

# Mobile Home Program

Po Box 1603, Burlington VT 05402  
802-660-3455 ext. 105



April 8, 2020

Dear Honorable Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs Committee Chair and Members:

I come to you on behalf of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity Mobile Home Program (CVOEO MHP) to advocate for mobile home parks and its residents in this unprecedented time facing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Primarily funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCH), CVOEO MHP is the only statewide mobile home residents' advocacy program that, through organizing and education, works to give resident a greater control over their housing by supporting the protection and improvement of their housing rights and living conditions. We strongly believe that government dollars could have a crucial impact in the lives of these important communities who make up the backbone of our state's workforce.

Due to their unique community structure and status, we believe that mobile home parks and its residents are likely to be gravely affected by this pandemic. Our main concern is the current living condition of vulnerable and elderly mobile home residents living in remote part of the State, without internet and other media access. They certainly have difficulty getting accurate info about COVID-19 prevention measures, access to food and medication with the current stay-home order in place; a real danger for remote MHP communities.

CVOEO MHP is actively looking to increase its capacity in order to urgently implement a statewide COVID-19 Mobile Home Park response/recovery outreach effort. via phone, email and mail (in person when permitted), to connect with our service recipients, collect info on their overall current living conditions and needs and provide info, resources and referral as needed. The info collected will also give us an outlook on the impact of COVID-19 on MHP residents and possibly help us-funding permitting-design an informed program recovery plan addressing residents post COVID-19 stay home order needs and issues.

We understand that safety and healthcare of a community starts at the individual level and, as confirmed by hurricane Katrina and now health and safety crisis with COVID-19, engagement to local response planning efforts, access to reliable sources of information and presence of applicable emergency household plans are crucial to effectively respond and recover from such disasters. Unfortunately, as many Vermonters, many residents who are mostly low income, were not prepared for such radical and brutal social and economic changes. Through our hotline, we are hearing about residents losing their jobs, living in anxiety not knowing how they will be paying for their mortgage, lot rent, groceries and medications in the coming months.

We believe that immediate action and consideration are required to tend to crucial issues affecting the lives, health, safety and wellbeing of these important labor force communities and sustain their existence. It is imperative to have our mobile home parks and its resident's particular circumstances in mind in relief and recovery planning efforts. Feel free to contact me with questions/concerns.

We appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Sandrine Kibuey, Director- VT Tenants & Mobile Home Program/CVOEO  
[skibuey@cvoeo.org](mailto:skibuey@cvoeo.org) /802-660-3455 x204