

Homeless Assistance

Economic Services Division
& Office of Economic Opportunity



DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Agency of Human Services

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-funded/AHS housing and services (not homeless specific)

Structure & Process

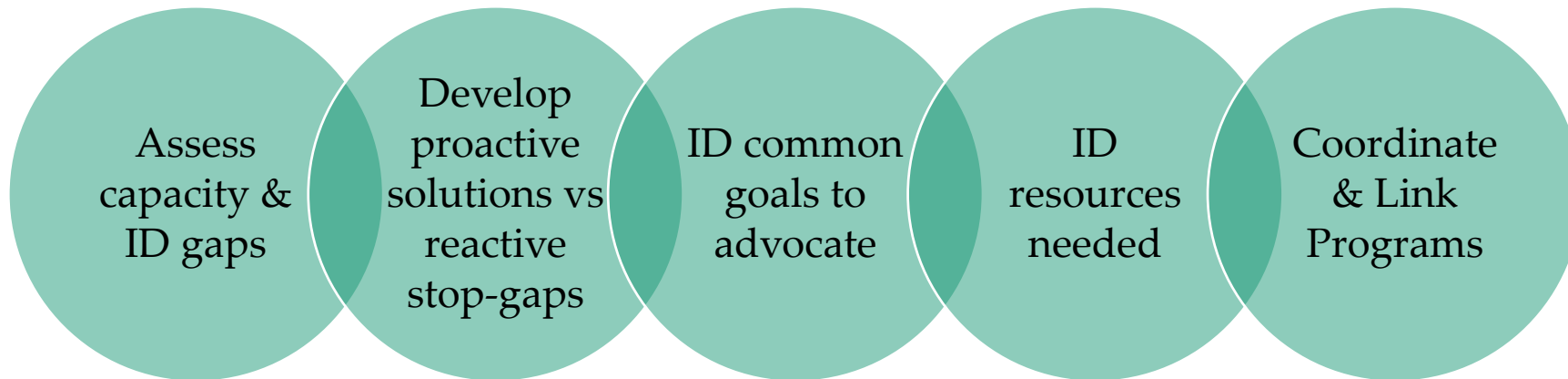
- Funding (Federal & State)
- Vermont Council on Homelessness
 - Vermont Plan to End Homelessness
- Continuums of Care (CoC)
- Coordinated Entry
- HMIS/Point in Time Count

Vt's Homeless Continuums of Care (CoC)

- Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, <http://helpingtohousevt.org/>
 - “Balance of State” with 11 local CoCs
- Chittenden Homeless Alliance, <http://www.cchavt.org/>



LOCAL PLANNING AND COLLABORATION



2019 Point-In-Time Count

A one-night, unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness
772 Households – 1,089 People

114 persons were Unsheltered (10.5% of total persons)

675 Single Adults (62% of total persons)

251 Children (23% of total persons)

128 Families with Children (37.5% of total persons)

136 Young Adults (ages 18-24) (12.5% of persons)

6 Unaccompanied Minors

27 Parenting Youth HH (21% of all families)

15.6% Chronically Homeless

8% Veterans

12.2% Fleeing Domestic or
Sexual Violence

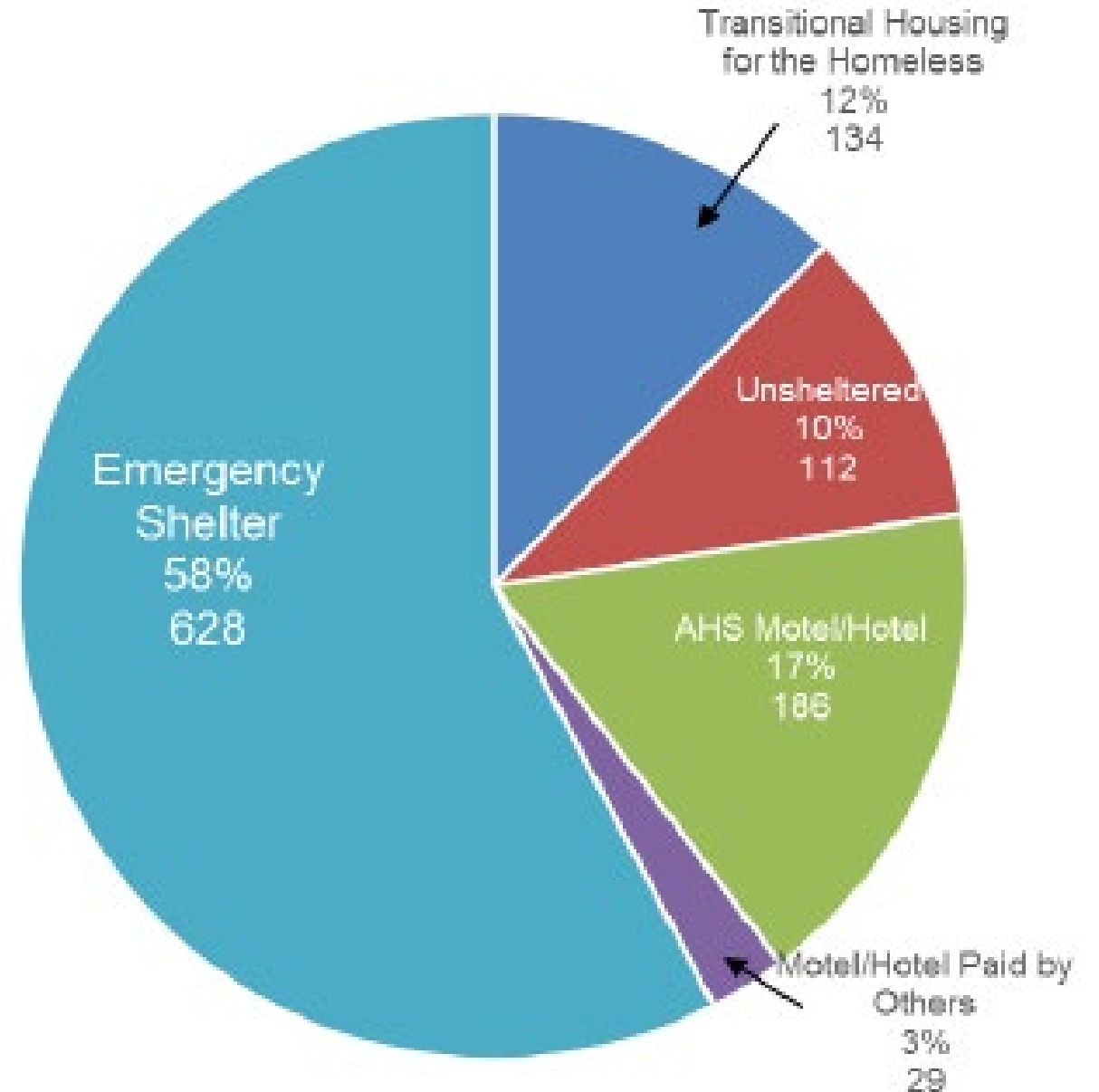
12% People of Color

42.3% Female, 56.6% Male

1.1% Transgender or Gender
Non-conforming

<http://helpingtohousevt.org/pointintime/2019-pit/>

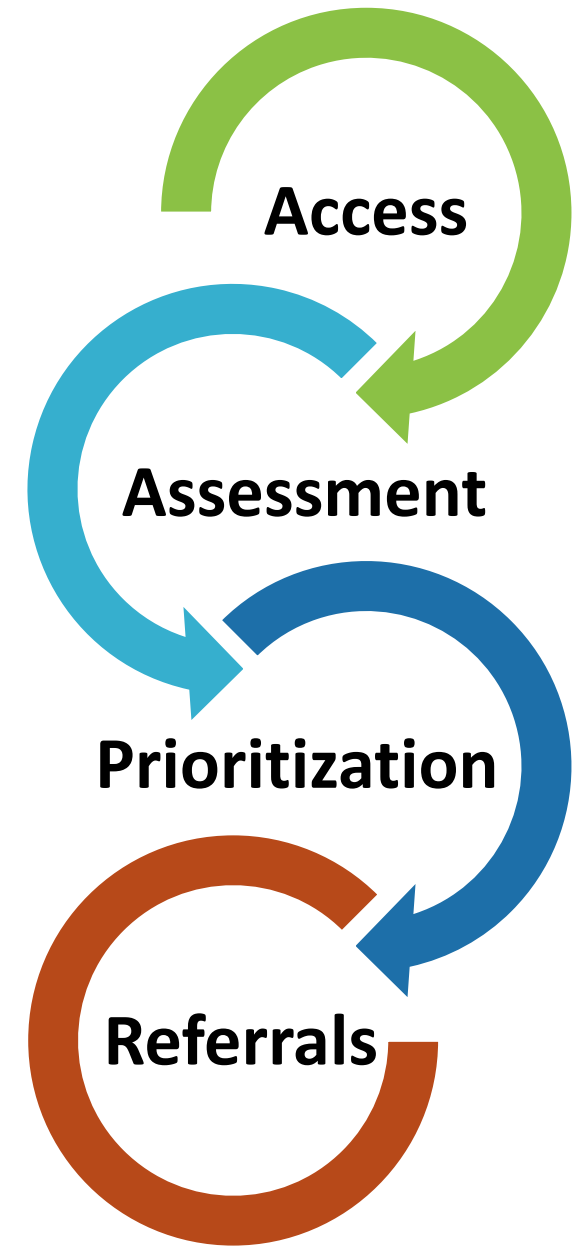
<https://helpingtohousevt.org/pointintime/>



What is 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



Get Connected – Local Lead Agencies

Washington
County: Capstone

Rutland County:
Homeless
Prevention Center

Addison County:
Charter House

Franklin/GI:
CVOEO

St. Johnsbury
Area: NEKCA

Springfield Area:
Springfield
Supported
Housing

Hartford Area:
Upper Valley
Haven

Southern
Windham:
Groundworks

Bennington
County: BROCC

Lamoille County:
Capstone

Newport Area:
NEKCA

Chittenden:
CVOEO

Housing Opportunity Grant Program

Blends ~\$7m in federal and state funding for 40+ community organizations to support housing crisis interventions.

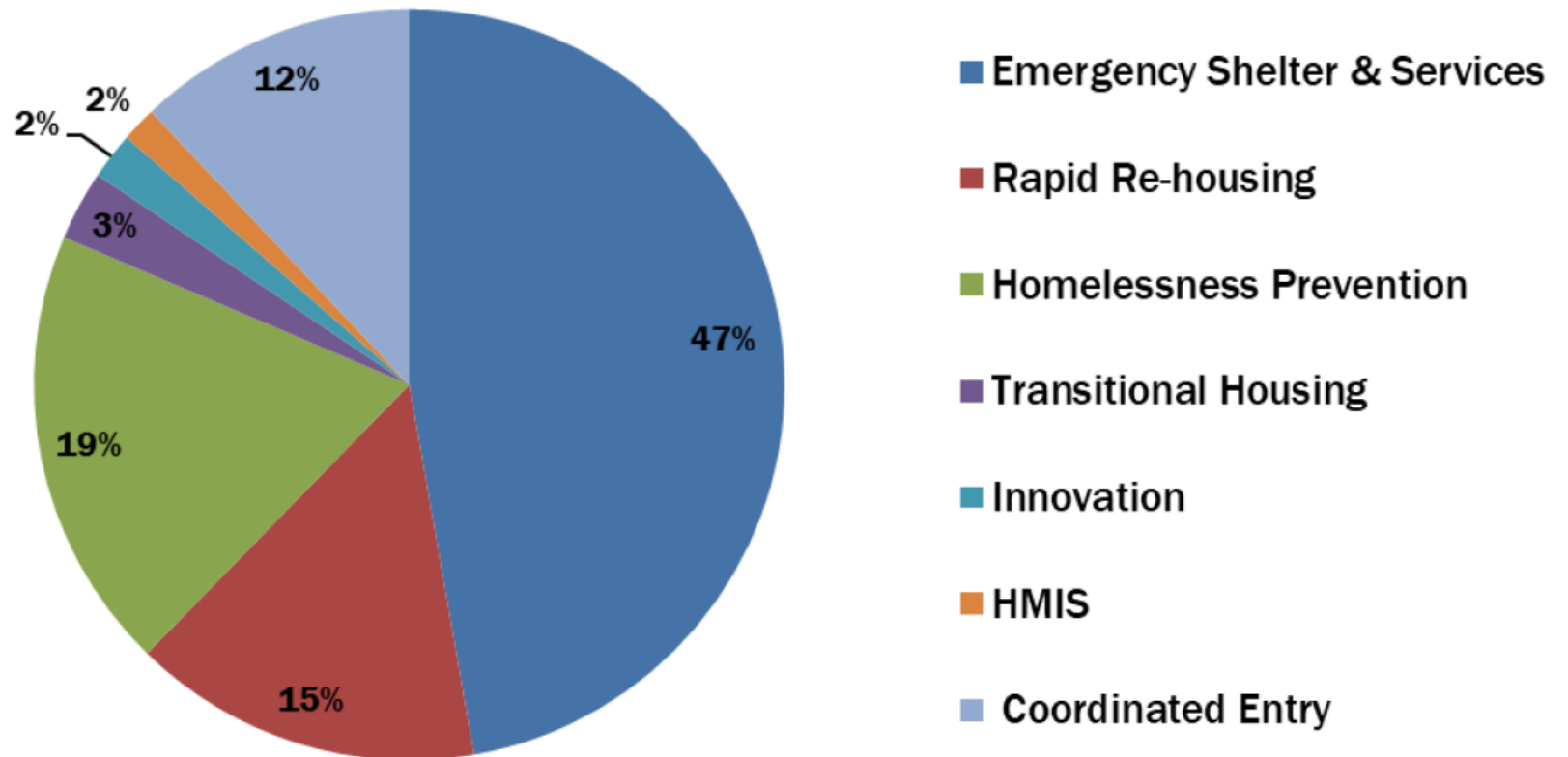
SFY 2020 Awards

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/OEO/Docs/HOP-Grants-SFY2020.pdf>

SFY 2019

Annual Report

<https://dcf.vermont.gov/sites/dcf/files/OEO/Docs/HOP-AR-2019.pdf>



Emergency Shelter

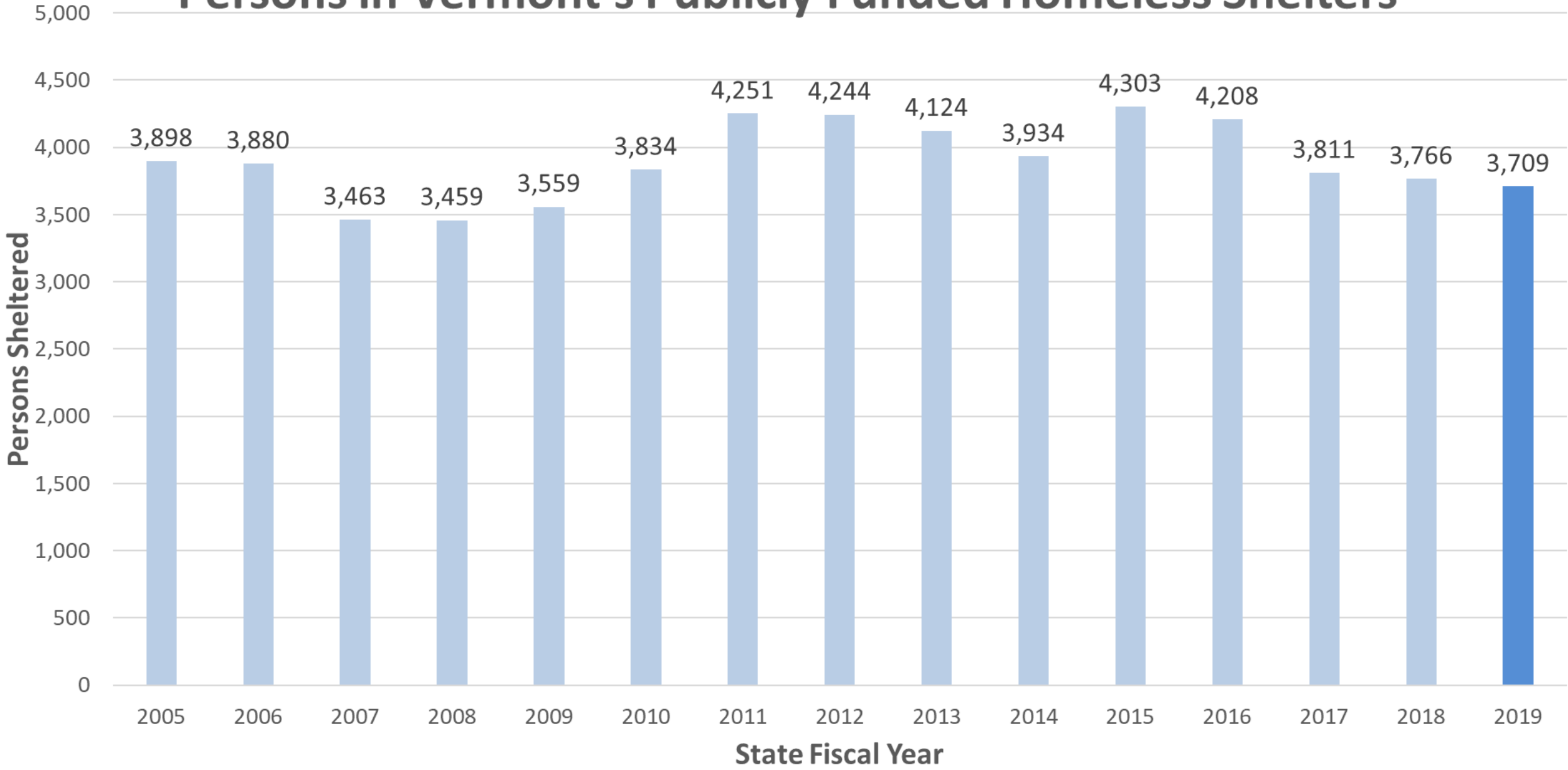


**Last year,
2,710 households
sheltered in community-based
projects.**

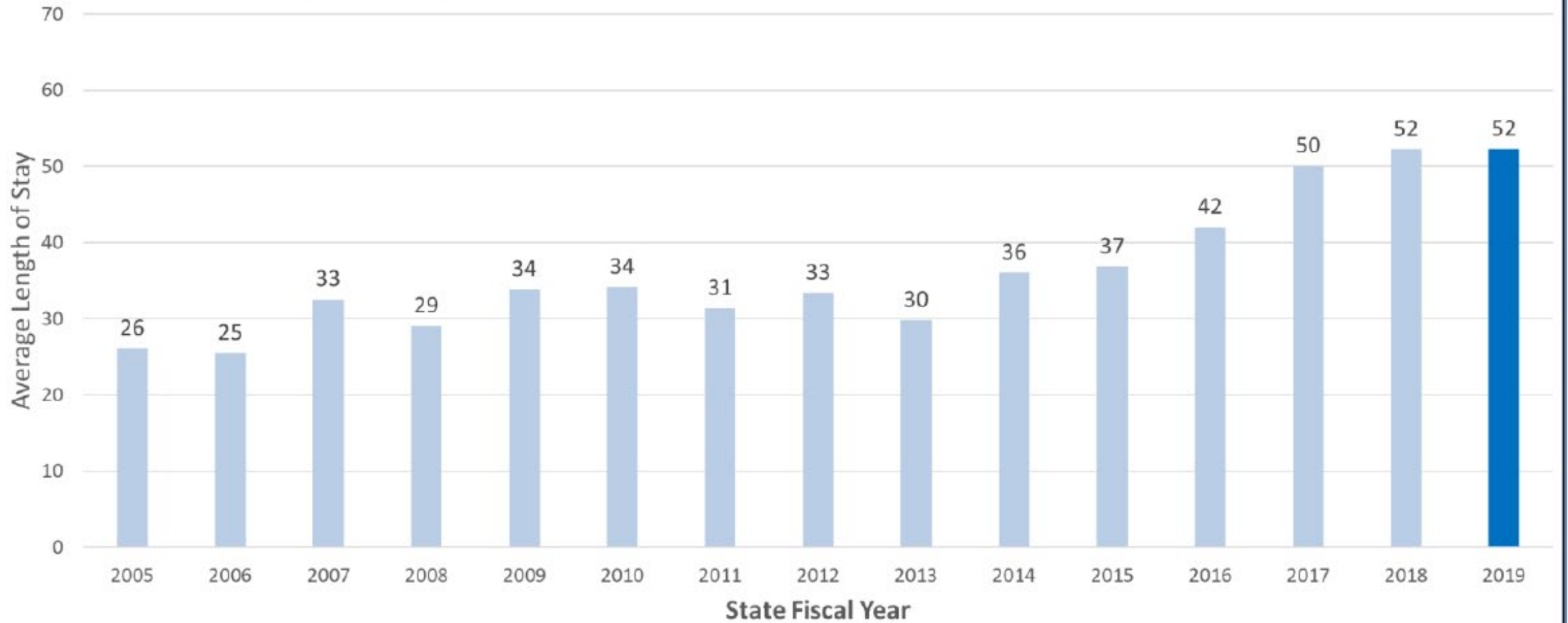
By design, intended to be temporary, and to help guests move into permanent housing as quickly as possible

Variety of forms:
congregate facility, motels,
domestic/sexual violence shelters,
seasonal “warming” shelter,
emergency apartments (*best for families*),
host homes for youth

Persons in Vermont's Publicly Funded Homeless Shelters



Average Length of Stay in Vermont's Publicly Funded Shelters



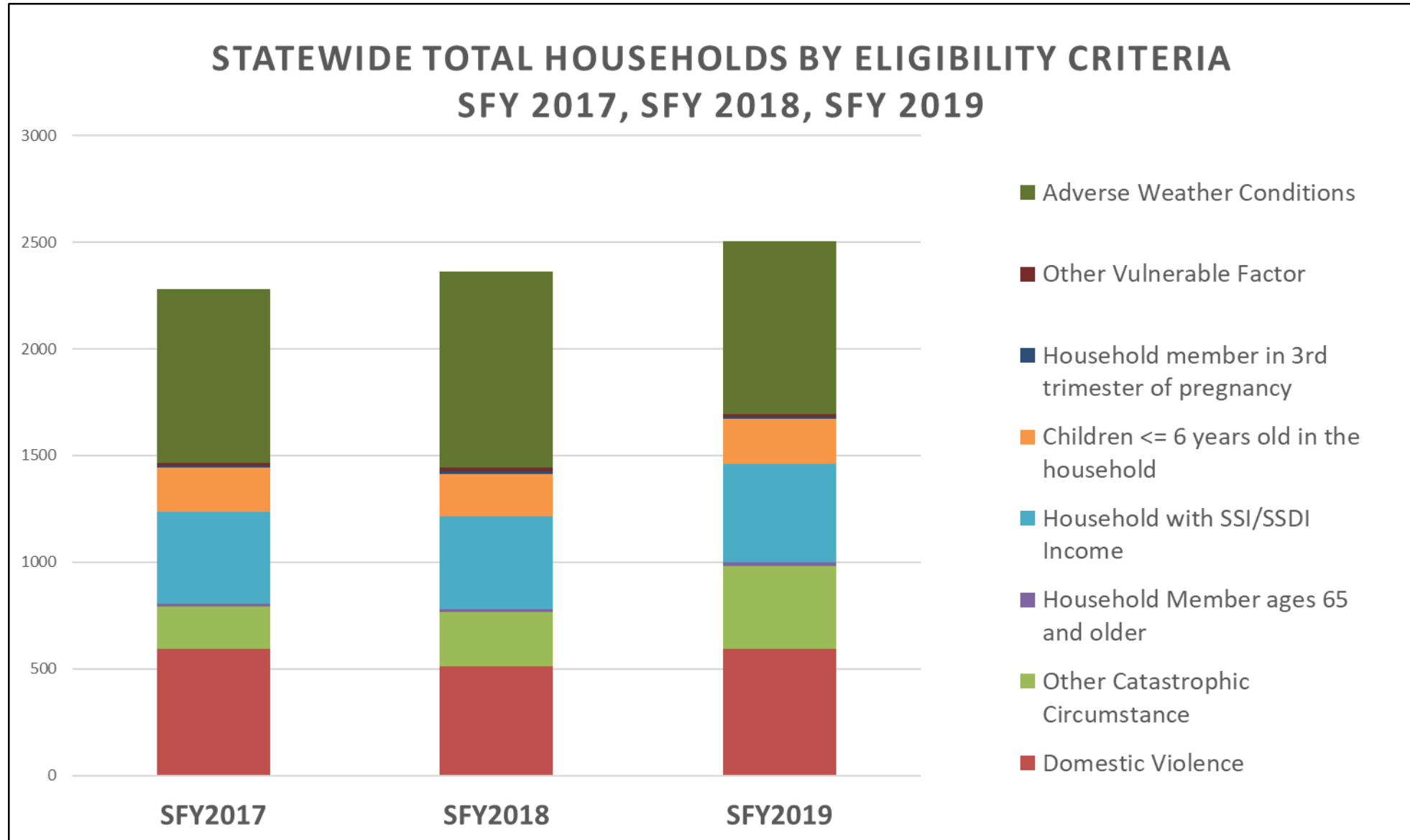
General/Emergency Assistance (GA/EA)

Provides emergency housing in a hotel/motel when no alternative shelter is available.

Eligibility/access through Economic Services District Office or 2-1-1 (After hours)

- Catastrophic
- Vulnerable
- Adverse Weather Conditions

General/Emergency Assistance



EA/GA Hotel & Motel Stays

Number of days of hotel/motel stays

71,770



FY2013

52,087



FY2014

58,227



FY2015

46,255



FY2016

38,999



FY2017

43,066



FY2018

57,164



FY2019

GA Community Investments

Decrease motel reliance by increasing community capacity

- 17 projects in 11 AHS Districts

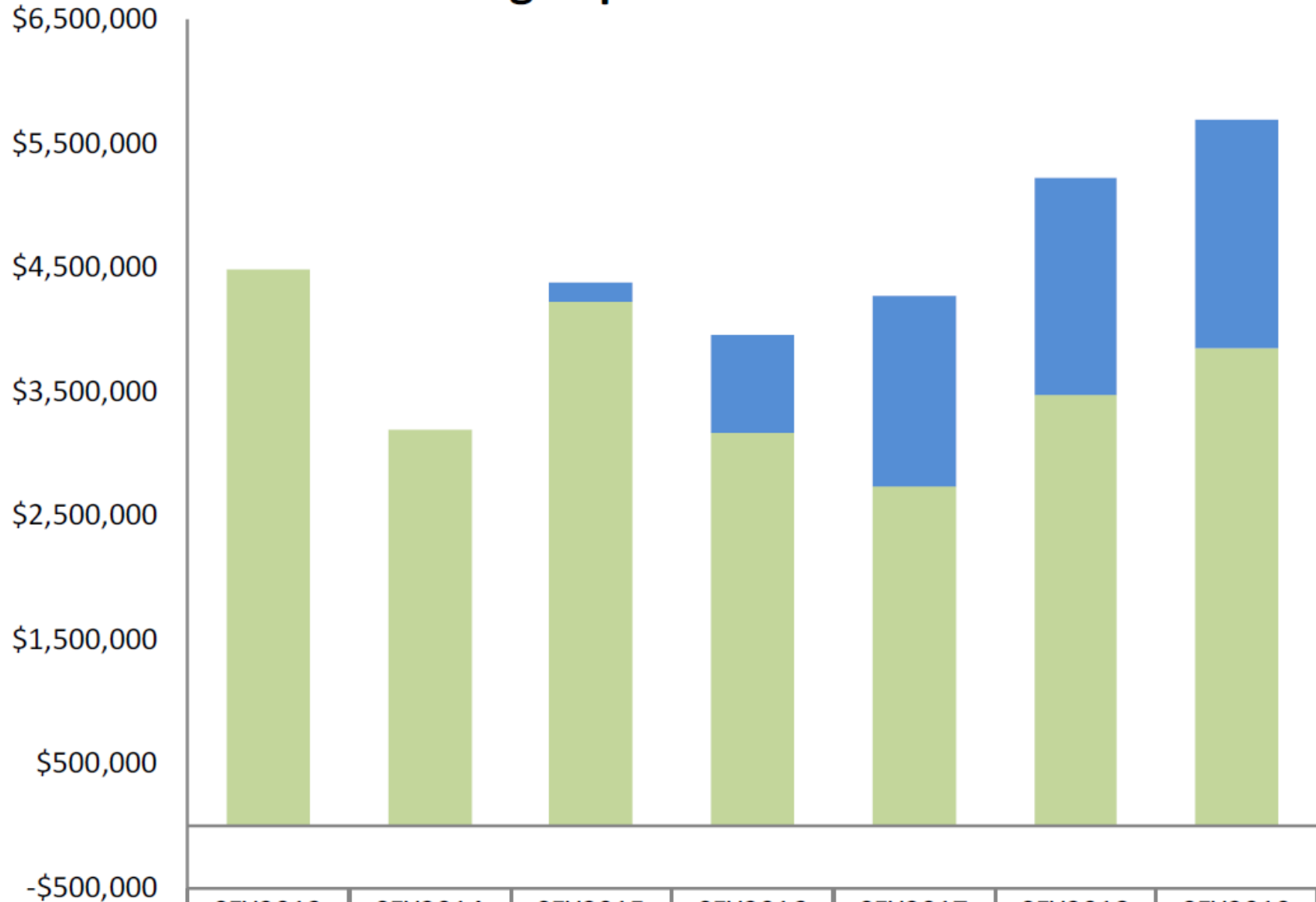
Improve service delivery

- Services help connect people to housing help and address housing barriers

Range of projects, including:

- Seasonal warming shelters
- Expansion of shelter, “motel pools” and services at domestic violence shelters

GA Housing Expenditures & Investments



Community Investments	\$0	\$0	\$158,568	\$788,544	\$1,548,581	\$1,758,095	\$1,843,579
Hotel/Motel Stays	\$4,487,722	\$3,195,116	\$4,222,150	\$3,172,578	\$2,730,568	\$3,470,838	\$3,845,625

Looking Forward: Emergency Shelter/Housing

Proposal to end GA temp housing (“motel vouchers”) and invest in community-based emergency housing/shelter. Aims to:

- Provide a realistic and responsible transition away from motels to protect vulnerable Vermonters;
- Partner to support community responsibility and accountability;
- Promote equity, quality and results through statewide standards and uniformity.

Part of the SFY21 Budget Proposal

Types of Housing Interventions

Supportive Housing

- *Evidence-based housing intervention that combines non-time-limited affordable housing assistance with wrap-around supportive services for people experiencing homelessness, as well as other people with disabilities.*

Affordable Housing

- *Housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities.*

Rapid Rehousing

- *Intervention that rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.*

Homeless Prevention

- *Strategy that prevents homelessness for people seeking shelter by helping them stabilize and preserve existing housing, or identify immediate alternate housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them with services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing.*

H.542/Sec. E.300.4

SPECIALIZED HOUSING VOUCHERS

“...requires the Secretary of Human Services to convene a workgroup to develop a strategy to fully utilize available federal rental assistance funds for vulnerable populations in Vermont”

Specialized Subsidies Covered:

- **CoC Permanent Supportive Housing** “Shelter + Care” Program
- **CoC Rapid Rehousing** Program
- **Family Unification Program (FUP)**

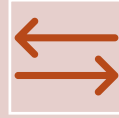
Workgroup Issued a Report in November:

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/Specialized-Housing-Voucher-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Findings Summary

- Service funding is not tied directly to the CoC programs. The CoCs have elected to use federal funding for subsidies not services.
- AHS provides significant funding for services leveraged by providers to support housing stability. No AHS funds are dedicated specifically to provide services for the CoC programs.
- CoC projects are meeting the federal match requirement.
- Lease up barriers and vacancy rates impact utilization of funds.
- Affordable housing providers are concerned that housing retention services are inadequate.

Highlighted Recommendations



Flexibility in how some programs operate



Prioritize, coordinate and streamline funding for housing retention services in conjunction CoC programs and coordinated entry



Encourage Affordable Housing Providers to house people through coordinated entry



Advocate for changes at HUD to allow time to adapt to CoC policy changes



Prevent households from entering (or returning to) homelessness through eviction prevention activities

Family Supportive Housing

Supportive housing for families with complex needs who have experienced homelessness

7 community providers (7 districts)
~134 families at a time

- Winston Prouty Center in Brattleboro
- COTS & Howard Center in Burlington
- Homeless Prevention Center in Rutland
- Upper Valley Haven in Hartford
- NEKCA in St. Johnsbury
- Family Center of Washington County in Barre
- Sunrise Family Resource Center in Bennington

Family Supportive Housing

Program Components

- Intensive, home-based case management and service coordination (12-15 families/staff)
- Permanent housing through partnership
- Evidence-based national model - holistic, multi-generation, trauma-informed
- Financial Empowerment Support
- Prioritized for families with multiple episodes of homelessness, DCF case, children under age 6

Looking Forward: Family Supportive Housing

Expand Family Supportive Housing

- SFY21 Proposal to expand from 7 to 10 AHS Districts
- Create capacity for an additional 110 families
- Strengthen partnership with Family Unification Vouchers