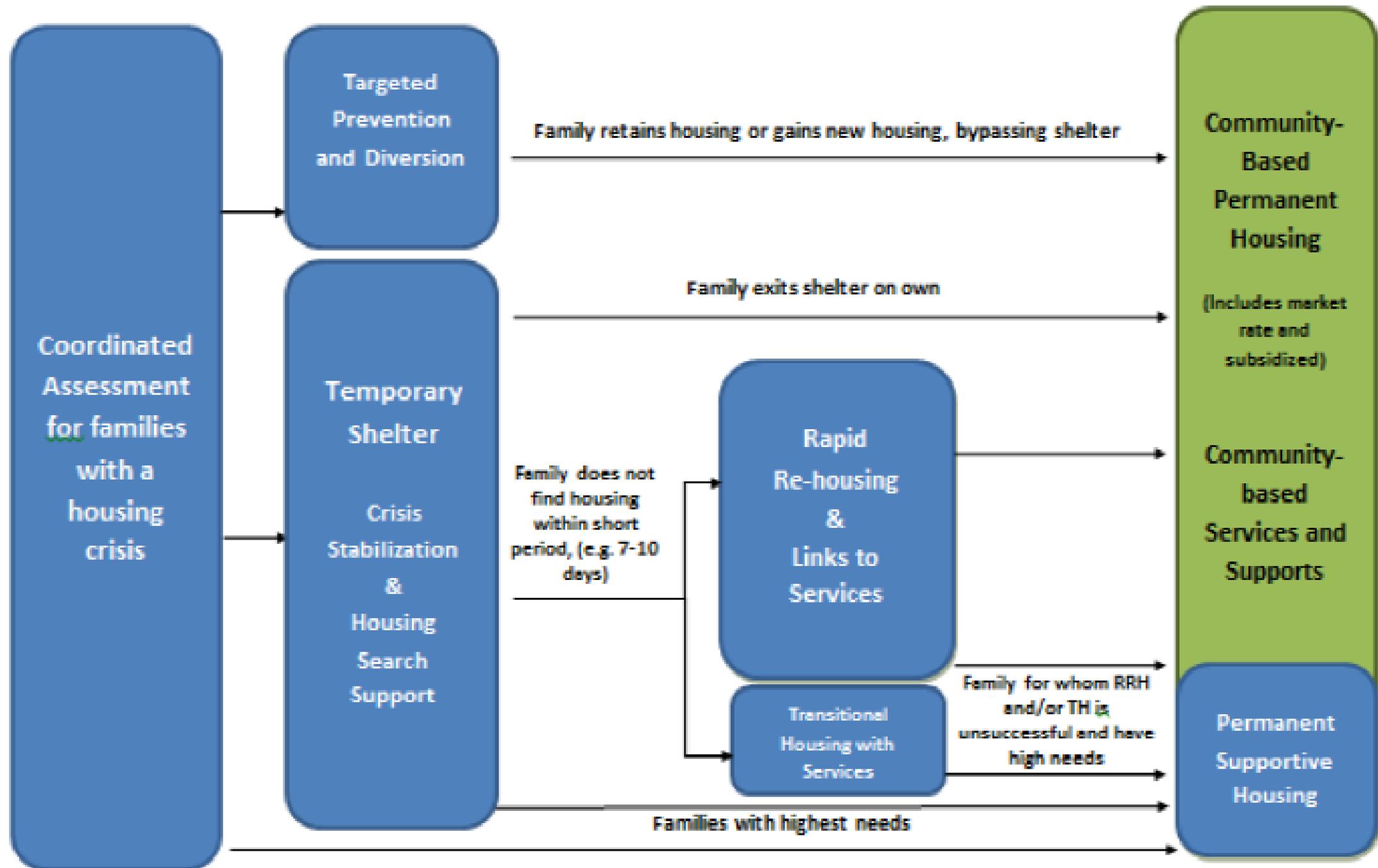
Continuum of Care – Collaboration:

- Assess capacity & ID gaps
- Develop proactive solutions vs reactive stop-gaps
- ID common goals to advocate
- ID resources needed
- Coordinate & Link

A Homeless “Continuum of Care”?

Housing crisis response system with pathways to permanent housing & links to mainstream resources

- **Outreach**
- **Assessment** to identify service and housing needs and provide a link to the appropriate level of both
- **Prevention & Diversion**
- **Emergency Shelter:** immediate, temporary, safe place to sleep
- **Transitional Housing,** where appropriate
- **Rapid Re-housing and Permanent Supportive Housing**



In Vermont...

Outreach

PATH (DMH) Providers– e.g., Shelter, Community Mental Health Agency, Safe Harbor

Assessment

through Coordinated Entry

Prevention & Diversion

Community Action Agencies, Homeless Prevention Center, COTS Housing Resource Center, etc. (HOP-funded)

Emergency Shelter

Year-round shelters, seasonal warming shelters, domestic violence shelters, youth shelter/programs, emergency housing apartments, General Assistance motels

Transitional Housing

Transitional Living Program for youth

Rapid Re-housing and Permanent Supportive Housing

HOP & CoC-funded programs, VT Rental Subsidy, Shelter + Care, Family Supportive Housing

Housing Opportunity Grant Program

Funding for community organizations who help people in crisis to find or keep stable, safe housing

- \$5.4 million of state and federal funding (current year)
 - Emergency Shelter: Year-round and seasonal emergency shelters; day shelters; domestic violence shelters; apartment stays for families
 - Transitional housing for youth & vets
 - Homelessness prevention
 - Rapid re-housing programs
- OEO partners with over 40 programs

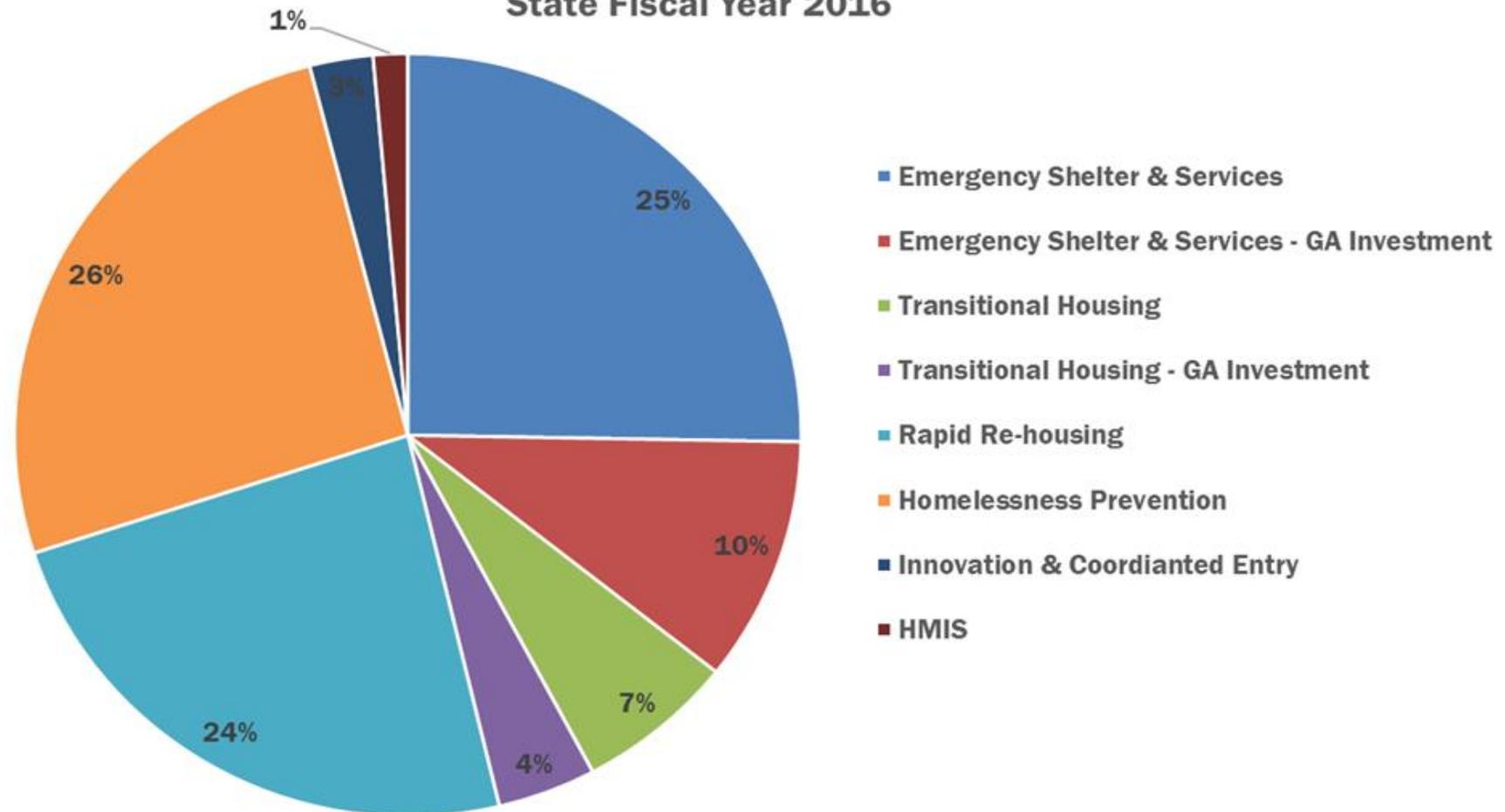


On any given night,
830 people are staying
in a shelter,
including 273 children

Last year 4,143 people
were sheltered:
3,263 adults & 880 children

Housing Opportunity Grant Program

Housing Opportunity Grant Program
including General Assistance Investments
State Fiscal Year 2016



Family Supportive Housing

- Supportive housing for families experiencing homelessness
- 6 community providers, ~100 families currently
- Blend of general fund and Medicaid
- Program components;
 - ✓ Permanent housing (MOU with housing providers)
 - ✓ Intensive, home-based services (small caseloads)
 - ✓ Financial empowerment support (banking, credit, savings)
- Point in time: 90% of participating families are stably housed
- 20-30% of families with Family Services; 60-80% with Reach Up

Housing First (Principles & Model)

- Ready for Housing vs. Housing First
- Evidence-based model for serving individuals and families who are chronically homeless
- Access to permanent housing as quickly as possible with no time limits and no pre-conditions
- A standard lease agreement to housing – as opposed to mandated therapy or services
- A variety of services are offered to promote housing stability and individual well-being on an as-needed, voluntary basis
- Pathways Vermont first rural model in the nation, supported by DMH and DOC

Other AHS Housing Programs *(not homeless)*

- Department of Mental Health
 - Subsidy + Care
- Department of Corrections
 - Transitional and Re-entry Housing
- Department of Aging & Independent Living
 - SASH
- Department of Health – ADAP
 - Sober Houses (e.g., Phoenix)

2016 Point-In-Time Count

A one-night, unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness
801 Households – 1,117 People

14% of People were Unsheltered

652 Single Adults (58%)

158 Families with Children (41% of total Persons)

73 Unaccompanied Youth (6.5%)

1 Minor & 72 Ages 18-24

95 Parenting Youth (Ages 18-24) & their Children (8.5%)

11% Chronically Homeless

10% Veterans

20% Victims of Domestic Violence

13% People of Color

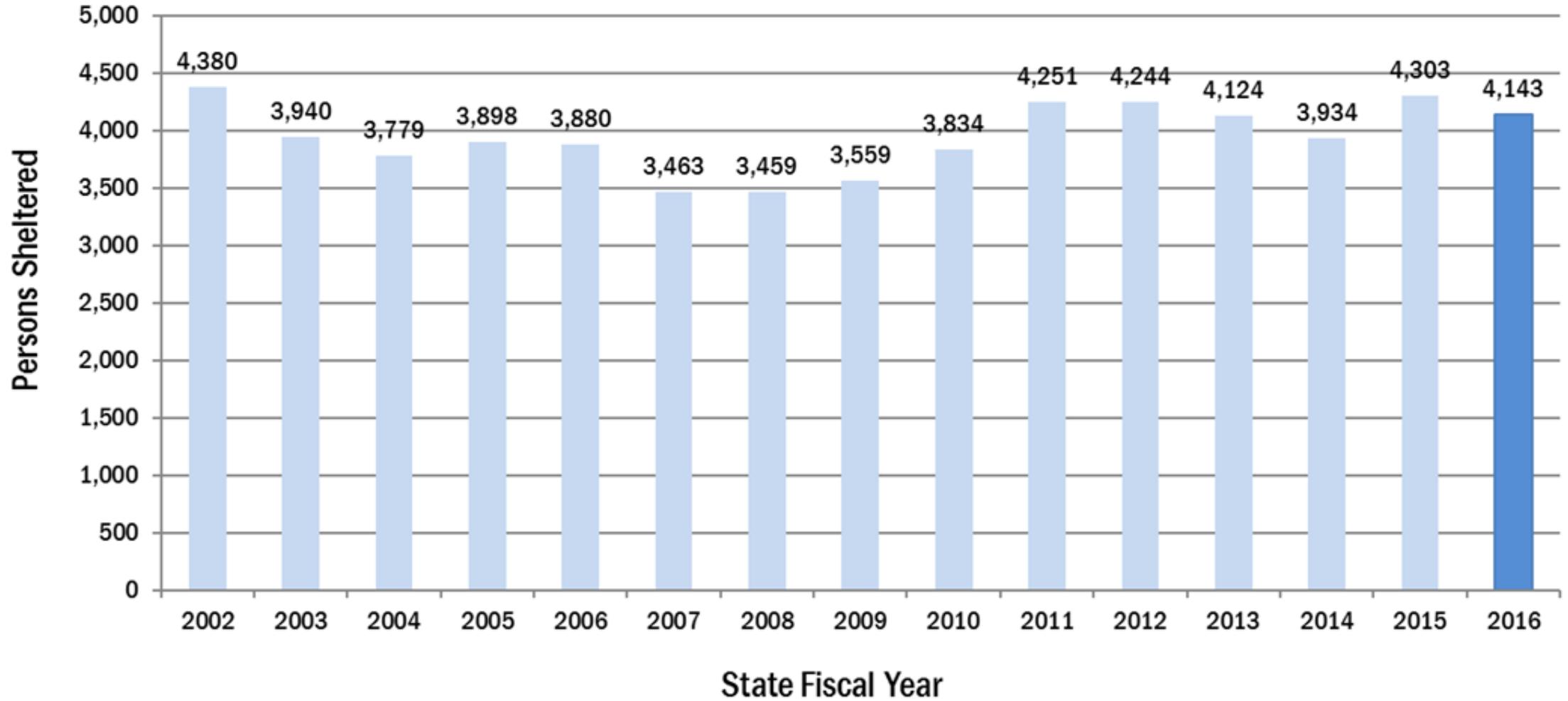
42% Female

57% Male

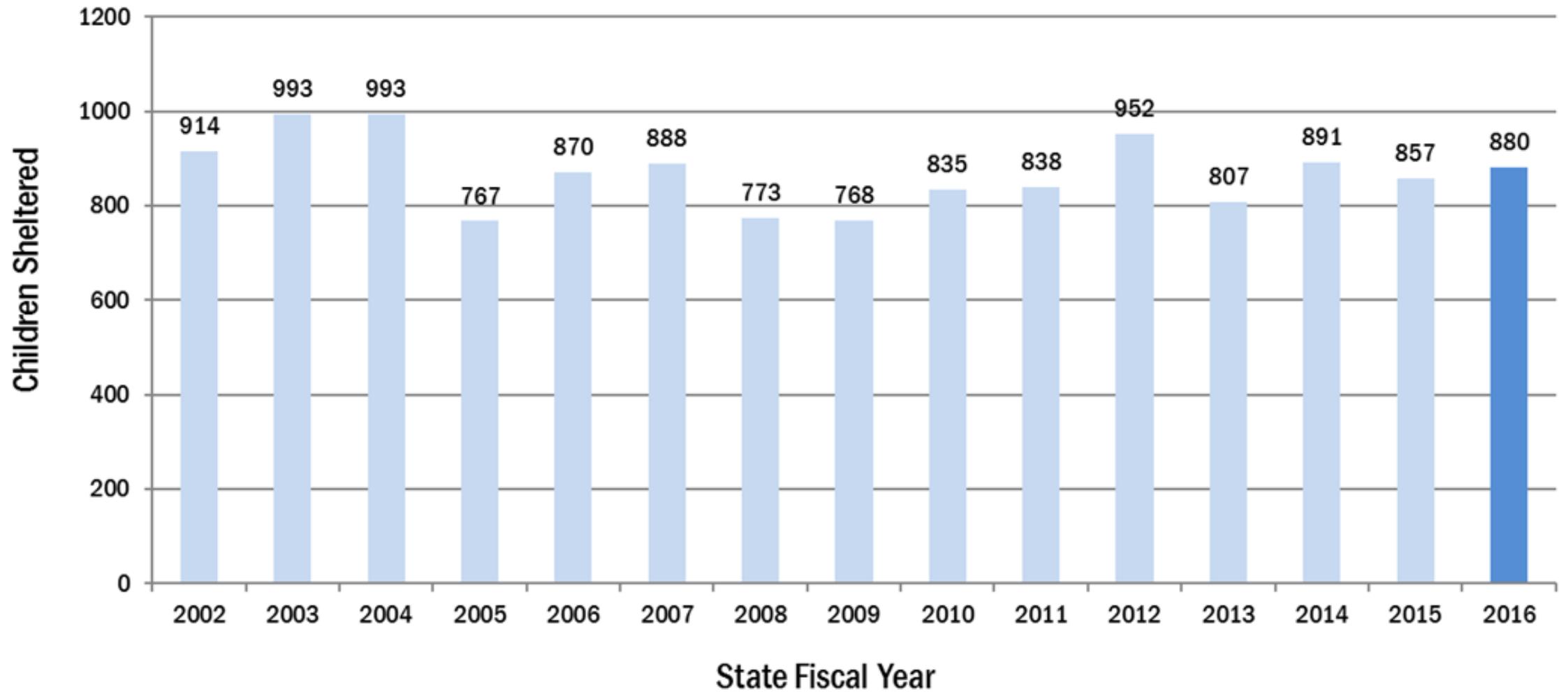
3% Transgender

Persons in Vermont's Publicly Funded Homeless Shelters

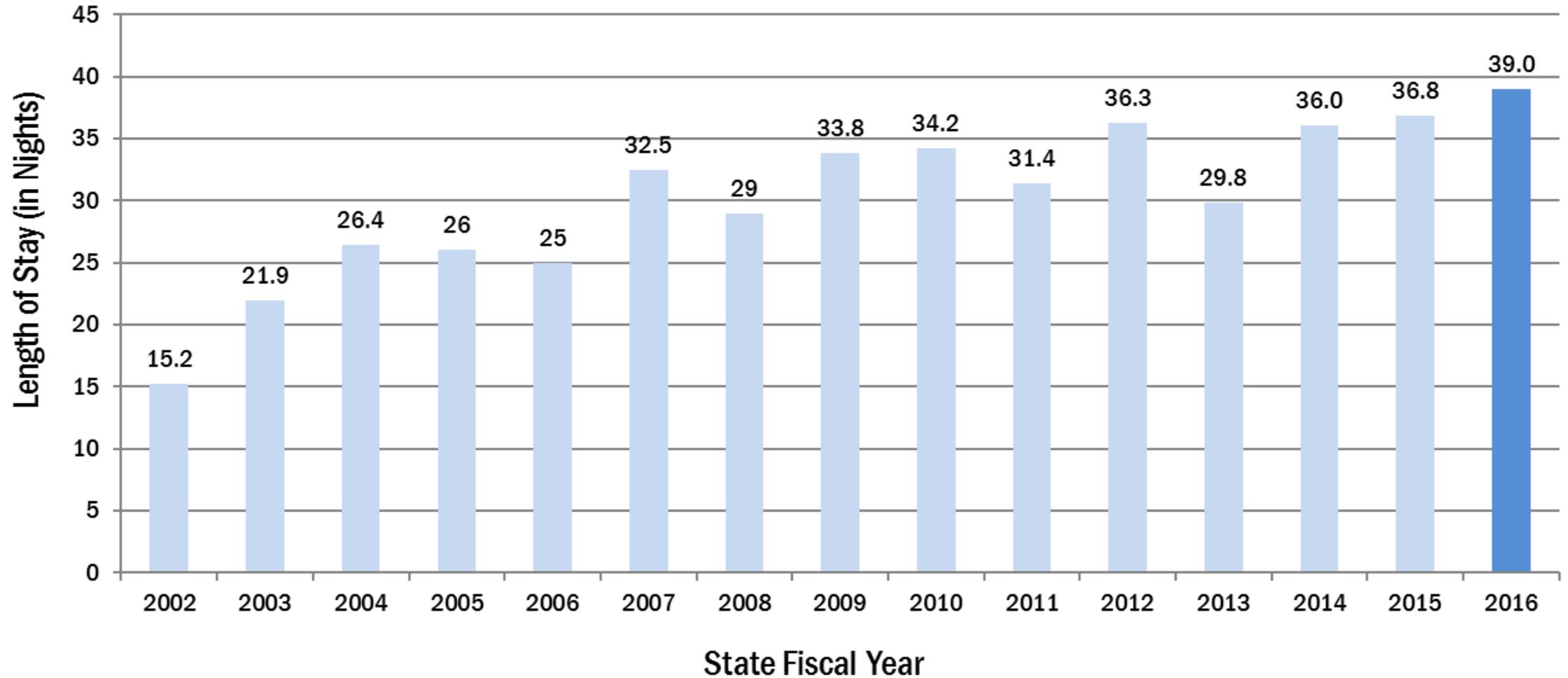
(2002-2016)



Children in Vermont's Publicly Funded Homeless Shelters (2002-2016)

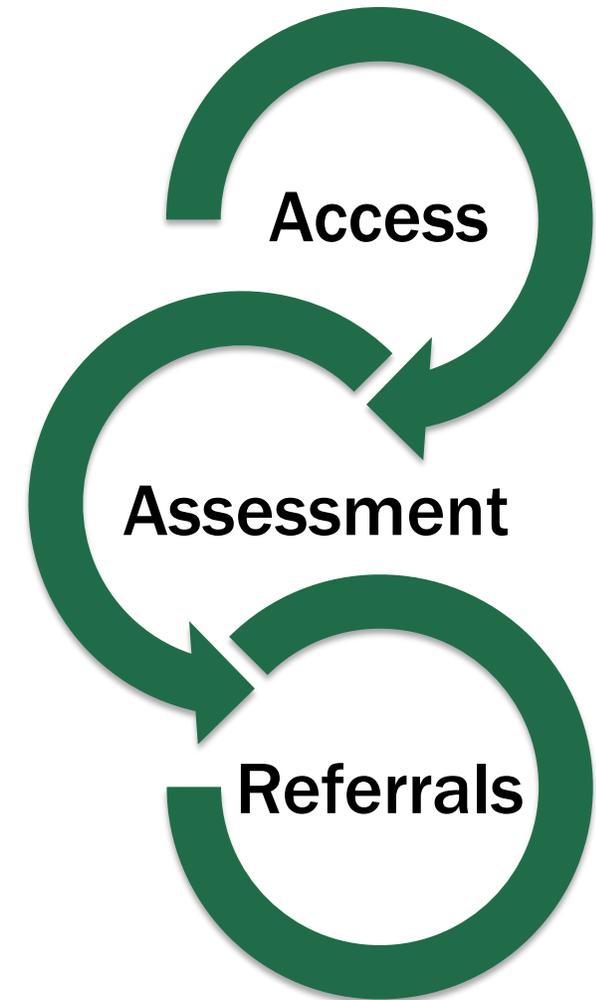


Average Length of Vermont's Publicly Funded Shelter Stay (2002-2016)



Coordinated Entry – Overarching Goals

- Reorient system to focus on those being served
- Minimize time and frustration accessing help
- Maximize use of system resources
- Identify service gaps for planning



Current System:

- Should we accept this client into our program?
- Client has to find services and housing projects. Multiple calls, visiting multiple locations.
- Inconsistent communication & understanding of what's available
- Different forms and assessments at each project
- Ad-hoc referrals between projects

With Coordinated Entry:

- What housing and services are best for this household, and available?
- Client accesses help through clear doors and carefully designed protocols
- Consistent, clear communication to partners & clients about what's available
- Standard forms and assessments for every client, no matter where they start
- Community agreement on where to refer

System building



Talented and committed providers using different methods and providing different services

An integrated network of providers whose efforts are well-coordinated to achieve a **COLLECTIVE IMPACT**

Source: From Boston Mayors Task Force on Individual Homelessness
(Modified from Houston's Plan to End Chronic Homelessness)

Why Coordinated Entry?

In Vermont, we believe that a coordinated entry can help:

Improve referral appropriateness and coordination

Increase understanding among partners of what resources are available

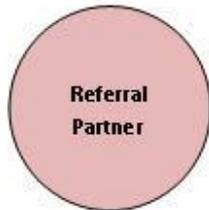
Decrease the time that people experience homelessness

Help people move in and out of the homeless system as quickly as possible allowing them to achieve housing stability

Support community-wide or system level planning and outcomes

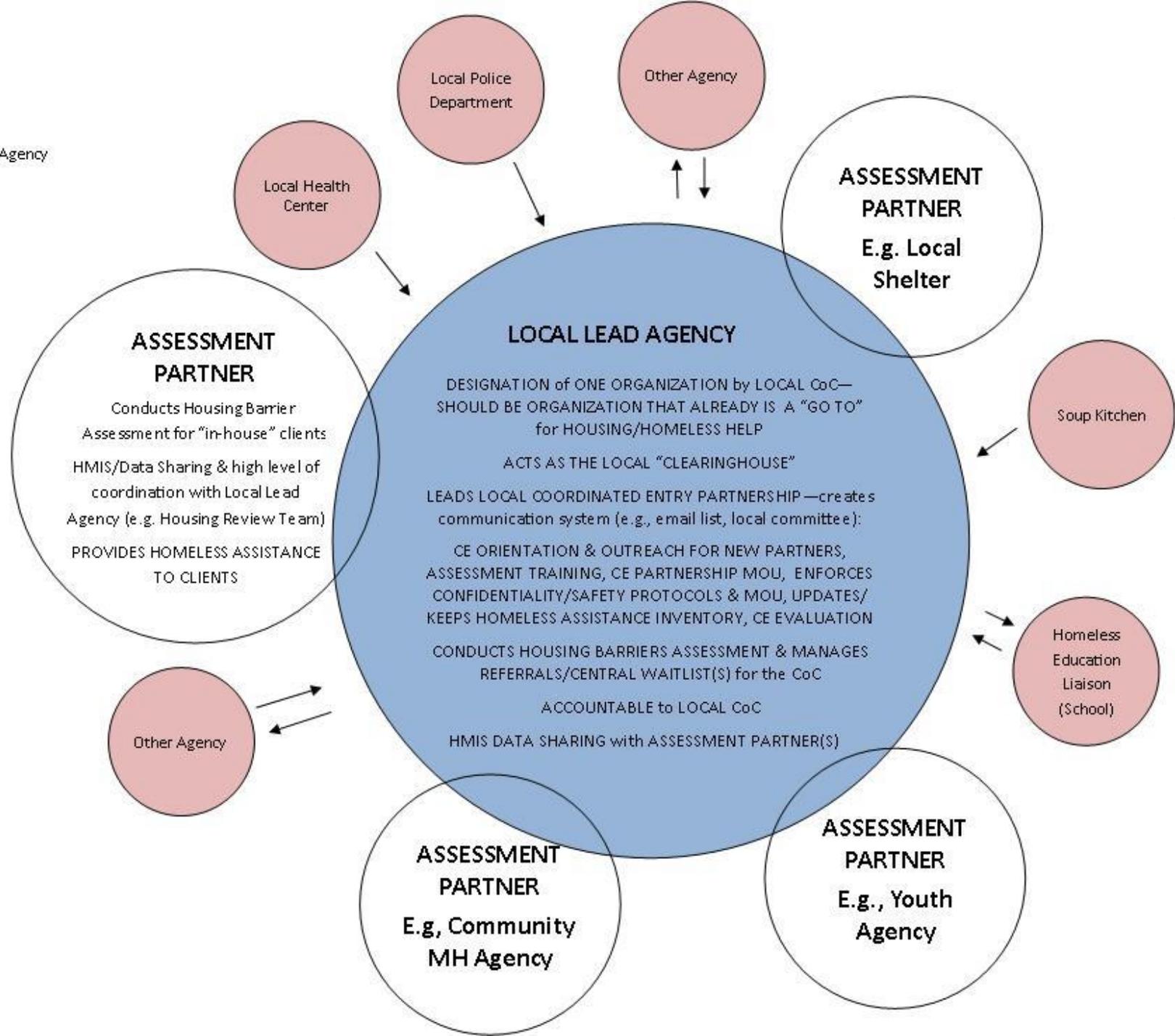
Key Partners:

- Community Mental Health Agency
- Shelter Provider
- Pathways
- Community Action Agency
- Domestic Violence Agency
- VA
- VCRHYP Partner
- Parent Child Center
- Economic Services Office
- 2-1-1
- And more



Completes VCEH Referral/
Housing Screen and sends
via HMIS or email to Lead
Agency for Housing
Barriers Assessment

Many initial Referral
Partners may become
Assessment Partners over
time.



VCEH Key Components

Uniform Tools

- Housing Screening & Referral Tool
- Housing Barriers Assessment Tool
- Client Release of Information
- Confidentiality Agreement for Partner Staff
- Template for Local Partnership Agreement

Other Key Components

Screening and Referral Protocols

- Victims fleeing Domestic/Sexual Violence
- Veterans
- Unaccompanied minors and youth
- Chronic Homelessness

Resources

<http://dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/>

<http://helpingtohousevt.org/>

<http://www.vtaffordablehousing.org/>

<http://dcf.vermont.gov/esd/>

<http://nationalhomeless.org/>

<http://www.endhomelessness.org/>

<http://www.nhchc.org/>

<https://www.hudexchange.info/>

<https://www.usich.gov/>

<http://center.serve.org/nche/>

<http://www.pathwaysvermont.org/>